

City College Coventry

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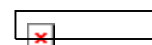
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Basic information about the college

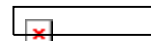


Name of college:	City College Coventry
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Paul Taylor
Address of college:	Butts Centre Butts Coventry CV1 3GD
Telephone number:	024 76791000
Fax number:	024 76791671
Chair of governors:	Margaret Bell
Unique reference number:	130471
Name of reporting inspector:	David Martin

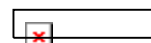
Dates of inspection:

10-20 November 2003

Part A: Summary



Information about the college



City College Coventry is a large college in Coventry, formed in February 2002 by the merger of Tile Hill College and Coventry Technical College. The college has three main sites; the Tile Hill Centre (previously Tile Hill College), the Butts Centre and the nearby Maxwell Centre (housing construction provision), (previously Coventry Technical College). Some commercially costed short information technology (IT) and management courses are delivered from the Charterhouse building, near the city centre. There are a number of local community-based outreach centres. Franchise provision has been reduced in recent years, with just a few remaining franchise partners in specific areas of need.

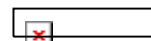
The college serves the immediate community, whilst also attracting students from nearby Warwickshire, Solihull and Birmingham, as well as overseas students. The majority of provision is further education (FE), with courses offered in all of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas of learning. The college is the main provider locally for construction and for automotive maintenance and manufacturing sectors. Across the college, there are more than 500 work-based learners, with the largest numbers in engineering, vehicle engineering and construction. There is substantial higher education (HE) provision and the college is actively involved in initiatives to address the needs of school pupils aged 14 to 16, including disaffected pupils. The college recruits a higher than average proportion of students from disadvantaged areas. In 2002/03, there were 13,272 students enrolled, of whom 2,244 were full time and 11,028 part time. For the same period, there were around 22,000 enrolments for all qualifications. Around 16,000 of these were for students aged 19 and over.

City College is one of two general FE colleges within Coventry. There is also a specialist college for students with physical disabilities which recruits from across the country. There are a further three general FE colleges and one sixth form college in Warwickshire. There are two local universities and around 30 providers of work-based learning in Coventry and Warwickshire. Of the 56 schools in Coventry and Warwickshire, 38 have sixth forms.

In 2001/02, 71% of the college's students were white, 16% were from minority ethnic groups and the ethnic origin of 12% was unknown; 53% of students were male.

The college's mission is 'to respond to the diverse educational needs of our learners, to raise continuously the standard of our education and training services, and to take education further into our business and social communities'.

How effective is the college?



Inspectors judged the provision to be good in two curriculum areas and satisfactory in nine

Provision for adult students is often good. Work-based learning in automotive engineering is good and satisfactory in engineering, but in construction it is unsatisfactory.

Key strengths

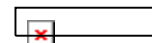
- the strong leadership by governors and senior managers
- personal support for students
- good accommodation and specialist resources
- good internal communications
- highly effective collaboration and partnerships
- the inclusive nature of the college's provision.

What should be improved

- students' pass and retention rates
- teaching in some curriculum areas
- the co-ordination of literacy and numeracy provision
- the consistency of application of college policies and procedures
- the sharing of good practice
- the use of value added measures.

Further aspects of provision requiring improvement are identified in the sections on individual subjects and courses in the full report.

Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas

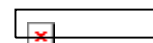


The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5).

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Science and mathematics	Unsatisfactory. Retention and pass rates on most of the courses are unsatisfactory. Some teaching and learning is good and engages students, but too many lessons lack activities to suit the range of students and there is little effective use of IT. Students benefit from a good learning environment and supportive teachers, but attendance and punctuality are often poor.
Construction	Unsatisfactory. Retention rates are often good, but pass rates are poor on level 1 and work-based learning programmes. There is a significant amount of poor teaching, individual learning plans are poorly written and used and students' literacy and numeracy needs are poorly addressed. Inadequate attention is paid to the health and safety of students. The management of work-based learning is unsatisfactory.
Engineering	Good. Teaching and learning are good. Students achieve good standards in their work, using high-quality specialist resources, and retention and pass rates are high. Students benefit through the effective partnerships with schools and industry. Work placements for work-based learners are good. Progress reviews for work-based learners are unsatisfactory.
Automotive engineering	Satisfactory. Teaching and learning for adult students and work-based learners are good, and significantly better than for full-time, college-based students aged 16 to 18. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but it is particularly good in practical workshop sessions and weaker in theory lessons. Retention and pass rates are satisfactory overall, but retention rates for work-based learners are good. Students attain good practical standards and there are very effective partnerships with local employers.
Business, management and professional studies	Satisfactory. There is much good teaching and learning and students are well supported. Students attain at least satisfactory standards in their work and make good progress, although pass rates on many courses are poor. Retention rates are satisfactory, but attendance is low. A wide range of provision effectively meets students' needs.
Information and communications technology	Satisfactory. There is a wide range of provision allowing good progression opportunities for students. Teaching is satisfactory and generally well planned, making effective use of high-quality resources. Students achieve satisfactory standards, pass rates are high on full-time courses at levels 2 and 3, but retention rates are often low.

	Support for students with additional learning needs is good. Full-time students have too few opportunities for work experience.
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Satisfactory. The teaching of practical skills is good, using good salon accommodation, and there is good additional training for beauty therapy students. Students attain satisfactory standards in their lessons, but pass and retention rates are low, although much improved in 2003. Attendance is low and is ineffectively monitored and addressed. Teachers effectively share good practice.
Health and social care and early years	Good. Good and wide ranging provision meets the needs of full-time and part-time students. Teaching and learning are very good, and support for students is good. Students make good progress, although some retention rates are low, but improving. Resources and assessment practices are satisfactory.
Art and design	Satisfactory. The quality of teaching is mixed, ranging from excellent to unsatisfactory. The standard of students' work is largely satisfactory. Retention and pass rates are satisfactory in most cases, with some high rates. Resources are generally good and are well used. There is a lack of rigour from curriculum managers in identifying strategies for improvement.
Performing arts, music and media	Satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good in the performing arts, but good practice between teachers is inadequately shared. Pass rates are good on some music technology and performing arts programmes, but retention rates on media courses are low. Students benefit from the high standard of music and multi-media specialist equipment. Students are well supported.
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	Satisfactory. Most teaching is at least satisfactory, but some lacks a suitable variety of teaching methods. Students develop good speaking and listening skills and are provided with very effective individual support. Target setting for some students is insufficient. The extensive range of courses and course options widens participation.
Literacy and numeracy	Satisfactory. The teaching of adults is good, making effective use of good specialist facilities. Achievement and standards are satisfactory, although attendance is too low. Individual learning plans are well used on programmes for adults, although the monitoring of students' progress on entry-to-employment (E2E) programmes is inadequate. Individual support for students is very effective on the E2E programme. Too few students identified with literacy and numeracy needs are provided with timely support.
English for speakers of other languages	Satisfactory. Teaching is often effective, but the needs of individual students are not sufficiently addressed in lessons or in action planning. Retention rates are high and pass rates are satisfactory, but attendance is poor. There is insufficient opportunity for students to progress, and gain English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) support, on other college programmes. Progress in implementing the new national standards is good.

How well is the college led and managed?



Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors and senior managers provide strong

structures have been established, and a clear sense of a single college has emerged. Staff morale is high. However, overall, the number of students successfully completing their courses is below the national average at all levels. Senior managers work well as a team and effective management at course level is developing. Some curriculum areas lack overall co-ordination or a strategic overview. Quality assurance arrangements are comprehensive, but the extent of their application varies across the schools. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report. Two of the curriculum areas inspected were judged to be unsatisfactory, so teaching improvement is appropriately the main thrust of professional development. Equality of opportunity is actively pursued. Financial management is effective and the college's financial position is satisfactory. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?

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The college's response to education and social inclusion is good. Many effective links to widen participation have been established. The percentage of students from minority ethnic groups matches their representation in the local community. The college has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy and action plan. It complies with, and has responded positively to, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. An effective equality and diversity group oversees the formulation of policy and monitors its impact. Data on the academic performance of different minority ethnic groups and economically disadvantaged groups are analysed thoroughly. The vast majority of students are able to follow their choice of courses and have good progression opportunities. The college is proactive in widening and increasing its community-based provision. It has responded positively to government initiatives for education for students aged 14 to 19 and is actively involved in local initiatives. The college provides satisfactory opportunities for students to develop literacy and numeracy skills. All sites have satisfactory access and facilities for people with restricted mobility.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?

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Guidance and support for students are satisfactory. There is effective pre-entry information and guidance in paper, including different languages, and web-based formats, but not CD-ROM, video or DVD. Gender stereotyping is evident in some publicity materials. Clear and full policies and procedures are in place to support students' applications, interviews and enrolment, dealing appropriately with students' additional learning needs. Initial assessment for literacy and numeracy needs is given to most full-time students, and in most schools the response is rapid and support is implemented. However, the uptake of support by those diagnosed as needing it is low and sometimes delayed. Induction is good for most students. Pastoral support, including group and individual tutorial provision, is good in most schools. In a minority, some support is ineffective due to the absence of lead progress tutors. The support of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Careers education and guidance is effective as is guidance on progression to employment and HE.

Students' views of the college

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Students' views about the college were taken into account and a summary of their main comments is presented below.

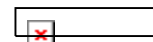
What students like about the college

- knowledgeable and approachable teachers
- helpful and friendly support staff
- the workshops and practical work areas
- good access to IT facilities
- the friendly college atmosphere
- the college's central location.

What they feel could be improved

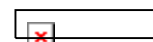
- the extent of use of IT in lessons
- opportunities for enrichment activities on courses
- the number of lockers
- car parking
- childcare facilities.

Other information



The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local LSC. The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC should send to Ofsted only action plans from colleges that have been judged inadequate or have been awarded a grade 4 or 5 for curriculum provision, work-based learning and/or leadership and management.

Part B: The college as a whole



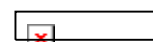
Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	57	29	14
19+ and WBL*	64	32	4
Learning 16-18	52	35	13
19+ and WBL*	67	30	3

Key: The range of grades includes: Excellent (Grade 1), Very Good (Grade 2), Good (Grade 3), Satisfactory (Grade 4), Unsatisfactory (Grade 5), Poor (Grade 6) and Very Poor (Grade 7).

**work-based learning*

Achievement and standards



1. City College Coventry has a large number of students from disadvantaged areas. Its performance is thus measured against other general FE colleges of a similar type. Aggregating the students' achievement data for the two predecessor colleges, for 1999 to 2002, shows that pass rates have declined overall at all levels with the exception of short courses for adult students. Data provided by the college, for 2003, the first year of data for the new college, demonstrate improvement in pass rates at levels 1 and 2 for all students. Aggregated data for 2001/02, and City College Coventry data for 2003, show that overall retention rates on level 1 courses have generally improved over the last three years and are around the national average for similar colleges. Retention rates overall, at level 2, remain around the national average, but retention rates on level 3 courses are in decline.

2. In 2001/02, pass rates, in most cases, were below national averages, although only significantly so for level 2 courses. Other than for this level, the college fell into the middle 50% of colleges for all levels and for all ages. Data for each of the predecessor colleges show that the number of students completing their courses and passing was generally at or above national averages for Tile Hill College, but had declined sharply at Coventry Technical College since 1999/2000. College data for 2003 show no consistent trend of improvement. Whilst overall pass rates at levels 1 and 2 have improved for students aged 16 to 18, they have declined at all levels for adult students.

3. The number of enrolments on college courses has decreased over the last two years from around 30,000 in 2001/02 to 21,623 in 2002/03. In 2001/02, 70% of enrolments were of students over the age of 19 and 72% of students studied part time. There is a significant amount of work-based learning provision in construction and engineering. Work-based learning opportunities are also provided in horticulture, business and healthcare. Almost all students on work-based programmes are foundation or advanced modern apprentices who are working towards National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and certification in key skills.

4. Pass and retention rates are monitored in a number of ways, including by area of learning, by level of course and by gender and ethnicity. The college has begun to implement systems to measure the performance of students in relation to their previous attainment, but this is very limited at present. Many of the current students have a relatively low level of previous attainment.

5. The pass rates on NVQ courses are low. The majority of student enrolments are at levels 1 and 2 where pass rates improved by almost 10% in 2003. At level 3, however, pass rates have continued to decline and were particularly poor in 2003 at 46%.

6. Around 500 enrolments are for General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary (GCE AS) courses. The overall pass rate on these courses is improving for adult students, but still remains below the national average. Pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 on these courses are low and have declined in 2003 to 48%. The proportion of all students achieving high grades (A to B) on these courses is poor. The pass rate for the small number of students on General Certificate of Education Advanced 2 (GCE A2) courses for adults is similar to that for students aged 16 to 18, at 78%. Approximately 200 students are enrolled on General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses. Pass rates are high, but the proportion of students achieving high-grade pass rates (grades A to C) for all subjects was just 45% in 2003. This is low and shows a decrease from 58% in the previous year.

7. Achievement of key skills qualifications in 2003 has improved from the previous year, but remains generally low at 38% overall.

8. The overall attendance rate in the lessons observed by inspectors was just above the national average at 77%. Attendance is good in engineering, automotive engineering, information and communications technology (ICT), health and social care, art and design and on programmes for students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is poor attendance of students in business, hairdressing and beauty therapy, literacy and numeracy and on ESOL programmes.

9. In all areas, with the exception of science and mathematics, the standard of work produced by students is at least satisfactory and many students make good progress. Students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities develop good speaking and listening skills in practical sessions. In engineering, students' practical and theoretical work is of a high standard. In health and social care, students are well motivated and they develop good personal and learning skills. Students' assignments are well presented in ICT. NVQ students on plumbing courses demonstrate good practical skills. Student work is of a particularly high standard in the motor vehicle restoration programmes. Students on the national diploma in fashion have been successful in the 'Clothes Show' competition for the last three years. The work-based learners on motor vehicle courses produce work of a high standard. The level of attainment in lessons is higher for adult students than that for students aged 16 to 18. In science and mathematics, many students are not working at the standard expected for their course of study.

16 to 18 year olds

10. Around 30% of enrolments in 2002/03 were for students aged 16 to 18. The aggregated retention rate at level 1, for students aged 16 to 18, improved significantly in 2002. The college retention rate for courses at this level, however, demonstrates a serious decline of 10 percentage points in 2003. The aggregated retention rate at level 2 has declined from around the national average in 2002 to 64% in 2003. At level 3, the retention rate has fallen from around the national average in 2001 to well below it in 2003, at 62%.

11. The aggregated pass rates at levels 1 and 2 were in decline in 2002, but have improved significantly to above the national average in 2003. At level 3, pass rates do not reflect the overall improvement in achievement nationally. The aggregated pass rates at this level for 2002 were low and have continued to decline, to 61% in 2003. Pass rates on short courses are also low and in decline.

12. Retention rates for students on work-based learning programmes are satisfactory overall, but very good on the public service vehicle programmes. Pass rates of modern apprenticeships are poor and average just 19% across all frameworks over the last five years, although there are many learners still in training. Many trainees make slow progress and take a very long time to complete their programmes. No learners in electrical installation have ever achieved the full framework.

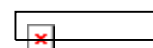
Adult learners

13. Adult students constitute the large majority of enrolments. The aggregated data for the two predecessor colleges show that retention rates of adult students at level 1 declined to below the national average in 2002. College data demonstrate significant improvement in retention rates at this level, to 73% in 2003. At levels 2 and 3, however, retention rates have declined dramatically from above the national average in 2002 to 69% and 65%, respectively, in 2003.

14. Pass rates on short courses have steadily improved to above the national average in 2002 and to 87% in 2003. There are excellent pass rates on a small number of specialist courses for employed students. More than 800 students enrolled on the cash transportation course at level 2 achieved a 100% pass rate in 2003. Pass rates on long courses, however, are in decline from around the national average in 2001 to 62% in 2003 at levels 1, 2 and 3.

15. Students who attend classes to improve their literacy and numeracy make satisfactory progress. The pass rate on the adult numeracy course is high. The current retention rate for the new E2E programme which began in 2003 is high. A significant number of students are enrolled on ESOL courses. There are good opportunities for these students to gain external accreditation, retention rates are high and pass rates are satisfactory at 66% in 2003.

Quality of education and training



16. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded in 249 lessons. Teaching was good or better in 59% of these, satisfactory in 30% and less than satisfactory in 10%. The respective percentages for learning are 58%, 33% and 9%. In 5 lessons, teaching was excellent and in 36 it was very good. Higher grades are similarly low for learning. The quality of teaching and learning is much the same as in the previous inspections of Tile Hill College and Coventry Technical College, undertaken by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), when 57% and 67%, respectively, of the lessons observed were considered to be better than satisfactory. Teaching and learning are better for adults than for students aged 16 to 18, at all levels of provision. The teaching in 64% of lessons for adults was good or better, compared with 57% in lessons for students aged 16 to 18. For the latter, 14% of

worse. Teaching and learning for work-based learners are often good, although this is less marked in hairdressing and beauty therapy. Students studying for entry level and level 2 courses benefit from the best teaching and receive the smallest amount of less than satisfactory teaching.

17. There are significant variations in the quality of teaching between curriculum areas. The best teaching is in health, social care and early years, engineering, literacy and numeracy and in business, where the amount of teaching which is better than satisfactory exceeds national averages. In construction and the performing arts, music and media, the proportion of teaching which is better than satisfactory is below national averages. In science and mathematics and construction, the proportions of unsatisfactory teaching are much greater than the national averages. Theory teaching in automotive engineering is markedly worse than practical teaching.

18. The more effective lessons are the product of careful planning. In engineering, for example, schemes of work and lesson plans are well designed and include challenging tasks and in health and social care, teachers incorporate relevant theoretical and practical activities that meet both students' and course needs. Teachers are clear about what they want their students to achieve by the end of the lesson and determine a structure and content to facilitate this. In literacy and numeracy and ICT, learning objectives are well matched to students' individual learning plans. Enthusiastic teachers, most evident in engineering and business, stimulate and motivate students to be involved and to understand. Teachers give good attention to meeting the learning needs of all students and use strategies to accommodate their different abilities and experiences. They regularly check students' understanding and, as in business studies, use regular questioning to extend and reinforce learning and to check students' understanding. The teaching of practical skills in engineering and automotive engineering is good.

19. The less successful lessons are insufficiently planned and teachers do not always apply some of the basic principles of sound teaching. In the poorest lessons, students are not given clear aims and objectives. Teachers talk too much and pay too little attention to matching teaching to the needs of students. This is marked in much of the construction teaching, where students in theory lessons spend too much time copying from the board or overhead projector images. Teachers are too often unimaginative in their attempts to gain and maintain the interest of students. In theory lessons in automotive engineering, for example, students are insufficiently engaged and are not fully involved, and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, teachers use an inadequate variety of teaching methods. Checking students' understanding through questioning is insufficiently rigorous. In many lessons there is little use of IT, both by students and teachers.

20. The teaching of key skills is largely satisfactory, although not sufficiently integrated with the students' main vocational programme. In some lessons obvious opportunities for integration are missed. Attendance in some key skills lessons is low. The overall co-ordination and monitoring of the adequacy and quality of this provision is underdeveloped.

21. The college has satisfactory staffing levels. Most teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. Of the full-time staff, 75% hold a recognised teaching qualification and 85% have a degree or relevant professional qualification. For part-time teachers the respective figures are 39% and 80%. In most vocational areas, teachers bring a high level of current industry knowledge to their teaching. There are 13 advanced practitioners working in 8 of the schools. Teaching and learning mentors are used effectively in all schools. No curriculum inspectors identified weaknesses in the provision of technicians. There is a shortage of suitably experienced administrative support staff in some outreach centres. A good continuing professional development system, for permanent and substantive part-time teachers, is strongly linked to the college's training needs planning cycle. Teachers are actively encouraged and supported to update their specialist skills with good access to staff development opportunities. In some areas, such as engineering, strong partnerships with industry support their development.

22. Since the new college was created, there have been significant improvements to accommodation. Across all curriculum areas it is attractive, clean and well-maintained. The majority of classrooms at the three main sites are pleasant, well decorated and well furnished. Despite the college's overcapacity of classroom space, rooms are not always put to best use. There are a few cramped classrooms and some unsuitable rooms, hindering effective teaching and learning.

Accommodation at the outreach centres, such as the Indian community centre and the Gosford Asian centre, is largely satisfactory. At the main college sites, security staff and wardens help to maintain a secure, safe and welcoming environment. All sites have satisfactory access and facilities for people with restricted mobility.

23. Facilities for practical work are very good in several curriculum areas, with a good range of specialist resources, providing students with realistic environments for acquiring vocational skills. There are excellent resources in the electronic, motor vehicle and public service vehicle workshops. Specialist resources for hair and beauty, and art and design are good. The laboratory and teaching accommodation in the sciences and mathematics area is very good. There is a high standard of specialist equipment in the music and multi-media studios. Most workshops in construction are good.

24. There are sufficient up-to-date computers for students, with the computer to full-time equivalent student ratio being 1:4.8. Most teachers have access to shared computers in staff rooms. In addition to these, there are also significant numbers of stand-alone, laptop or networked computers supporting specialist areas. Open access computers are available at all main college centres. A college-wide network links the three centres for e-mail, file storage, management information, Internet and intranet access. Ceiling-mounted digital projectors and interactive whiteboards have been installed in most curriculum areas. The college libraries and learning resource centres at the Butts and Tile Hill centres have good stocks of learning and teaching material including a wide range of CD-ROMS, DVDs and video tapes. Both libraries are bright and spacious with good and accessible provision for private study. Library opening hours provide satisfactory access for students.

25. Catering facilities at the three centres are good and well used. Recreational facilities at Tile Hill are good with a well-equipped sports hall and social areas. There are no sporting facilities at the Butts and the Maxwell centres. The Butts centre has a full production theatre. There is a college nursery at Tile Hill, but there is no suitable space for one at the Butts Centre.

26. Comprehensive college assessment procedures are well documented. These include a college charter which sets out standards of service, and a range of handbooks that serve to standardise assessment practices. A series of cross-college working groups have been established to address assessment and verification issues and share good practice.

27. Initial assessment takes place during induction to identify students' learning needs. In some curriculum areas, the results of initial assessment are detailed and the learning support provided to students is good. This is particularly evident in ESOL and literacy and numeracy where good use is made of the information to inform teaching and learning plans. However, there is some ineffective use of the results of initial assessment to enable teachers to meet the needs of hairdressing and beauty students and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

28. The college's 'learner management weeks' provide an effective focus for the discussion of students' progress and assessment, embracing workshops and group or individual tutorials. Teachers provide opportunities for students to gain additional help about assessment. Most written and oral feedback on students' work, as in construction and ICT, is constructive and gives helpful guidance on what they need to do to improve their work. In some areas, such as science and mathematics and art and design, feedback is not developmental and does not inform improvement.

29. The college has systems for monitoring students' individual progress towards learning goals, but these are not applied consistently across all curriculum areas. Therefore, whilst students' performance is carefully tracked and monitored by teachers and progress tutors in engineering and hairdressing and beauty, in construction and ESOL progress reviews are weak. Teachers do not set specific targets that have any impact on course or lesson planning. The college does not make effective use of systems to set targets and monitor the progress of students based on their achievement on entry to their course.

30. Most assessment is rigorous and meets awarding body requirements. The reports from both internal and external verifiers confirm that assessment is appropriate and thorough, for example, in

business and health and social care. There are some weaknesses in assessment practice in construction, where insufficient staffing to effectively assess and manage internal verification has led to sanctions by the awarding body. Procedures for ensuring that external verifiers' reports are monitored and acted upon are sound. In instances where performance has been less than satisfactory, effective corrective action, with monitoring by managers, has been introduced.

31. The planning of courses and programmes are satisfactory. Comprehensive college-wide curriculum planning provides a suitable framework, within which curriculum groups effectively manage the delivery of the curriculum. There is, however, a lack of overall co-ordination of ICT short course provision. The college has a recently revised key skills strategy which is now being implemented, but is not yet fully embedded in some schools.

32. The college offers a good range of courses from pre-entry to Higher National Diploma (HND) level for many students, with good student progression. The vast majority of students are able to follow their choice of courses, but there are some gaps. In performing arts, there is an insufficient range of provision to support widening participation and ESOL students have limited progression opportunities and there are no specific courses for students aged 16 to 18. There is no level 1 provision for full-time students aged 16 to 18 in art and design, science and mathematics and the performing arts.

33. The college has developed effective links to widen participation. There are 13 outreach centres from which 'bite-size' courses are offered across the city. The college is focused on meeting the needs of under-represented students. For example, it provides effective support for minority ethnic females through an African Caribbean women's refuge centre and an Indian community centre. It has recently become involved in an Asian mental health project and developed 'Pathways' for single parents. It provides support and guidance for young people who have left care and are moving into independence and works closely with the probationary service to provide basic skills, ESOL and ICT at local recruitment agency.

34. The college has responded positively to government initiatives for provision for young people aged 14 to 19. It is an active partner in a large collaborative partnership to regenerate an area north of the city to meet the needs of inner city students, working closely with the city council, hospital trust, primary care trust and Coventry University. It has senior representation on the 'strategic forum', concerned with local provision for young people aged 14 to 24. It has developed a number of initiatives with the local education authority and schools, including accredited work-related learning opportunities and progression for young people aged 14 to 16, working with gifted and talented pupils, developing a multi-skill programme for low achievers and providing a pupil referral unit for excluded Key Stage 3 pupils. Partnerships with schools last year provided 238 pupils with the opportunity to attend careers taster sessions, with around 60% subsequently enrolling on college courses. The college is working effectively with local universities and is involved with 'Partners for Progression' to increase HE participation rates.

35. Partnerships with local employers are very effective, especially within engineering, vehicle maintenance and construction. The college has been particularly successful in developing and delivering programmes of education and training for large corporate clients in the motor vehicle sector and the college has a strong collaborative partnership with another college to deliver engineering programmes for an international car manufacturer at a new local car plant. Industry-related enrichment activities are underdeveloped in ICT, where there is no work experience for full-time students.

36. Effective pre-entry information gives students clear and full advice and guidance about college courses and admissions. Different languages are used to address community needs, including those of the increasing numbers of asylum seekers. The information is in paper and website form, but excludes other electronic media such as CD-ROM, video tape and DVD. Gender stereotyping exists in images used to portray course information.

37. Clear and comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to assist staff in the application, interview, enrolment and induction phases. Proforma used in applying and interviewing refer effectively to determining students' additional learning needs. Documentation on students' support,

students' profiles, progress tutors, action planning, learner support fund and HE is clear and detailed. Student services location, accommodation, resources and staffing are good. However, there is limited provision available at the outreach centres. Learner support fund claims are managed well and most are responded to rapidly. However, there are inconsistencies across college for a few students accessing financial support, leading to some delays and frustrations.

38. Students' induction is good and a useful experience for most. For a minority, it is inappropriate and part-time students receive a limited version. There is centre-based provision of childcare during induction week. The induction week is the first of five 'learner management' weeks held each year. These provide good opportunities for individual students plan production, one-to-one tutorials, progress reviews and action planning. In most schools, there are extra opportunities for trips and enrichment which are enjoyed by the students. The use and effectiveness of these weeks are inconsistent across college. Whilst most schools stop the main curriculum and fully engage in the weeks, others do not provide this support and enrichment to students.

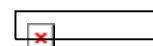
39. Policies and procedures for the tutorial system are clear and often effectively implemented by lead progress tutors and progress tutors. There are inconsistencies in the implementation of both group and individual tutorials, which the college is aware of through a thorough audit of tutorials. Some lead progress tutors have not yet been appointed and this prevents the provision of a full tutorial programme.

40. Approximately 75% of full-time students were initially assessed in literacy and numeracy in 2002/03 and 90% in 2003/04. There are inconsistencies in the quality of provision and the timeliness of additional learning support in response to the needs identified. In most schools, additional support is rapidly provided and closely monitored, but only 32% of students needing support receive it directly from the school of skills development. In some cases, support has not started until November or December, for students starting courses in September. Subject teachers provide extra support to students through additional classes and workshops. There are effective report card systems in place in some schools to improve students' attendance, punctuality and attitude.

41. The specialist support needs of students are well met. Expert staff are well qualified and experienced, especially in the areas of hearing and visual impairment, and are readily available. For example, a visually impaired student received good and sensitive support through an enabler and the class teacher and was able to participate fully in a group activity. Specialist equipment is readily to hand or quickly obtained. Provision to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, which includes the engagement of other agencies involved in supporting students. There is close liaison with the specialist Hereward College, whose students join mainstream college programmes. There is no childcare provision at the Butts Centre, but students are assisted to find appropriate facilities.

42. Careers advice and guidance are good and external experts are brought in to talk about jobs and HE courses. Links with the Connexions Service are effective. It has its own base in the college and works closely with the student services unit on induction and tutorials as well as supporting individual students.

Leadership and management



43. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors and senior managers provide strong leadership and a clear strategic direction for the college. The merger of Coventry Technical College with Tile Hill College has been effectively and successfully completed. Careful attention has been given to the financial, curricular and personnel aspects of the merger prior to the legal establishment of the new City College in February 2002. Much has been achieved in a short time. Provision has been effectively organised across the two centres, a new staffing and management structure has

plan was carefully monitored by a group comprising senior college managers and officers from the LSC. Governors have worked closely with senior managers to plan the merged provision and closely evaluated the plan's completion. Communication has been good and consultation with staff and stakeholders has been thorough. Staff morale is high.

44. Senior managers work well as a team, with the principal providing clear leadership. Effective arrangements for managing the curriculum and reporting have been established. Many programme and course managers are recently in post or have extended or changed responsibilities. The inspection revealed many organised teams already working well. Communication within schools was identified as good in most curriculum areas, with regular well-minuted meetings. Meetings deal effectively with issues to do with teaching and learning. A computerised system for tracking students' progress provides a detailed focus for good course management in engineering, and on hairdressing courses teachers track course units through a well-developed intranet programme. In provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, part-time staff are particularly well involved in all the area's activities and in business two large teams have been successfully amalgamated into a single effective unit. In construction, however, there is weak management of work-based learning and internal verification. There is inadequate co-ordination of both literacy and numeracy, and ICT provision across the college. Responsibility for management, in both cases, is dispersed across the schools and the school of skills development. This has resulted in a low student take up of additional support in some schools. ESOL courses lack a strategic overview. In performing arts, the resources and accommodation are inefficiently managed. In a number of curriculum areas, like hairdressing and beauty, business and learning difficulties and/or disabilities, good practice is effectively shared and developed by teachers within teams, but in others like engineering and ICT it is not fully exploited.

45. Appropriate arrangements for monitoring and assessing quality are in place, but their impact on teaching, learning and achievement are as yet unsure. The number of students successfully completing their courses in 2003, the college's first year, were below national averages at all three levels. The college's second self-assessment report is a thorough and accurate review of its performance and successfully identifies strengths and weaknesses. Senior managers contribute to the validation of college self-assessment reports. Rigorous analysis and assessment resulted in construction provision being judged unsatisfactory, with which inspectors agreed.

46. A range of surveys and forums, collecting student's views on teaching and learning, are used by managers to inform decisions on provision. At course level, in a number of curriculum areas, however, insufficient attention is given to students' pass and retention rates in making judgements about quality. Attendance is ineffectually monitored in a number of areas, and in others there is weak action planning. The college has appointed 13 advanced practitioners whose roles are to support individual teachers and focus attention on teaching improvement. Where these are in place, there are overt initiatives for the development of classroom practice and a closer monitoring of performance, but as yet no overall college wide improvement is discernible. In time it is intended that there should be 30 such appointments. Teaching has been observed externally and graded. These grades are close to those awarded during the inspection, which were near to the average for general FE colleges. Governors systematically and closely monitor course performance in terms of pass and retention rates, and attendance, in their quality and performance committee. This committee's work is becoming increasingly effective.

47. Equality of opportunity is actively pursued. An effective equality and diversity group oversees the formulation of policy and monitors its impact. Good practice in pursuit of equality was identified in ICT, with a poster campaign and sensitivity to the religious needs of minority ethnic groups, and in business where the school analyses ethnicity and gender data and effectively relates it to pass and retention rates. In health and social care, equality and diversity issues are well integrated into teaching learning and assessment. In engineering, equality issues are fully discussed during induction, but not reinforced as the courses progress. The college is in compliance with its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. An effective race equality plan is in place and many staff are trained in its implementation. All staff will be trained on a staff development day in December 2003. The progress of the plan in its first year has been reviewed and results published to the governors. The entry and progress of minority ethnic students is monitored centrally and the results analysed at a range of levels. Good progress has been made in the implementation of

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA). Staff have been trained and procedures for eliminating discriminatory practice in admissions, enrolments and teaching are being developed. Procedures to anticipate the needs of students with learning difficulties/and or disabilities are in place. Governors are involved in monitoring this progress.

48. The main thrust of staff development is the improvement of teaching and learning. Full-time teachers and those with substantial part-time contracts undertake continuous professional development. Teachers with the support of their mentors draw up an individual training needs plan. Progress on this plan is reviewed annually. The majority of staff actively pursue professional development. Lead progress tutors, advanced practitioners, mentors, and e-learning champions provide effective support to teachers in their training and teaching. A programme to increase the number of qualified teachers is underway. The new college was accredited as an Investor in People in February 2003.

49. The college has a wide and diverse range of links with local and national employers. Particularly strong are links with the motor industry which have led to considerable sponsorship of equipment and accommodation. Effective links with childcare and health providers result in a breadth of work experience placement provision. Active employer liaison committees in most vocational areas provide a focus for the college's response to local employment needs. Links with local schools are good. The college works particularly well with the community. Noteworthy are a number of projects which serve the minority ethnic population.

50. Management information is increasingly accurate and available in the college. However, it is not used effectively by all curriculum managers in planning their provision. In business, there is evidence of useful analysis, but in hairdressing and beauty, art and design, and ESOL accurate data are not used to describe performance. In some instances, data in the self-assessment report differ from those held in the curriculum area and used by managers. Financial management is effective. The college is planning to further reduce the proportion of its income spent on staffing against the background of excess accommodation costs inherited at merger. The college's financial position is satisfactory. Class sizes are at the national average and staff are generally efficiently deployed. Whilst pass and retention rates were below national averages overall in 2002/03, it is clear from the teaching observed during the inspection that the college provides satisfactory value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas

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Science and mathematics

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Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- high quality laboratory and classroom accommodation

- flexible access to HE courses

- good specialist support for students.

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates
- low retention rates
- a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching
- lack of punctuality and poor attendance by many students aged 16 to 18.

Scope of provision

51. Courses include daytime GCSE provision of biology, physics, chemistry and mathematics and evening provision of single science and mathematics. GCE AS subjects include mathematics, chemistry, physics and biology during the day and human biology, mathematics (pure) and mathematics (applied) in the evenings. At GCE A2, there is a small programme of chemistry and biology during the day and human biology in the evening. The day-time provision is mainly for students aged 16 to 18 and the majority of evening classes attract adult students. The access to HE programme offers a wide-range of options, on a full-time and part-time basis, for adult students. There are around 400 enrolments on the GCE and GCSE courses and nearly 200 on the access certificate programme. There is no vocational or level 1 provision.

Achievement and standards

52. Pass rates are very low on the GCE AS mathematics, chemistry, biology and physics courses, the GCE A2 chemistry and biology courses and the Access programmes. The only courses with pass rates close to the national averages are those for GCE A2 in mathematics and human biology and for GCSE mathematics. Retention rates are low for GCSE mathematics, GCE AS mathematics, physics, chemistry, GCE A2 biology and both of the Access programmes. Only GCE AS chemistry, biology, GCE A2 biology (human) and mathematics have retention rates close to national averages. Many students aged 16 to 18 arrive late and attendance at many lessons is low, especially for the early part of the academic year when the inspection took place.

53. Students are competent in practical lessons and they are aware of the essential health and safety issues. In some lessons, however, students struggle to understand basic concepts, they make slow progress and do not work at a standard appropriate to the level of their course.

A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	92	89	121

		% retention	55	49	60
		% pass rate	53	73	68
GCE AS mathematics	3	No. of starts	19	31	37
		% retention	53	77	70
		% pass rate	70	29	15
GCE AS chemistry	3	No. of starts	19	*	15
		% retention	74	*	80
		% pass rate	64	*	25
GCE AS human biology	3	No. of starts	13	26	24
		% retention	77	77	88
		% pass rate	60	65	38
Access to science, health and social studies (1 year)	3	No. of starts	41	46	86
		% retention	59	83	60
		% pass rate	57	42	48
Access to science, health and social studies (2 year)	3	No. of starts	36	32	59
		% retention	53	75	68
		% pass rate	93	77	41

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

* fewer than 15 students enrolled

Quality of education and training

54. A high proportion of teaching is unsatisfactory. Students are often content to be passive in lessons and teachers allow them to be, failing to encourage them to participate. In the least effective lessons, teaching is dull and insufficiently challenging for students. There is little variety in the teaching methods used and limited opportunity for students to be actively involved in group work or discussion. Too many lessons involve students in excessive copying of examples from the board with insufficient explanation or demonstration. In some lessons, teachers do not vary their approach sufficiently to meet the needs of individual students and there is insufficient checking of students' understanding. Too little use is made of ICT, learning resources or practical demonstrations to enhance students' understanding in these lessons.

55. In the more successful lessons, teachers facilitate learning by planning the lively engagement of their students using a variety of theoretical, practical, individual and pair or group work. Students enjoy these lessons and make good progress. For example, in one practical lesson, the teacher made good use of a digital microscope to enhance students' understanding of theory by enabling them to actually see a real image of cell division.

56. Teachers are experienced and appropriately qualified in their specialist subjects. Most engage in a range of relevant professional development activities. The students benefit from working in a very good learning environment. The laboratories and classrooms are bright, spacious and contain plentiful storage facilities and equipment. Some rooms have video and interactive white boards and all rooms have Internet access. However, as yet, little use is made of these facilities. There is an adequate range and quantity of books in the library, but there are limited journals for use by science and mathematics staff and students.

57. Students receive good specialist support from their teachers. They provide drop-in workshops and extra lessons to help students make better progress or to catch up on missed work. Teachers also give freely of their time to assist students. Students' work is generally assessed regularly and

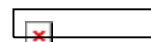
teachers provide full, positive and constructive feedback to aid improvement. Some summative feedback given to students, however, is neither supportive nor helpful and occasionally is non-existent. Assessment and internal verification processes on the access course are effective.

58. The access to HE programme provides particularly flexible study opportunities for adults. Offered in science and health and social studies it is available as both a full-time and a part-time course and students can attend at times which are convenient to them. Students are able to study applied science, mathematics, biology and human biology.

Leadership and management

59. Leadership of science and mathematics is satisfactory. The self-assessment report is comprehensive, detailed and generally accurate in identifying strengths and weaknesses. The grading of specific aspects of the provision, however, is overgenerous. Relevant action has been identified to improve issues such as students' attendance and punctuality. The organisation and management of courses are satisfactory. Some policies to improve students' performance have not been fully implemented, including work on measuring value added, observation of lessons by advanced practitioners, staff appraisal and student target setting.

Construction



Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- high retention rates on many courses
- good progression of students
- accurate and rigorous self-assessment.

Weaknesses

- low pass rates for work-based learning
- unsatisfactory teaching and assessment practice
- poor health and safety practices

- inadequate support for students with additional learning needs
- poor use of individual learning plans.

Scope of provision

60. There is a wide range of courses available. The college offers foundation, intermediate and advanced level programmes for craft and technician students. These include City and Guilds, NVQ programmes and modern apprenticeships for work-based learners. Courses are also offered for key stage 4 school pupils, national certificate, national diploma and the Institute of Builders' examinations. Current programmes include trowel occupations, carpentry and bench joinery, plumbing, painting and decorating, electrical installation and plastering. At the time of inspection, there were 689 students of whom 301 were aged 16 to 18 and 388 were adults. Of these, there were 108 employed modern apprentices and 40 students aged 14 to 16.

Achievement and standards

61. Levels of student retention are high on many courses. Over the past three years, retention rates have been consistently above the national averages, in particular the NVQ level 2 in bricklaying which is 54 percentage points above. Pass rates, however, are low on some courses, particularly on the intermediate craft award. The replacement of NVQs with new college-based construction awards in 2002/03 has improved the achievement of students on level 1 courses.

62. The overall completion of modern apprenticeship frameworks is low. Of 306 starters since 1998, only 60 have completed the full framework. No learners in electrical installation have achieved the full framework since 1998. Retention rates on work-based learning programmes are satisfactory with 69% of starters remaining until the end of their programme.

63. Levels of attainment are satisfactory in most practical sessions. They are best for adults and for work-based learners. Plumbing NVQ students demonstrate good practical skills in copper bending and working with gas appliances. Students' portfolios in plumbing are of good quality and contain a wide range of evidence. The standard of students' work in the workplace is at least satisfactory.

64. Students often progress through the wide range of college courses, from craft to technician studies, and make good progress to HE. For example, in 2003, all five students who completed the national diplomas in construction and civil engineering went on to HE and, in 2002, all eight went to university.

A sample of retention and pass rates in construction, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
NVQ in wood occupations	1	No. of starts	50	36	*
		% retention	60	92	*
		% pass rate	94	36	*
NVQ in bricklaying	2	No. of starts	41	49	26
		% retention	37	76	96
		% pass rate	74	44	73

Intermediate construction certificate	2	No. of starts	**	42	21
		% retention	**	60	62
		% pass rate	**	8	0
NVQ mechanical engineering services plumbing	2	No. of starts	93	44	23
		% retention	44	89	70
		% pass rate	95	56	100
AVCE (double award) in construction	3	No. of starts	21	17	**
		% retention	95	82	**
		% pass rate	80	72	**

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

* course did not run

** fewer than 15 students enrolled

Quality of education and training

65. The standards of teaching, training and assessment are unsatisfactory. In the weakest lessons, teachers do not plan effectively, lesson objectives are unclear, and there is insufficient monitoring of students' learning and little assessment. For example, in one lesson which was poorly planned, the teacher failed to check students' understanding of specialist vocabulary when explaining the effect of pollutants. This led to students becoming confused and disengaged and the majority failed to contribute or to improve their understanding. In theory lessons, students spend too long on low level tasks such as copying notes from the board or the overhead projector.

66. In the well-planned lessons, teachers meet the needs of individual students well. Good use is made of a range of resources, including technicians, to enhance students' learning. Teachers demonstrate their subject expertise well in successfully linking theory to practical applications to enhance students' learning.

67. The standard of discipline in some lessons is poor and teachers often fail to challenge inappropriate behaviour. In some practical classes, students do not adhere to the required health and safety practices for workshops and this is not challenged or well monitored by staff.

68. There have been some improvements to the accommodation since the time of the last inspection. Most workshops are sufficiently large and have good resource rooms for students to research information and carry out theory work. Some accommodation is unsatisfactory. The gas training classroom and the plastering workshop are too small. Work-based assessors and reviewers are vocationally competent and experienced, but there is no qualified assessor in plastering.

69. Some aspects of assessment are satisfactory. Schemes of work are shared with employers and there are regular visits by tutors for work-based assessment. However, there is little evidence of assessment planning and employers are dissatisfied with the assessment process. Because of poor verification and assessment practice, assessment sanctions by the awarding body are in place in carpentry and joinery and plastering.

70. The use of individual learning plans is poor and teachers do not ensure that these are regularly updated. Progress reviews are weak, failing to set targets and accurately record progress towards qualifications. Exceptionally, there is good tracking of learners' progress in plumbing. Work-based learners receive detailed and constructive feedback from teachers on their portfolios. Assignments undertaken by national diploma students are also assessed well.

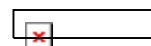
71. There is inadequate support for students with additional needs. The approach to initial assessment is unsystematic and the outcomes are not efficiently communicated to vocational

teachers. Students often receive undifferentiated support which is not related to their individual needs. For example, one student gained high marks in the numeracy assessment and by far the lowest in literacy, but there was no recognition of this in the learning plan.

Leadership and management

72. A new management team have carried out an accurate self-assessment of provision and have identified the relevant actions required. Recent action to improve communication, develop key skills materials and redevelop workshops has been successful. Progress in improving other identified issues has been slow. There is unsatisfactory management of health and safety within workshops. The progress of work-based learners is slow. Management of work-based learning is unsatisfactory with over 50% of reviews behind schedule. Those that have taken place have been poorly carried out and inadequately documented. There is insufficient support for the many newly appointed teachers.

Engineering



Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- high retention and pass rates
- good teaching and learning
- high standard of specialist resources
- effective partnerships with schools and industry
- good work placements for work-based learners
- very good progress monitoring system for work-based learners.

Weaknesses

- lack of sharing of good practice

- unsatisfactory progress reviews for work-based learners.

Scope of provision

73. The college offers full-time and part-time courses on two sites, at levels 2 and 3. The level 1 course was not offered at the time of the inspection. Courses in production, manufacturing and maintenance are available at level 2. Level 3 courses are provided in mechanical, electrical and telecommunications engineering. Aerospace programmes and technical certificates are provided for work-based learners. A work-based learning programme delivers modern apprenticeship training for local companies. In larger companies, apprentices attend the college full-time for the first year. Assessment is carried out in modern apprentices' workplaces. There are 214 students on college-based courses, of whom 64% are adults. There are 23 students on the first diploma course in engineering, 83 on national certificate in manufacturing engineering, 22 on the national certificate in electrical/electronic engineering and 28 on the computer-aided design course. Some 147 students are on part-time courses, including the 129 work-based learners, and the majority are students aged 16 to 18.

Achievement and standards

74. Student retention rates are high. There are good retention rates on the national certificate in electrical engineering, the national certificate mechanical, manufacturing and in two-dimensional, computer-aided design. Retention rates are unsatisfactory in three-dimensional, computer-aided design and on the first diploma in engineering. Pass rates are excellent, compared with the national average, on all courses with the exception of the national certificate in mechanical, manufacturing, where they are good.

A sample of retention and pass rates in engineering, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
First diploma engineering	2	No. of starts	21	23	15
		% retention	86	87	73
		% pass rate	39	80	100
National certificate electrical engineering	3	No. of starts	18	15	17
		% retention	76	73	94
		% pass rate	92	82	100
National certificate engineering	3	No. of starts	35	19	34
		% retention	83	85	76
		% pass rate	92	95	96

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

Quality of education and training

75. All teaching is satisfactory or better and the majority is good. Schemes of work are well designed. Lessons are well planned and many include challenging tasks for students. Teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects. Students make good progress in lessons and receive good support from teachers. Teachers make effective use of ILT, in particular electronic whiteboards, powerpoint presentations and simulation packages.

76. In one effective lesson, the teacher carefully linked the study of manufacturing and business cost to a production application. The lesson was well planned and good use was made of well-designed paper-based and electronic learning materials. Students were well motivated and completed the spreadsheet tasks successfully. They gained a good understanding about controlling the costs in the production of materials.

77. There is too little sharing of good practice in teaching and learning. The skills and techniques, particularly in lesson presentation and use of learning resources are not consistent across the school.

78. Students receive effective guidance from experienced teachers, most of whom have relevant vocational experience. The staff have good, practical knowledge of the industry. The engineering accommodation and resources are of a high standard, including the very good practical workshop facilities. The excellent links with employers are reflected in the wide range of modern equipment available to students.

79. Assignments are well designed. Students make good use of computers and computer simulations in completing and testing their work. Teachers work closely with students and their employers when preparing individual learning plans, including workplace training plans. Effective use is made of an innovative electronic system for monitoring the progress of work-based learners, designed in collaboration with a large multinational company. The system has been extended to include information about students' progress towards completion of their NVQ course. The system is used well by staff in college and in the workplace. In work-based learning, one of the assessors is an external verifier for a large awarding body. However, the degree of planning of the training process in the workplace and the use of assessment practices varies from employer to employer.

80. There are productive links with schools to promote engineering courses and extend opportunities for students aged 14 to 16 through the increased flexibility programme. Students benefit from the close links with large multinational industrial organisations, including major motor manufacturers, and a number of industry personnel contribute to courses directly. The majority of students, and especially work-based learners, benefit from good work placements, often in large international companies who have a strong commitment to training. Students are able to undertake an extensive range of activities and they make good progress towards developing the range of skills required by the modern apprenticeship frameworks.

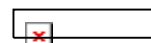
81. Progress reviews for work-based learners are unsatisfactory. Employers are insufficiently involved in the progress reviews. Other than in the largest employers, supervisors often agree reviews without agreeing the targets. Short-term achievable targets for work-based learners are often not specific. Previous targets are not always revisited at each review, and learners are not challenged if targets are not met. Equality of opportunity is not sufficiently reinforced at all reviews.

Leadership and management

82. Leadership and management are good. Roles and responsibilities are clear. Action planning is effective and managers have been successful in raising retention and pass rates in most areas since the new college was created. Equality of opportunity is insufficiently promoted. There has been little training for staff and the subject is not proactively addressed in lessons or in the work-based learning reviews. Overall, staff training needs are identified, and there is appropriate staff development, with good opportunities for teachers to learn from industry.

83. Teachers are involved in self-assessment and understand the importance of improving the quality of what they do, although there is a need to improve the sharing of their good practices. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report.

Automotive engineering



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **good (grade 2)**

Strengths

- very good retention rates on work-based learning programmes
- the wide range of practical skills taught
- well-planned work-based learning
- excellent workshop resources
- highly effective formative assessment
- very good industrial partnerships.

Weaknesses

- low retention rate of students on most full-time courses
- unsatisfactory theory teaching
- inadequate additional support for students
- ineffective staff appraisal
- insufficient sharing of good practice.

Scope of provision

84. At the time of the inspection, 389 students were on motor vehicle programmes. There were 243 students aged 16 to 18 and the remainder were adults. Within these numbers, 188 learners were on work-based learning programmes. Programmes include motor vehicle repair and servicing, motor vehicle body repair and paint, public service vehicle repair and maintenance and motor vehicle craft courses. Advanced modern apprenticeships and foundation apprenticeships are offered. All apprentices are employed by one of the 79 employers involved. NVQs at levels 1, 2 and 3 are also offered. Of the motor vehicle students enrolled, 18 are female and 12% are from minority ethnic groups.

Achievement and standards

85. Retention rates are very good on work-based learning programmes. On the mechanical programmes, of those who started their programmes since 2002, 93% are still in training; it is 95% for electrical programmes and 90% for body repair programmes. Work-based learners make very good progress through their framework and produce work of a high standard. Workplace supervisors, in companies recognised for their high engineering standards, praise the standard of students' work.

86. Retention rates are low for most full-time courses, with rates mostly below national averages. Retention rates on the repair and servicing of motor vehicles courses, at NVQ levels 2 and 3, are significantly below national averages. Pass rates on most programmes are satisfactory and generally around the national averages.

87. Students develop a wide range of practical skills, including welding techniques, vehicle body fabrication and components assembly skills. Students on the motor vehicle restoration programmes produce work of a particularly high standard.

A sample of retention and pass rates in automotive engineering, 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2003
City and Guilds 3980-1 vehicle body competencies	1	No. of starts	25
		% retention	72
		% pass rate	55
City and Guilds 3992 motor vehicle repair and maintenance	2	No. of starts	23
		% retention	26
		% pass rate	83
City and Guilds 3810 motor vehicle craft studies	3	No. of starts	19
		% retention	84
		% pass rate	38

Source: college (2003), merged college data for 2001 and 2002 were not used for this curriculum area

Quality of education and training

88. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is much better for adult students and for work-based learners than for college-based students aged 16 to 18. There is good teaching in practical workshops. Small group sizes enable students to receive frequent and effective one-to-one tuition. Teachers often

successfully link theory and practical work. In one lesson, the teacher effectively planned a theory lesson on vehicle systems so that it was interspersed with visits into the mechanical workshop, for practical demonstration and component identification. The students made good use of the learning resources and contributed well to the discussion which was facilitated effectively by the teacher.

89. The teaching of theory is often less than satisfactory. In these lessons, students are insufficiently challenged and some are not fully involved in discussions or group activities. Learning resources are of poor quality in most theory lessons. Teachers fail to test the knowledge or understanding of students sufficiently. In one poorly planned lesson, the learning objectives were not made clear to students. The teacher used overhead projector transparencies that were unclear and difficult to read. Students were not fully engaged and unable to participate as the lesson was teacher dominated.

90. Work-based learning is well planned. A detailed programme of learning is agreed with employers and includes a wide-range of specialist tasks for students. Work activities are regularly well monitored by workplace mentors and supervisors.

91. Employers provide a range of additional qualifications and training for students including public services vehicle (PSV) driver licences and programmes covering disability awareness and dealing with conflict. Employers frequently visit the students at college to discuss and review their progress.

92. There are excellent resources in the motor vehicle and electronic workshops including interactive equipment and software for developing electronic circuitry and fault diagnostic techniques. In the motor vehicle and PSV workshops, equipment and vehicles are of a high specification. A wide-range of pre-production motor vehicles have also been donated by local manufacturers. A few classrooms are cramped and unsuitable for the size of groups who use them. Teachers are well qualified and vocationally experienced.

93. The testing and assessment of students' understanding are effective and frequent, especially for work-based learners. Homework is completed regularly and graded punctually. Work-based assessors regularly visit students in the workplace. Assessors and work-based supervisors frequently discuss students' progress and set clear targets for improvement and further skills development. Employers regularly adjust work schedules to suit students' needs.

94. A wide range of programmes are offered with the active support and participation of local industry and employers. The college has developed very effective partnerships with local employers, including motor vehicle manufacturers with international reputations. An employer forum meets regularly to rigorously review the quality of training and evaluate and discuss the training frameworks and changes to qualifications.

95. Whilst students are well supported overall, there is insufficient support provided for students with identified additional learning needs. The results of initial assessments for literacy and numeracy are inadequately used. There is no classroom support available and teachers do not always use teaching styles or learning materials to accommodate the individual needs of students.

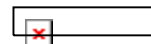
Leadership and management

96. The management of motor vehicle programmes is satisfactory overall and the management of work-based learning is good. There has been some disruption to the management team since the new college was created, but a recovery plan is being implemented successfully. This is yet to impact upon the effectiveness of communications across the area. Staff do not share good practice sufficiently, although there is effective and frequent monitoring of teaching. The organisation of staff room accommodation and the infrequency of meetings adversely affects communication. There is insufficient emphasis on improving provision, particularly for college-based students. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report, but the report did not identify the key differences in the quality of provision for college-based students.

97. Staff appraisal is not well managed and is infrequent. Some staff have not been appraised for over two years. There is insufficient involvement in professional development for staff and little

monitoring of this by managers. Internal verification arrangements have lacked rigour, with poor planning and insufficient monitoring of assessment. The college have taken steps to improve this process by recruiting additional staff for the work-based learning programmes.

Business, management and professional studies



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- much good teaching and learning
- good support for students
- wide range of provision.

Weaknesses

- low pass rates on many courses
- low attendance rates.

Scope of provision

98. The college provides courses from foundation level to HE. Most courses are located at the Butts Centre, but a number of part-time professional courses are run at the Tile Hill Centre. At the time of the inspection, there were 157 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 69 full-time adult students. There were also 32 part-time students aged 16 to 18 and 447 adult part-time students. In addition, 17 work-based learners in administration and accounting were enrolled, of whom 15 were modern apprentices. The area provides office practice and IT courses for 21 secondary school pupils aged 14 to 16. There is a wide range of vocational and professional courses across all levels to meet a variety of learning and business needs. Many part-time students are employed and attend college with the purpose of enhancing their employment skills.

Achievement and standards

99. Pass rates on many courses are poor. Over the last three years, pass rates on NVQ accounting courses at levels 2 and 3 have declined to below the national averages. For the level 1 book-keeping course, pass rates were high in 2002, but fell to well below the national average in 2003. Pass rates on GCE AS business have similarly declined to well below national averages. On the General

National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) intermediate in business they have improved significantly since 2001, by some 40 percentage points, but remain below the national average. On some professional courses, such as the diploma in production and inventory management, the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) management certificate and the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) foundation certificate, pass rates are at or above national averages. Overall, retention rates are satisfactory. They are good on the level 1 book-keeping course.

100. Students' attendance is low. The average attendance during the inspection was 70% and in some lessons below 50%. Registers for some courses show declining attendance since the start of the academic year. Attendance on adult programmes is better than that for students aged 16 to 18. Students' punctuality is also unsatisfactory in some lessons. These issues have been identified by the college and strategies to improve retention and pass rates, attendance and punctuality are showing signs of success.

101. Students attain at least satisfactory standards in lessons and make good progress. They participate well in discussions and group work and produce work of a satisfactory standard. Some demonstrate particularly good research, learning and vocational skills and produce work of a high quality. For example, first-year Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education (AVCE) business students, working on the young enterprise programme, chair their own committee meetings and demonstrate very good team working and organisational skills. Many students progress on to more advanced courses at the college. On the management and professional courses, students effectively integrate their role in their employment into their assignments; examples include work-related projects in new product development, human resources management and profit and loss analysis.

A sample of retention and pass rates in business, management and professional studies, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Book-keeping	1	No. of starts	24	17	22
		% retention	96	88	95
		% pass rate	78	93	43
NVQ accounting	2	No. of starts	74	85	71
		% retention	59	73	70
		% pass rate	86	68	64
GNVQ/AVCE business	2	No. of starts	32	31	23
		% retention	53	87	70
		% pass rate	18	52	56
GNVQ/AVCE business	3	No. of starts	53	43	*
		% retention	51	28	*
		% pass rate	81	92	*
CMI management certificate	3	No. of starts	74	64	15
		% retention	68	84	73
		% pass rate	90	57	100
GCE AS business	3	No. of starts	20	24	23
		% retention	80	83	78
		% pass rate	31	80	56
NVQ accounting	3	No. of starts	55	43	63
		% retention	80	77	81

		% pass rate	64	55	45
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Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

* fewer than 15 students enrolled

Quality of education and training

102. Most teaching is good or better. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subject. Most lessons are well planned and contain clear learning objectives for students. Teachers consistently provide clear and concise instruction and guidance for students. Good use is made of the ILT and other learning resources by both teachers and students. Question and answer techniques are used to good effect to extend and reinforce learning and confirm students' understanding in lessons. In one lesson, students studying for professional qualifications were able to extend their understanding of the legal aspects of contracts through the carefully designed learning materials and astute questioning by their teacher.

103. Many lessons are stimulating and teachers successfully motivate students. In one lesson, there was a high level of student participation in a well-facilitated discussion on the effect of pressure groups on business development. The teacher responded carefully to students' comments and adapted the lesson content to meet the needs of all students. Students were enthusiastic and interested in the topic and demonstrated thorough understanding of complex concepts through their contribution to the lesson. Teachers frequently and regularly check the work of students during lessons and provide constructive feedback to them.

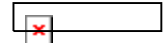
104. Resources are satisfactory, though some rooms are too small for the size of group being taught. There is a large resources centre that is well used by many students. Full-time students also make good use of the library, but students who attend in the evening find the opening hours restrictive. The assessment, moderation and internal verification processes are satisfactory. Assignments are promptly and adequately marked with constructive feedback to help students to improve. Provision for key skills is satisfactory, although not fully integrated into all courses. Attendance at some key skills lessons is low.

105. An integrated approach to learning support has been introduced recently and is working effectively. Students receive good support from teachers during and outside of lessons. There is effective differentiated support in most lessons, particularly for students for whom English is an additional language. Teachers provide good additional language support and ensure that key words and terminology are clearly understood by students. Good use is made of college 'learner management weeks'. These are well planned to enable students to complete any work outstanding or join additional classes to learn new skills that provide vocationally relevant enrichment opportunities. Part-time students benefit from flexible tutorial arrangements. Appointments are made to fit in with work commitments or family responsibilities.

Leadership and management

106. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Internal communications are effective, meetings are held regularly and actions agreed are implemented quickly. The school has amalgamated the departments of the two merged colleges effectively and there is good team working between staff. Target setting for staff is satisfactory and is used well in course planning. A recently introduced internal teacher observation system, involving advanced practitioners, is particularly effective in identifying and sharing best practice. All staff are encouraged to attend well-planned training and curriculum events. Quality assurance is satisfactory. The self-assessment report is accurate in identifying key strengths and weaknesses. Internal verification and moderation arrangements fulfil awarding body requirements. There are good arrangements for collecting and using students' views of their course. The school produces an informative analysis of recruitment, retention and pass rate data by ethnicity and gender.

Information and communications technology



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- high pass rates on full-time courses at levels 2 and 3
- good support for students with additional learning needs
- good well-used teaching resources, at the main college centres
- wide range of provision.

Weaknesses

- ineffective strategies to address the declining retention rates
- underdeveloped links with ICT-related industries
- lack of overall co-ordination of short courses.

Scope of provision

107. Provision is split across several schools. Full-time and part-time courses extend from entry level to Higher National Diploma (HND). There are over 1,000 students studying ICT. Of these, 83% are part time. Students aged 16 to 18 account for 67% of the full-time students whilst adults account for 80% of the part-time students. Full-time courses include City and Guilds 7262 foundation, Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) first diploma, BTEC national diploma, AVCE in ICT and access to computing. Part-time provision includes 'absolute beginners', computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT), web-page design, introduction to the Internet, CISCO and the City and Guilds 7261/7262 qualifications. Part-time courses are delivered at the main college sites and at several community-based outreach centres.

Achievement and standards

108. Pass rates on full-time courses at levels 2 and 3 are often high, especially in 2003. The first

diploma, national diploma and the access to computing courses all had 100% pass rates in 2003. The pass rate on the full-time level 1 City and Guilds 7262 course fell significantly in 2003, from levels which were well above national averages. Retention rates vary considerably. They have declined on the first diploma and national diploma courses over the last three years, but they are still at, or above, national averages on some courses. Various strategies have been introduced to address the issue of declining and low retention rates, but as yet they are ineffective.

109. Students' work is of a satisfactory standard overall. Students are competent in the use of computer software. Students' assignment work is well presented and they demonstrate good understanding of practical computing skills. Students' attendance is good. Students on courses in the community learning centres make good progress in developing their IT skills and improve their self-confidence.

A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communications technology, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
CLAIT	1	No. of starts	514	520	178
		% retention	86	84	81
		% pass rate	79	64	57
Using ICT	1	No. of starts	437	506	424
		% retention	86	76	76
		% pass rate	80	71	84
City and Guilds 7261/7262 foundation	1	No. of starts	17	*	16
		% retention	65	*	88
		% pass rate	82	*	64
BTEC first diploma	2	No. of starts	*	16	30
		% retention	*	75	73
		% pass rate	*	92	100
City and Guilds 7261 diploma	2	No. of starts	39	43	47
		% retention	92	67	74
		% pass rate	92	86	74
ECDL	2	No. of starts	129	97	98
		% retention	88	87	88
		% pass rate	59	58	82
National diploma in computer studies	3	No. of starts	33	37	30
		% retention	82	62	53
		% pass rate	78	91	100

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

* fewer than 15 students enrolled

Quality of education and training

110. The majority of teaching is good. In the more effective lessons, teachers use a wide variety of learning resources well to engage students. Good links are made between theoretical aspects and practical activities to aid students' understanding. In one well-planned lesson for computer

technicians, the teacher used a combination of examples on an overhead projector transparency, a whiteboard and handouts to effectively explain the theory of operating systems. The teacher was adept at asking probing questions of students to assess their understanding. Students received helpful one-to-one and peer support whilst working on tasks and were able to clarify what they had learnt through the teachers' valuable plenary. In workshop sessions, teachers provide good support to individual students.

111. The small number of unsatisfactory lessons were characterised by poor planning, a lack of clear learning objectives and insufficient checking of students' learning. Students in these lessons were unclear about what was expected of them and were unable to complete the tasks set. This led to distraction and some inappropriate behaviour by students whose learning needs were not being met.

112. Students on full-time courses do not have sufficient opportunity to broaden their knowledge and experience of the ICT industry. Links with the industry are underdeveloped. There is no planned work experience programme or curriculum links with local employers.

113. Teachers are well qualified and know their subjects well. Resources are good on the two main college sites. Teachers make good use of the multimedia projectors, specialist software, electronic whiteboard, and the specialist computer rooms for networking. The five outreach centres do not provide a similar standard of resources. The learning resource centre at the Tile Hill Centre is spacious, well equipped and provides good ICT support for students. There is an adequate supply of textbooks available, but a lack of up-to-date periodicals and magazines. There is effective technical support.

114. An advanced practitioner undertakes the well-planned internal verification process effectively to ensure consistency in assessment. Students' work is generally marked well. Teachers provide constructive feedback and clearly identify how students can improve their work. On some courses, effective use is made of students' individual learning plans to monitor progress, set targets and help students to progress.

115. All full-time and substantial part-time students undergo initial assessment to identify their additional support needs. Many students receive good individual support in lessons from teachers, technicians and learning support assistants. There is a strong commitment to equal opportunities and widening participation. Students with a range of disabilities including sensory impairment and learning needs are well supported by specialist equipment, software and informative staff.

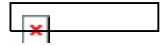
Leadership and management

116. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The creation of the new college led to a restructuring of courses and staffing. The transfer of the majority of full-time provision to the Tile Hill Centre has been well managed. A good range of courses provides good opportunities for progression, serves the wide-ranging needs of potential students and contributes to the college's targets for the widening of participation.

117. The development and management of the short course provision are the responsibility of the school of computing and the school of skills development. There is a lack of co-ordination between the two schools, damaging opportunities for curriculum development, the sharing of good practice and presenting a confusing picture for students. Short course IT programmes are currently under recruiting.

118. Quality assurance is considered of importance and a number of the weaknesses identified by inspectors are noted in the self-assessment report. Staff are involved in the self-assessment process. Good use is made of the professional mentoring scheme for all full-time and part-time teachers.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- good teaching of practical skills
- good salon accommodation
- effective computer-assisted assessment and progress tracking in hairdressing
- good additional training opportunities for beauty therapy students
- effective sharing of good practice.

Weaknesses

- low retention and pass rates
- low attendance, ineffectively monitored and addressed
- poor monitoring and analysis of retention and pass rate data.

Scope of provision

119. Both full-time and part-time courses are offered in hairdressing and beauty therapy and part-time courses in body massage and remedial massage. The college also provides work-based learning through a foundation level modern apprenticeship programme. Full-time courses include hairdressing at levels 1 and 2 and for beauty therapy at levels 1, 2 and 3. There are part-time evening courses in beauty therapy, foundation level, level 1 hairdressing and for the body massage and remedial massage certificates.

120. At the time of inspection, there were 126 full-time students, largely aged 16 to 18, 181 adult

students and 10 foundation modern apprentices.

Achievement and standards

121. Retention and pass rates are often low. On beauty therapy courses, pass rates are below the national averages for the last three years. In 2003, they were around 20 percentage points below national averages for levels 2 and 3 beauty therapy. Retention rates on beauty therapy courses have also been poor, although they have improved to near national averages in 2003. For hairdressing, pass rates at level 1 have fallen over the last three years to well below the national average in 2003, although the retention rate in 2003 improved significantly and is now good. The level 2 pass rate is now just above the national average, but the retention rate fell markedly in 2003. Pass and retention rates for the certificate in sports massage are high in 2003.

122. Students' portfolios and practical work are of a satisfactory standard and appropriate for their stage in the course. Beauty therapy students are able to complete a range of treatments at level 2 and have well-developed customer service skills. Hairdressing students, at level 2, are taking clients and appropriately extending their range of skills and services.

123. Attendance at lessons is low, at only 72%, and in two of the lessons observed only half of the students on the register attended.

A sample of retention and pass rates in hairdressing and beauty therapy, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
NVQ hairdressing	1	No. of starts	70	49	86
		% retention	74	73	86
		% pass rate	92	89	70
NVQ hairdressing	2	No. of starts	41	38	30
		% retention	83	87	63
		% pass rate	64	48	79
NVQ beauty therapy	2	No. of starts	83	66	83
		% retention	67	76	73
		% pass rate	46	68	61
NVQ beauty therapy	3	No. of starts	17	20	16
		% retention	59	60	81
		% pass rate	30	67	54
Certificate in body massage	3	No. of starts	18	19	29
		% retention	78	95	72
		% pass rate	71	89	86

Source: ISR, using merged college data (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

Quality of education and training

124. Teaching and learning are satisfactory or better, but there is little teaching that is very good or better. Whilst lesson planning identifies students' individual learning needs and characteristics, these are rarely taken into account by teachers in theory lessons. In the best lessons, highly imaginative learning activities are used very effectively to deliver aspects of theory in a practical way. During a health and safety lesson, the teacher of beauty therapy carried out a make-up demonstration to illustrate poor health, safety and hygiene. She wore a dirty overall and skilfully, and amusingly,

demonstrated other aspects of poor practice. In many theory lessons, there is no activity to confirm understanding. Teachers provide highly effective individual support during practical lessons, inspiring confidence and the willingness of students to undertake all client services. Students work well together in the salons, helping each other and sharing knowledge. Work-based learners share experiences gained at work.

125. Beauty therapy students have particularly good opportunities to widen their understanding of the industry and its products. For example, they receive specific company and product training on tanning, theatrical make-up and remedial make-up. They also receive careers talks from leading health and hydro venues and a cruise line company.

126. The recent refurbishment of salons has resulted in a very pleasant and realistic working environment and there is excellent storage space. Salons are well laid out to facilitate effective teaching and learning. There are computers in all salons, the reception area and in a conveniently located specialist classroom. Staff have good industry qualifications and experience and vocational teachers delivering key skills have achieved a level 4 key skills qualification.

127. Students take responsibility for recording and tracking their assessments. They and teachers maintain and update assessment records accurately and regularly. Hairdressing staff make good use of a computerised tracking system and students confidently manage their own end of unit testing schedule with the use of computer-assisted assessment. This is very effective in enabling them to take external tests in the salons when they feel ready and to receive immediate results. The comments by teachers on students' assessments do not sufficiently inform assessment planning. All full-time students take tests to determine their basic skills needs and complete learning style preferences questionnaires during induction. It is not clear what use is made of the outcomes of these. Part-time students do not have basic skills screening. Students receive good support with personal issues and value this highly. Courses for adults are grouped together and timetabled to fit in with school hours to help their attendance should they have school-aged children.

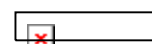
Leadership and management

128. After several changes of managers and an overly-high reliance on part-time teachers, the area has recently been re-organised. New posts have been created and staff have new responsibilities. It is too soon to judge the impact of these changes. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report.

129. The teaching and support staff team are very proactive in sharing good practice. They make visits to colleges which have received good inspection reports and organise 'away days' to share good teaching practice. This has resulted in the development of some highly imaginative learning activities. The area's teaching mentor is very effective in helping staff to develop continuing professional development action plans and in training and supporting staff in the use of information learning technologies (ILT). Course organisers use proprietary software packages, the college's intranet and unit files to share standardised schemes of work and learning materials with their colleagues.

130. Key aspects of quality assurance are weak. The monitoring and analysis of retention and pass rate data are poor and teachers are sometimes confused about which data they should be using. Action to monitor and improve attendance is also ineffective.

Health and social care and early years



Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

Strengths

- high pass rates on foundation early years and national diploma courses
- very good teaching
- good development of students' personal and learning skills
- wide range of provision
- effective pastoral support for students.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates on the national diploma in early years and the CACHE diploma in childcare and education
- insufficient specialist additional learning support for students.

Scope of provision

131. Full-time and part-time courses lead to a wide range of qualifications from entry level through to HE. The courses cover health and care, early years and counselling and meet particular local community needs and national priorities. The additional lower level courses recently introduced are effective in widening participation. At the time of the inspection, there were 675 students. Of these, 82 were aged 14 to 16, 313 were aged 16 to 18 and 280 were adults. Students were evenly split between full-time and part-time courses. There are good progression opportunities for students across the provision.

Achievement and standards

132. There are excellent pass rates of 100% on the foundation early years, the national diploma in caring services course and the national diploma in early years. Pass rates on the remaining courses are often at or below the national averages. Retention rates on the GNVQ intermediate health and social care and the national diploma in caring services courses are high and are above the national averages. There are low retention rates on two of the level 3 courses, the national diploma in early years and the Council for Awards in Childcare and Education (CACHE) diploma. Strategies are in place to improve retention rates, for example, through more appropriate selection procedures and the positive and supportive work of the advanced practitioner and college progress tutors. These are beginning to have a positive impact.

133. The development of students' personal and learning skills is good. Many students are highly motivated and undertake their studies with enthusiasm. Students produce written and practical work of a high standard. Adult students' attainment in lessons is particularly good.

A sample of retention and pass rates in health and social care and early years, 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2003
Foundation early years	1	No. of starts	18
		% retention	67
		% pass rate	100
CACHE certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	18
		% retention	64
		% pass rate	86
GNVQ intermediate health and social care	2	No. of starts	16
		% retention	81
		% pass rate	69
National diploma in caring service	3	No. of starts	28
		% retention	68
		% pass rate	100
BTEC national diploma in early years	3	No. of starts	17
		% retention	47
		% pass rate	100
CACHE diploma in childcare and education	3	No. of starts	22
		% retention	55
		% pass rate	67

Source: college (2003), merged college data for 2001 and 2002 were not used for this curriculum area

Quality of education and training

134. Most teaching is very good. Teachers plan lessons well to incorporate relevant theoretical and practical activities that meet both the individual students' needs and the course requirements. Some teaching inspires, challenges and motivates students. In a national diploma in early years lesson, preparing for a research project, the teacher explained the purpose clearly and established a firm understanding of the expectations of students. Students were encouraged to participate in discussion, briefly outlining the focus of their research, and good use was made of IT and other learning resources to enable them to thoroughly prepare for their individual research projects.

135. Teachers plan lessons well to take account of students' previous learning and experiences. They use a wide and diverse range of methods to maintain students' interest and co-operation and use question and answer techniques effectively to assess students' learning. Teaching resources are well designed and used to develop students' learning. Good use is made of ICT in lessons. Key skills are not sufficiently integrated into the vocational curriculum. New systems and procedures have been introduced to improve this.

136. Good links are made between students' knowledge and effective practice to enable them to develop their personal, learning and vocational skills. Links with employers are effective and they provide high-quality vocational work placements for students. Students benefit from undertaking

enrichment activities and additional qualifications such as first aid and safe food handling.

137. Resources are satisfactory and help to support teaching and learning. Teachers are well qualified with relevant vocational experience which is updated regularly. Classrooms display helpful and informative examples of students' work, and effective use is made of physical resources to support students' practical and vocational learning. However, not all accommodation is fit for purpose, for example, the rooms for counselling and individual tutorials are inappropriate, and security for equipment and resources at the Muslim Resource Centre is not adequate.

138. Assessment procedures are thorough, rigorous and subject to internal verification. Students receive constructive and timely feedback to help them to improve their work. Initial assessment is used to identify students' additional learning needs and individual learning styles. Staff work hard to address the needs of the significant number of students with complex learning and personal needs, but there is insufficient specialist additional learning support for students, especially in lessons.

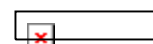
139. Pastoral support for students is good. Students value the accessibility of teachers and their regular tutorials. Students' performance is generally well monitored. Teachers have a good knowledge of individual students and the progress they are making on their courses. Target setting is used well to direct students towards improving their performance.

Leadership and management

140. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is effective co-ordination, communication and team working. Systems for quality assurance are good and teachers are fully involved in the self-assessment process. Actions for improvement in student attendance, retention rates and accommodation have been accurately identified. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report.

141. Equality of opportunity and diversity issues are well integrated into teaching, learning and assessment practice. The particularly wide range of courses supports the college's widening participation strategy. Some attempts have been made to address the lack of male students on health care and early years courses and outreach work, particularly by the Muslim resource centre, has been successful in recruiting students from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Art and design



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- good retention rate on the national diploma
- high pass rates on the first diploma in design and GCE AS art
- effective use of well-resourced studios and workshops

- good support for students from subject and personal tutors.

Weaknesses

- too much unsatisfactory teaching of whole class activities
- lack of constructive feedback on students' written work
- lack of rigour in identifying strategies for improvement.

Scope of provision

142. The area offers a broad range of courses at levels 1 to 4, with a good range of level 3 full-time provision across the specialist subjects. There is one first diploma in design course, but no full-time provision at level 1. The national diploma in design has distinct pathways in fashion, three-dimensional design, graphic design and photography. GCE AS art is available as part of the college's offer to students across the college and as an additional qualification for national diploma students. A wide selection of part-time courses are offered during the evenings at the Butts Centre, such as ceramics, embroidery and photography. Machine knitting and sewing are available at an outreach centre in the city centre, to where students travel from a wide area. At the time of the inspection, there were 232 full-time students and 163 part-time students, of whom about 50% were adults.

Achievement and standards

143. Retention rates for students on the national diploma in design and GCE AS art courses are now above the national averages. The profile is mixed on part-time programmes, with excellent retention rates on machine knitting and photography, but poor for drawing and painting. Pass rates are mainly high, with very good results on the first diploma in design and the National Open College Network (NOCN) introduction to drawing and painting course. Retention and pass rates are particularly good for the national diploma in design pathways in graphic design and industrial design. This is not the case on the pathways in fashion and photography.

144. The standard of students' work is largely satisfactory, with some very good work produced by individual students across most courses. Most students can articulate their ideas about their own work in an informal setting. Students are encouraged to enter competitions and fashion students have won and been selected as a finalist, in 2001 and 2003, respectively, in the national 'Clothes Show Live' competition. A graphic design student was one of ten students selected in a national web-page design competition, where all other students were from HE. Progression to HE courses is encouraged, though most who apply, do so to other local colleges.

A sample of retention and pass rates in art and design, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
NOCN introduction to	2	No. of starts	*	16	19

drawing and painting		% retention	*	81	47
		% pass rate	*	100	89
National diploma in design	3	No. of starts	26	54	61
		% retention	54	63	72
		% pass rate	100	76	72
GCE AS art studies/fine arts	3	No. of starts	40	37	42
		% retention	68	65	83
		% pass rate	48	71	86

Source: ISR using merged college data (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

145. The quality of teaching is mixed, ranging from excellent to unsatisfactory. It is often good for adult students. In the better lessons, teachers use their skills to good advantage, conducting good question and answer sessions, managing lively and relevant feedback and review and teaching in an informative and interesting manner. In a photography lesson for graphic design students, their task was to design a cover for a CD of their choice. The teacher gave an excellent talk, illustrated with photographic slides of record and CD covers and students commented and analysed their effectiveness, also discussing how they had been achieved technically. In a drawing development lesson, a group of photography students were introduced to the expressive qualities of line by drawing with willow sticks. The use of media and scale was challenging. The students were fully absorbed and saw the relevance of drawing as an extension and stimulus for the further development of their photography work. The teacher had high expectations of them and their work. The students thoroughly enjoyed the lesson. Most students work well on their individual practical tasks. Students travel from a wide catchment area to access the knitting classes, where students are working on a variety of tasks to suit their level of ability.

146. A significant minority of teaching and learning for students aged 16 to 18 is unsatisfactory, with whole group activities poorly managed. Students have less opportunity for debate and are passive, sometimes because teachers have unrealistic expectations of their prior learning. In one lesson, the teacher introduced the topic very briefly, asking for a few examples, which all came from one student, before giving out books for students to look through and copy some examples of their own choice, without giving any guidance. A feedback and presentation by photography students was poorly managed with students chatting and joking rather than taking the process seriously. In another lesson, the teacher failed to ensure that students could see the demonstration and did not notice that some paid no attention.

147. Teaching and learning are supported by well-resourced studios and workshops which are effectively used. Both graphic design and three-dimensional design students use computers with relevant software as well as more traditional equipment and materials. For example, three-dimensional design students produce design ideas worksheets as normal, but also use proprietary software to produce and manipulate images, to further explore the potential of the shapes being used. Facilities at the outreach centre for both knitting and sewing are good, with good numbers of modern machinery. Facilities are adequate but cramped in the fashion studios, causing potential health and safety issues. Photography currently lacks suitable digital equipment. Teachers are well qualified in their subjects, but many are not yet qualified teachers. The ratio of technicians to teachers is good, but not evenly distributed across all subject areas.

148. Teachers' written comments on assessment feedback sheets, completed for all summative assessments, are supportive of the efforts made, but few include sufficient information to help students improve. Some students feel that marked work takes too long to be returned. Most teachers

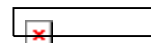
give useful verbal feedback during practical lessons.

149. Students are well supported by their subject and personal tutors, and build good working relationships. All full-time students have regular tutorials, which they feel are both helpful in improving their work and in lending them pastoral support, and are tested to find out their levels of numeracy and literacy. As a result, some students receive individual support, but not all students take advantage of this help. Support arrangements for adult students are unsystematic.

Leadership and management

150. Satisfactory leadership and management of the area are provided by both the head of school and the curriculum co-ordinator. Curriculum development is well planned. Course and section meetings are held regularly, with good minutes and actions produced. Staff are supported in their resource needs. However, there is a lack of rigour in identifying strategies for improvement and for sharing good teaching practice. This has resulted in weaker teaching not being identified and addressed. Additionally, there is some confusion over course retention and pass rate figures as many teachers, at the college's request, use the in-year retention rates. The self-assessment report is reasonably accurate, identifying work to be completed or resource needs, but it exaggerates the quality of teaching and learning.

Performing arts, music and media



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- good pass rates on the national diploma in music technology and the first diploma in performing arts
- good teaching and learning in performing arts
- high standard of music and multi-media specialist equipment
- good support for students.

Weaknesses

- poor retention rate on media courses
- ineffective sharing of good teaching practices

- insufficient provision to support widening participation
- inefficient management of accommodation and resources.

Scope of provision

151. Most provision is at levels 2 and 3. Level 3 performing arts courses include the national certificate in performing arts, national awards in musical theatre, stage management, acting, and dance and acting. GCE AS and A2 are offered in dance and drama. At level 2, the first diploma in performing arts (acting), GCSE dance and the NOCN dance are offered. In media studies, there are the national diploma in media, with pathways in video and audio production, GCE A-level media and a first diploma. There is also a national diploma in multimedia. Music courses include the national diplomas in music technology and music practice, and NOCN provision at levels 1, 2 and 3 in music technology. At the time of the inspection, some 340 students were enrolled on these courses, 60% of whom were aged 16 to 18 and largely on full-time courses.

Achievement and standards

152. Overall, students achievements and standards are satisfactory. Pass rates for key full-time courses are often good. For example, all students passed the national diploma in music technology and the first diploma in performing arts in 2003. Retention rates are less good and are poor on media courses. For example, in 2003, the national diploma in media retained only 33% of its students, following a declining trend in the previous two years. The college has recognised this weakness and is providing special support and monitoring to the programme. The retention rate is also low on the GCE AS media course, at around 20 percentage points lower than the national average.

153. Students largely attain satisfactory standards, but they are good in the performing arts. For example, in one lesson about naturalistic theatre, students used emotional memory in their work. They had previously developed a short dramatisation which they performed for the class. The teacher asked them to use emotional memory to further develop the work. The resulting standard of performance was both powerful and impressive. Inspectors also noted that a first-year music technology student produced a sophisticated response to a music styles analysis brief. Progression is appropriate on the majority of courses. Students regularly gain places in HE.

A sample of retention and pass rates in performing arts, music and media, 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2003
First diploma performing arts	2	No. of starts	21
		% retention	62
		% pass rate	100
National diploma performing arts	3	No. of starts	74
		% retention	64
		% pass rate	57
National diploma music technology	3	No. of starts	21
		% retention	67

		% pass rate	100
National diploma media	3	No. of starts	21
		% retention	67
		% pass rate	100

Source: college (2003), merged college data for 2001 and 2002 were not used for this curriculum area

Quality of education and training

154. Teaching and learning across the provision are satisfactory. The best teaching and learning are in the performing arts, where inspectors judged most to be good or better. Here, teachers have high expectations of their students and provide carefully planned, well-structured lessons. Students are fully engaged in their learning and confidently make contributions in lessons which promote a non-threatening environment. In a lesson for multi-media students, the teacher added 'surprise' requirements to the brief which required them to re-plan their approach to the development of a software application. Their response was enthusiastic and competitive.

155. The good teaching practice in the performing arts, however, is not adequately replicated in other subject areas. There is too much poor adherence to lesson plans, which limits learning opportunities, and a lack of challenge for students in some lessons. Teachers do not engage all students and good learning materials are unexploited. In one lesson, the teacher lacked technical knowledge, essential to the safe and effective use of specialist equipment.

156. There is a good range of enrichment activities including, in the last year, dance and drumming workshops with a dance company from Africa. Performing arts students have performed at the Edinburgh Festival fringe and students participate in a wide range of visits to shows and gigs.

157. Resources to support teaching and learning are largely satisfactory. The standard of specialist equipment in music and multi-media is high, with a wide range of industry-standard specialist sound production equipment. Significant investment has been made in IT-based digital design systems for sound editing and multi-media production. The equipment is well maintained and the software updated regularly. There is little purpose-built accommodation, but, in most cases, areas have been well adapted and provide effective learning environments. However, in the performing arts, the dance studios are cold and have no mirrors or practice bars and changing areas are shabby. Some music technology and multi-media computer rooms are hot and stuffy. Staffing levels are adequate. The great majority are well trained and qualified in their specialist areas and bring a high level of current industry knowledge. The updating of specialist skills is encouraged through good staff development opportunities. Most teachers have at least basic teaching qualifications, or are working towards them.

158. The assessment and monitoring of students' progress are satisfactory. Assessment tasks are appropriately rigorous, with clear assessment criteria, and are fairly assessed. The quality of written feedback is in the best examples, careful and supportive, providing good advice on how students can improve. In a minority of cases, feedback is too limited, or contains generalised comments of little constructive value to students. Internal verification is effective.

159. Students are well supported in their studies. Teachers take time to work with their students to address individual problems and circumstances and make arrangements to fit courses to students' needs. For example, a single parent with three children had rediscovered the motivation to get up in the morning. She was receiving a personalised programme, including some individual tuition, which fitted in with the demands on her time. In another example, a visually impaired student received excellent and sensitive support through an enabler and the subject teacher and was able to fully participate in class activities. The tutorial programme, which is satisfactory overall, is good in media and the performing arts. Tutors make effective use of the college's central support services, enhancing the quality of personal support for students. There is appropriate assessment of students'

basic and key skills, although the take up of additional support opportunities by students is inconsistent.

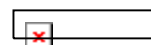
160. There are too few courses to support the widening of student participation. There is, for example, no full-time level 1 provision with effective progression opportunities to higher level programmes, although it has been proposed in the performing arts. There are no Access to HE programmes, or regular taster provision.

Leadership and management

161. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a strong team ethos throughout the area and staff work well together. Course management is effective. Equality of opportunity and diversity are put into practice and actively supported. Informal communication is good, but the minutes of meetings do not always provide sufficient detail for action. All staff were involved in the preparation and review of the self-assessment report. Inspectors agreed with many of its judgements, but it failed to recognise the differing strengths and weaknesses across the provision.

162. The management of accommodation and resources is inefficient. Most lessons in music and media start at 9.30am and end at 4.30pm. Outside of these times, and during lunchtimes, specialist rooms and equipment are not available to students. In meetings with inspectors, students complained about this and how it reduced their time to practice with complex equipment. The college enfranchises a local private provider to deliver music technology courses, but has not addressed the providers' use of cramped and poorly equipped accommodation.

Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- good development of speaking and listening skills in practical lessons
- very effective individual support for students
- good range of programmes that widen participation.

Weaknesses

- inadequate variety of teaching methods in theory lessons
- insufficient use of individual learning plans.

Scope of provision

163. Programmes are offered on a full-time and part-time basis and are available from pre-entry level to level 2. Adult provision, includes the 'Further On' programme for students with severe learning difficulties, the 'Community Links' programme for those with profound and moderate learning difficulties and 'Skill Steps' and 'Skills for Working Life' programmes for students with severe learning difficulties. The youth team is responsible for the alternative education programme for students aged 14 to 16 and for 'Connect 2', for students with moderate learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. This concentrates on the development of independent living, personal development, work experience and employability skills. 'Pathways for Parents' is for young people who are parents or are mothers-to-be and consists of vocational and work preparation and child development skills. The schools link programme is for pupils preparing to move on to FE, after leaving school. Options on the programmes include literacy, numeracy, IT, art, drama, cookery and horticulture. There are 283 enrolled students. The majority are aged 19 and over. Some 18% are aged 14 to 16 and 26% are aged 16 to 18. Some students may follow courses for formally recognised qualifications, such as key skills.

Achievement and standards

164. Students develop good speaking and listening skills in practical lessons. Teachers adopt innovative and interesting methods, making good use of practical subjects, including drama and horticulture, to effectively develop students' communication skills. For example, in one drama lesson, students formed small pop groups and took it in turn to sing the song they had agreed upon. The other students were responsible for scoring the performance using specific criteria that also referred to how well the students knew the songs and were pronouncing the words. The students thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and effectively developed skills in speaking, listening and reading. Students also improved their confidence by being successful and feedback from their peers reassured them that they had done well.

165. Most students produce a high standard of work and regular feedback is provided to them on their progress. The achievement of learning and personal goals is satisfactory. Most students achieve the learning outcomes expected of them during lessons, on their own or with support from teachers. Retention rates and attendance are satisfactory, although some students are late for morning lessons due to transport problems.

Quality of education and training

166. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, there is good emphasis on the development of students' literacy, numeracy and social skills, using practical activities. For example, in a horticulture lesson, students were asked to count the number of plant pots that they needed to plant seedlings. In a basic skills lesson, about countries, students were encouraged to provide views on what foods were local to the country and a group discussion was encouraged that effectively developed conversational skills. In contrast, the variety of teaching methods in theory sessions is inadequate. Some lessons are inappropriately focused on one method of teaching and students become bored and disruptive and their progress is slowed down. In such cases, teachers do not have sufficient expertise to adapt teaching strategies to maximise learning.

167. A wide variety of appropriate paper-based resources support teaching and learning. There are sufficient computers to support group lessons in IT and some basic skills lessons, but not all classrooms have computers. Some chairs are inappropriate for computer users and for those with physical disabilities and it is not possible for some wheelchair users to get sufficiently close to a computer. Overall, specialist equipment is satisfactory. In subjects such as in cookery and art, there is a comprehensive range of specialist resources. There are some educational games available; some are adapted for students with poor motor skills or for visually impaired students.

168. Initial assessment of students' learning needs is comprehensive. Staff effectively use

information from a range of sources to inform assessment, including feedback from other agencies. Students undertaking key skills complete a diagnostic assessment. The results of initial assessment are not always effectively used to plan individualised learning programmes. Students' progress is insufficiently monitored and, although mostly students' needs are met in lessons, some targets are insufficiently challenging, and do not recognise their ability. Many students achieve skills that are recognised in their lessons which are not reflected in their individual learning plans. Determining students' progress over time is, therefore, difficult. Assessment is regular and students are provided with positive feedback at each lesson, motivating them to learn more. There are appropriate arrangements in place to assess qualifications including a tracking document of students' achievements against the qualification standards.

169. The range of programmes effectively widens participation, meeting the needs of adults and young people with profound to moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The 'Pathway for Parents' programme effectively prepares young parents, or parents to be, for parenthood and FE or work. The schools-link programme provides a good introduction for pupils to FE and reduces their anxieties when moving from school to college. The innovative alternative education programme provides a core programme of literacy, numeracy and vocational options for students as an alternative to school. Programmes improve the quality of life of adults with profound learning difficulties and disabilities by providing meaningful activities in horticulture and art and also improve their social interaction. Students participate in a residential event, social evenings and have the opportunity to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

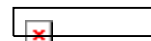
170. Individual support for students is good. In lessons, staff effectively deal with a range of social, emotional and behavioural issues with minimum disruption to the rest of the class. Group sizes are small and teachers and support workers work effectively together to support students. For more challenging students, or those with specific health issues such as epilepsy, staff are well briefed on the best methods to deal with problems. Staff work closely with other agencies and contribute to care plans. They are good at using information from other agencies to develop appropriate strategies to work with students. Staff attend specific forums, such as teenage groups and autistic spectrum disorder, to update themselves on current and best practice. Students comment on how much they enjoy college. Students are provided with appropriate advice and guidance about programmes. They have a satisfactory understanding of key induction topics including health and safety, equal opportunities and course content.

Leadership and management

171. The curriculum area is well managed. Weaknesses in provision have been recognised and are being addressed. For example, much work has taken place over the last year to improve the planning of learning and the recording of students' progress against specific goals, even though these aspects are still under developed for some students. There has been a recent and positive emphasis on the introduction of the pre-entry curriculum, in particular, speaking and listening skills.

172. Staff meet weekly, including part-time staff. They value their meetings and use the time effectively to discuss issues they may have and to share their experiences. Staff development is widely available and most staff have had, or are undertaking, training. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of equality and diversity. They all contributed to the self- assessment process and their views were considered within the final version of the report. The report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses determined by inspectors.

Literacy and numeracy



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Contributory grade for entry-to-employment is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- good teaching in lessons for adults
- effective use of good specialist facilities
- good use of individual learning plans on adult courses
- very effective individual support on the E2E programme.

Weaknesses

- inadequate student take up of literacy and numeracy support
- inadequate monitoring of students' progress on E2E programmes
- unsatisfactory attendance
- insufficient written feedback to students on adult programmes.

Scope of provision

173. There are 263 students, of whom 87% are adults, studying literacy and numeracy, in discrete classes. Most of these classes take place on the main college sites, though there is also provision at five outreach centres in the city. The school of skills development also provides additional literacy and numeracy support for students following other college programmes. College data show 990 students, identified through initial assessment, as having literacy and numeracy skills beneath the level required for their main programme. The responsibility for meeting these support needs lies with the heads of school responsible for students' main programmes, who may request that support is supplied by the school of skills development. At the time of the inspection, 316 students were supported directly by that school. The college also has a recently awarded contract with the LSC to deliver E2E programmes. There were 43 students on this programme, following a range of vocational options.

Achievement and standards

174. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Students make good progress against the targets set in their individual learning plans. Adult students produce well-presented portfolios of work which

show development in a range of basic literacy skills. Good progress is made in spelling and dictionary work. In numeracy, many adult students have grasped the basic rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division for the first time. Others have acquired more complex skills, for example, the calculation of composite areas. Learners develop personal confidence. A carpenter who was initially assessed at entry level 3 and was unable to write sentences, other than simple phrases, is now able to write in a more complex form. This gave him the confidence to apply for a supervisor's job which required the writing of simple reports. He was successful and is now working towards a level 2 qualification. One E2E learner working in a nursery was unable to maintain eye contact with either staff or children and spoke infrequently. She is now able to have a conversation with colleagues, smiles confidently and supervises a small group of children for art work.

175. Attendance in lessons is unsatisfactory. The average attendance in lessons observed was 67%. Students with infrequent attendance spend a disproportionate amount of time at the beginning of lessons refreshing concepts learnt some weeks previously, before being able to move forward. This distracts teachers who are unavailable to support students who have attended regularly.

Quality of education and training

176. There is much good teaching in lessons for adults. Lessons are planned carefully to meet individual needs. Students' objectives for each lesson match their individual learning plans and learning resources are prepared to meet specific needs. A brief review of progress for each student is completed towards the end of each lesson and work for the next week discussed and planned. A broad range of teaching and learning styles is employed, including group work. There is effective use of IT in most lessons.

177. There is good use of individual learning plans on adult courses. These plans are informed by initial assessment, including diagnostic assessment where appropriate. Targets are written simply and are understood by students. Small achievable steps are matched to the national curriculum. Activities planned for each student in a lesson are carefully planned against these targets.

178. The teaching of key skills is largely satisfactory, although in a significant number of lessons observed they were not sufficiently integrated with the students' main vocational programme. In some lessons, obvious opportunities for such integration were missed. Attendance in some key skills lessons is low.

179. The monitoring of E2E learners' progress is inadequate. The supporting paperwork for the review process is poor; it is not used consistently. There is insufficient detail in learner reviews. The reviews are infrequent and in the learners' portfolios examined by inspectors no learner had received reviews regularly at the required four-weekly intervals. Reviews which do take place are often informal and unrecorded. As a result, progress is not adequately monitored or recorded.

180. Good specialist facilities are effectively used. Classrooms are bright, comfortable, and have colourful and relevant wall displays. The environment creates an atmosphere of purpose and endeavour. There are good IT resources with modern software, adaptive technology and Internet access in all classrooms. There is a comprehensive range of everyday equipment in numeracy rooms which is used for practical learning. Relevant reading books are used in literacy classes which reflect the cultural diversity of many students. Interview rooms in the learner centres afford students a good degree of privacy.

181. Written feedback to adult students, on the quality of their work, is inadequate. Work is marked accurately, but there is little written feedback, especially on numeracy programmes. Opportunities are missed to reinforce and celebrate achievement as well as to give an explanation as to how errors could be avoided in the future. No students' work is celebrated by being displayed in classrooms.

182. Individual support for E2E is very effective. Staff support them through a range of complex personal and social problems, such as domestic trauma, inter-personal, financial, and criminal justice issues, and often in combinations. Work placement support is good with very effective

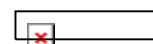
communications between staff and providers. This enables work placement supervisors to give appropriate personal and learning support. Learners are very appreciative of this support. One said that it was the first time that he felt that he had had someone to 'champion' him.

Leadership and management

183. Although initial assessment is co-ordinated and managed as a whole, college-wide monitoring of the adequacy, the quality of delivery and the effectiveness of additional support is inadequate. Only 32% of the 990 students identified as needing literacy and/or numeracy support are being catered for centrally. The large majority are dependent upon provision made by their schools and lead progress tutors. Curriculum inspectors determined that there are disparate responses to the needs of learners by the heads of school. There are gaps in provision and some planned support had not been put in place at the time of inspection.

184. The self-assessment report is often accurate, but does not tackle the weakness of the low number of students directly supported by the schools. Quality assurances procedures are applied satisfactorily and clear and challenging targets are set. There is little cross-college professional development to support the delivery of literacy and numeracy for subject teachers.

English for speakers of other languages



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- high retention rates
- good range and variety of successful teaching techniques and materials
- high levels of personal support for students
- good progress in implementing the national standards for ESOL.

Weaknesses

- insufficient attention to determining and meeting the individual needs of students
- unsatisfactory attendance

- lack of structured opportunities for progression on to vocational or academic courses.

Scope of provision

185. Courses, from entry level to level 2, are offered at the college's Butts Centre and at three community outreach centres. They are part-time courses, mostly taking place in the day time, with a choice of morning, early or mid-afternoon, or evening provision at the Butts Centre. Enrolment is termly. The majority of students are adults, working towards NOCN unit accreditation. Some take other external examinations. There is an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) programme for doctors, and a foundation programme for pupils aged 14 to 16, run in partnership with the local education authority, schools and Connexions. A summer school programme was held in 2003. At the time of inspection, 400 students were enrolled. There is some language support to meet the ESOL needs of students on vocational or short courses. This is co-ordinated through the college's basic skills team.

Achievement and standards

186. There are good opportunities for students to gain external accreditation. Pass rates on NOCN units are satisfactory, ranging from 46% to 99% in 2002/03. Retention rates were between 82% and 93% in 2002/03, which is particularly good for part-time adult provision.

187. The inspection took place during Ramadan when average attendance was unsatisfactory, at only 64%. This is well below the college's own target for attendance in the area, which is 80%. Punctuality was also poor in some lessons. Staff make sure that students are aware of the attendance requirements and use telephone calls and letters to follow up non-attendance.

188. Students' attainment in lessons is satisfactory or good. Students work at an appropriate standard for their level of class. At the lower levels, there is more evident variation in individuals' attainment between the spoken and written skills. Students work well in pairs and groups, and learn from each other. All students are keen and work hard to complete tasks, and to develop their understanding and skills in English. They respond particularly well to problem solving tasks such as spotting and describing the differences between two pictures, or following oral directions on a map to locate particular buildings. Many students are confident in their oral responses and ask for further explanations.

Quality of education and training

189. Students are now working towards the new NOCN units and qualifications, aligned to the ESOL curriculum. Schemes of work are detailed and cross-referenced to the new national standards for ESOL. There is good progress in implementing the standards.

190. Teaching and learning are largely satisfactory or better. Most lessons are well-planned, with clear learning objectives covering a range of skills and with a structured sequence of learning activities. Teachers use a wide range of language teaching techniques effectively. Most teachers have good ways of eliciting and correcting spoken language. They share learning objectives with students, have good linguistic knowledge and provide clear explanations or examples.

191. Teachers do not always fully adjust their planning and delivery to meet the needs of all students in a group, although some tasks and materials have been designed to meet varying needs and language levels. In some lessons, teachers fail to provide sufficient oral rehearsal before moving, too quickly, into freer writing tasks, which some students then struggle with. Some students, at the lower levels, are unable to cope with written prompts or instructions. Some lessons do not provide opportunities for consolidating learning through less-controlled and student-led communication.

There are too few examples of cross-cultural content in lessons. There is some over-reliance on text book exercises which fail to check learning. Some students would like to learn more 'street language' or colloquial English.

192. Learning materials are of a high quality and support the different learning styles of students. Teachers provide good visual input through pictures, overhead transparencies, demonstrations and actual objects. There is limited use of IT to support language development, with no dedicated computers for ESOL, although some teachers book students into a computer suite for lessons. Some students are keen to develop IT skills to improve their employability.

193. Teachers are well qualified with specialist teaching qualifications in ESOL and English as a foreign language (EFL), many having completed their training through the in-house programmes for teaching ESOL. Most teachers have recently attended ESOL curriculum and related training. Teaching accommodation is generally satisfactory including that used in outreach centres. Most rooms are well lit and of a suitable size. Posters and wall displays create a welcoming environment for students.

194. Thorough initial diagnostic assessment is well used to place students at an appropriate level and provide teachers with sound advance information about learning priorities. Target setting in individual learning plans is too general and does not get to the heart of students' particular needs, and some targets are not couched in terms that students can understand.

195. Planned progression routes for students wanting to move on to other college courses, with continued specialist support, are insufficient. There are no joint programmes delivered between the ESOL and the vocational teams and no use of national standards to establish the level of language required for entry to or success on vocational or academic courses. There are no specific courses for students aged 16 to 19. Core ESOL courses are well structured to meet the needs of students, with a suitable range of locations, timings and levels. Provision is responsive to the needs of specific client groups and there has been a recent staff appointment to co-ordinate and extend community-based provision.

196. Students receive high levels of personal support from teachers and personal tutors which they value. New tutorial arrangements ensure that tutors have regular individual sessions with students to review individual progress and provide effective pastoral support. Some larger classes create challenges for tutors in developing individually tailored programmes, where students' lack of spoken or written English creates additional barriers to negotiating learning priorities and action planning.

Leadership and management

197. Curriculum management is effective. It has provided good leadership in introducing the new ESOL standards and curricula, new external accreditation, diagnostic assessments and skills for life learning materials. There is a good understanding of national developments and their impact on the quality of provision. Communication between teams is good, including contact with outreach and part-time staff. Staff work closely together to serve the best interests of students in an environment which respects equality of opportunity and diversity.

198. Some aspects of quality assurance are under developed, such as the inadequate use of retention and pass rate data to monitor performance. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report, although the college's report embraced EFL and teaching of ESOL, making comparisons difficult.

Part D: College data

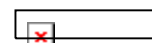


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age

Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	21	14
2	27	28
3	28	15
4/5	1	5
Other	23	38
Total	100	100

Source: provided by the college in 2003

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age

Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments
Science and mathematics	663	1,903	12
Land-based provision	2	144	1
Construction	274	369	3
Engineering, technology and manufacture	350	1,204	7
Business administration, management and professional	311	1,208	7
Information and communication technology	449	1,805	10
Retailing, customer service and transportation	1	943	4
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	150	453	3
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	102	214	2
Health, social care and public services	554	1,132	8
Visual and performing arts and media	393	707	8
Humanities	264	481	3
English, languages and communication	466	495	4
Foundation programmes	432	997	7
Unknown area of learning	1,538	3,619	20

Total	5,949	15,674	100
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Source: provided by the college in 2003

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
1	Starters excluding transfers	1,483	1,345	1,210	3,958	2,387	2,205
	Retention rate	75	70	83	82	64	65
	National average	74	75	75	70	73	74
	Pass rate	67	75	63	76	66	65
	National average	64	64	66	65	68	69
2	Starters excluding transfers	1,514	1,239	951	2,309	2,167	1,941
	Retention rate	78	69	71	71	66	75
	National average	69	70	70	70	70	69
	Pass rate	68	64	60	69	69	65
	National average	66	67	68	65	65	69
3	Starters excluding transfers	1,391	1,540	1,478	2,355	2,300	2,112
	Retention rate	64	65	65	74	65	74
	National average	62	67	75	67	67	70
	Pass rate	66	66	66	64	71	66
	National average	69	70	73	63	65	69
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	17	*	*	859	570	604
	Retention rate	76	*	*	73	66	75
	National average	61	**	**	66	65	70
	Pass rate	69	*	*	53	53	58
	National average	**	**	**	50	49	49

Note: summary of retention and achievement for the last three years for the Tile Hill College and the Coventry Technical College, by age and level of course, compared against national averages for colleges of the same type (that is general FE/tertiary colleges or sixth form colleges) in a disadvantaged area.

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 1999 to 2001: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2002.

2. College rates for 1999 to 2002: College ISR.

* too few students to provide a valid calculation

** data unavailable

Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	59	30	11	90
Level 2 (intermediate)	64	26	10	70
Level 1 (foundation)	44	44	13	39
Other sessions	66	26	8	50
Totals	59	30	11	249

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