



Christ the King Sixth Form College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Christ the King Sixth Form College
Type of college:	Sixth Form College
Principal:	Jane Overbury
Address of college:	Belmont Grove, Lewisham, London, SE13 5GE.
Telephone number:	0208 297 9433
Fax number:	0208 297 1460
Chair of governors:	Peter Worden
Unique reference number:	130416
Name of lead inspector:	Sean Hanan HMI
Dates of inspection:	14-18 November 2005

Background of the organisation

1. Christ the King Sixth Form College is a Catholic college in Lewisham, south-east London. Lewisham has a population of about 250,000. 50% of those aged 15 to 19 belong to black and other minority ethnic groups. Lewisham is amongst the 20% of the most socially deprived local authorities in the country. In 2005/06, the college enrolled 1,398 16 to 19 year old learners. It is regularly over subscribed. In 2005/06 there were almost 3000 applications for 700 places. The large majority of learners are aged 16 to 18 and are following advanced level courses. The college offers 36 AS and 34 A level subjects and three BTEC National courses. Level 2 programmes consist of four GNVQ intermediate courses, one BTEC first and four GCSEs. There is also a GNVQ foundation course.
2. The college's shared sense of vision and values is articulated through its mission statement, which is "a Catholic college dedicated to the education and development of the whole person, so that learners can reach their full potential". It has a distinctive ethos, which underpins all of its work. Learners come from the seven partner schools and also from a wide area across London. In 2005/06, learners were recruited from 112 different institutions, with 561 learners coming from the college's partner schools. 59% of the learners are Catholic and 71% are from minority ethnic backgrounds. 60% of learners are female.
3. In 2004, the college was awarded Learning and Skills Beacon status by the Department for Education and Skills

Scope of the inspection

4. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; and data on enrolments and learners' achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:
 - overall effectiveness of the college and its capacity to improve further
 - achievements and standards
 - quality of provision
 - leadership and management

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Outstanding: grade 1
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: grade 1
Achievement and standards	Outstanding: grade 1
Quality of provision	Good: grade 2
Leadership and management	Outstanding: grade 1

Note: Where contributory grades have been awarded, they are shown in the relevant sections of the report. Contributory grades represent the judgement of the team that the quality of the aspect of provision indicated by the grade differs from the grade overall.

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Outstanding: grade 1

5. Christ the King is an outstanding sixth form college. Its success is founded on a strong Catholic ethos and sense of values that underpin all aspects of college life and create a highly supportive learning environment. The college is very inclusive and equal opportunities are thoroughly integrated throughout the organisation. Learners recognise and respect the views of others and express their personal beliefs with confidence. The leadership of the principal and other college managers is outstanding. Governance is very strong. Governors are committed to the college and its ethos. They also act effectively as 'critical friends'. The outcomes of self-assessment are comprehensive, rigorous and broadly accurate. Targets are used effectively throughout the college to drive improvements. Financial management is strong and the college provides excellent value for money.
6. Standards achieved by learners are high and improving. The progress they make is very good. Teaching and learning are generally good and learners' progress is closely monitored. Accommodation and learning resources are good. The support provided for learners is outstanding, although the consistency of tutorials needs to improve. There are excellent enrichment opportunities for learners and their spiritual and moral development is outstanding. Learners attend regularly and their behaviour is excellent. Communications with parents and carers are very good. Whilst learners have opportunities to develop their key skills, the accreditation of them needs to improve.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding: grade 1

7. The college's capacity to improve is outstanding. Performance is regularly reviewed and strategies are clearly focused on improving learners' achievements. The monitoring of performance is thorough and rigorous. The self-assessment process is well established and in most curriculum areas the outcomes from action plans have successfully addressed the areas for improvement. Outcomes from self-assessment are broadly accurate and correctly identify the college's strengths and areas where improvement is needed. A small minority of reports at course level are insufficiently focused on weaknesses. Quality assurance processes include regular observations of teaching and learning and areas of concern are effectively addressed. Standards have risen steadily over the past few years.

The effectiveness of the steps taken by the college to promote improvement since the last inspection

8. The college has made outstanding efforts to improve since the last inspection in 2001. Most of the issues raised have been addressed. The quality of the college's self-assessment report has improved markedly. The buildings are fully accessible to wheelchair users as a result of significant investment in lifts and new access points. Managers have also continued to make improvements to other aspects of provision that were judged good at the last inspection. For example, the pastoral system has been strengthened and the use of information learning technologies (ILT) has been further developed. Progress has been slower in improving key skills provision and work experience opportunities for learners.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- Strong Catholic ethos and shared values that create a highly supportive learning environment
- Equal opportunities permeate all aspects of college life
- Highly effective leadership and governance
- Comprehensive and rigorous self-assessment process
- High and improving standards achieved by learners
- Challenging targets set at all levels
- Outstanding spiritual and moral development
- Excellent enrichment opportunities for learners
- Very good communications with parents and carers
- Close monitoring of learners' progress
- Outstanding support for learners

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- The accreditation of key skills qualifications
- The quality of provision in a small minority of subjects
- Consistency of delivery of group tutorials

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Outstanding: grade 1

9. The college has high expectations of all its learners. Targets for success are realistic, challenging and are clearly communicated throughout the college. Learners achieve high standards on the large majority of courses. Standards achieved by learners in health and social care, leisure, travel and tourism, humanities and business are particularly impressive. However, standards on courses in ICT and on some courses in engineering have declined and are below the average for similar colleges. These areas have been identified within the college's self-assessment report and actions are in place to bring about improvement.
10. Success rates on advanced courses have improved each year since the last inspection. The overall success rate in 2005 was 82% which is higher than the average for similar colleges and represents an improvement of 10 percentage points over the past 2 years. In the same year the success rate for level 2 courses was also high and above average. Overall retention rates are high. Retention rates on A level courses have been consistently high over time and there has been a significant improvement in retention on AS level courses in the past year. In 2005 the overall retention rate for level 2 courses improved to well above average.
11. Pass rates at level 2 have been consistently high over the past four years, particularly for GNVQ intermediate courses. Standards are high on GCSE English and a high proportion of learners achieve grades A to C. Standards on GCSE mathematics have improved significantly in recent years. Pass rates on advanced courses are high and have improved much faster than the national rate. In 2005, the overall pass rate for advanced courses was 89%. In the same year learners achieved 100% pass rates in 18 of the 34 subjects offered at A level and in 10 of the 36 subjects offered at AS level. In 2005, pass rates on AS and A level courses were outstanding in performance studies, media, history, religious studies, geography, government and politics, English language and literature and English literature. Pass rates were also outstanding on advanced vocational courses in science, care, travel and tourism and business. Learners make very good progress during their time at the college. However, those with lower levels of attainment at GCSE when they start college make better progress than more able learners. The college has recognised this difference and achievements in AS level qualifications in 2005 indicate that changes that have been introduced are making a difference.
12. Learners make the most of all the college has to offer them and many have received external recognition and prizes for their work. The achievements of young people from minority ethnic backgrounds are very good. Learners are confident and demonstrate a mature attitude to their learning. They attend regularly and most are punctual for their lessons. They work well together in

lessons and are highly supportive of each other. The spiritual and moral development of learners is outstanding. They recognise and respect the different views and beliefs of others and express their individual faith with confidence. Many learners follow a nationally approved course in religious education and success rates are high.

Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

13. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that the overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Many teachers make skilful use of targeted questions to elicit well developed responses, involving and challenging all learners. In a minority of lessons, a few more able learners dominate discussions. Teachers frequently relate lessons to learners' own experiences and contemporary society. For example, in an English literature lesson the teacher successfully linked contemporary popular culture to the 17th century theatrical world, making 'The Tempest' alive and relevant. Learners use specialist terminology accurately and confidently. In many lessons, teachers check learners' understanding very effectively. For example, the use of small, hand-held whiteboards in science and mathematics makes it clear which learners understand and which do not. Learners generally work purposefully, are attentive and well motivated. They show mutual respect and genuine interest in their peers' views. Some lesson planning is less effective. In these lessons, it is not always clear what learners should be able to do or understand by the end of the session. Accommodation, ILT and resources are good. The learning resource centre provides an admirably quiet and high quality environment for focused study.
14. Teachers set regular and appropriate homework. They generally mark and return it promptly. Feedback is usually sufficiently detailed to allow learners to make improvements in their future work. Where appropriate, there are clear links with the assessment objectives of the course. Learners receive target grades, which take account of their previous performance in GCSEs and their current courses. The college monitors learners' progress towards these targets closely and frequently. In reporting on progress, teachers list appropriate actions for improvement. Learners also evaluate their own performance with their tutor, identifying steps for improvement. In both cases, most of the objectives identified are specific and helpful. A minority are too open-ended.
15. Learners with additional learning needs are identified at the beginning of their course and effective arrangements to support them are made. The college liaises closely with partner schools to evaluate learners' needs before they start their course. It also uses initial screening or early diagnostic assignments. Communications between learning support and curriculum staff are good. The learning support base room is bright and welcoming. The college has not yet assessed the relationship between the support it provides and the success of learners. The college skills development policy details opportunities for young people to develop an appropriate range of skills. Personal tutors track the development of the key skill of communication for

- which there is comprehensive guidance. Many learners produce portfolios, but very few complete the full key skills qualification.
16. Communication with parents and carers is regular and effective. They are present at the initial guidance interview before a learner joins the college, receive frequent written progress, attendance and punctuality reports and attend regular review evenings.
 17. The approach to educational and social inclusion is outstanding. The college is an inclusive and diverse community within which every person is valued and respected. In 2005/06 learners were recruited from 112 different institutions. 40% of learners are from denominations or faiths other than Catholicism. 71% are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Many learners come from socially disadvantaged areas of London. The college's provision sits comfortably within the Lewisham strategy for learners aged 14 to 19. There is an excellent range of advanced level courses for 16 to 18 year old learners. Provision at levels 1 and 2 is less extensive. There are plans to extend the choice for learners at level 2 and the college has also helped to develop courses at levels 1 and 2 within local partner schools.
 18. Pupils aged 14 to 16 from local schools are able to work towards a variety of courses including AS critical thinking. There are opportunities for year 12 learners to receive training as mentors. Learners and the college make excellent and positive contributions to the local community. Courses in IT and art are provided for the homeless within the parish and community days are arranged when learners organise events. The Catholic identity of the college is prominently stated in its promotional literature.
 19. There is an extensive range of excellent enrichment activities. Sports facilities are excellent and are very well used by learners. Employment skills' training has been introduced on foundation and intermediate business and health and care programmes. Learners on business courses benefit from links with a local university. The chaplaincy is responsive, accessible and welcoming and is well used by a range of young people. The regular opportunities for prayer and worship include a weekly celebration of Mass, a Gospel choir and the opportunity to pray through activities such as clay and stone painting. The chaplaincy also facilitates other enrichment activities such as Amnesty International. Learners on most vocational courses benefit from the links the college has with local employers. For example, in health and care, employers support the six monthly work placement programme. Employers attend the college to give talks on a variety of curriculum topics.
 20. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that learners receive outstanding guidance and support. It is a community where every person matters. Prospective learners receive extensive pre-course advice and guidance which familiarises them with what the college has to offer and helps them make suitable choices. They settle in quickly to the college with the help of well planned and innovative induction activities. Groups of upper sixth

learners are specially trained to lead the ice-breaker sessions. The college has strong support systems that nurture academic achievement. Extensive subject support is available outside the classroom both informally and through the workshops which all subjects offer at least weekly. The small numbers of learners with specific learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported.

21. Personal tutors set high expectations of attendance and work rate, closely monitor and review learners' progress and help them manage their learning. The group tutorial programme is relevant to learners' needs, encourages them to adopt a healthy lifestyle and underpins the college's mission and values. The materials are exemplary, though they are not always well used. Inspectors agreed with the judgment in the self-assessment report that there is inconsistency in the delivery of group tutorials. The range of opportunities for spiritual and moral development is outstanding. Learners enjoy the reflective and imaginative general religious education lessons. They have an exceptionally wide range of staff to turn to for support with personal issues. The recently established provision for supporting young people with mental health issues is already being well used. The careers guidance and education provision provides very good support for learners' economic well being. It is effective in raising the aspirations of learners and supporting the many successful applications to employment and further and higher education.

Leadership and management

Outstanding: grade 1

22. Leadership and management are outstanding. The principal, senior managers and governors set a clear strategic direction for the college. Governors and managers are fully committed to promoting the Catholic ethos. Gospel values underpin all the college's work and the college mission is clearly understood and shared by all staff. College and governors' meetings start with prayer.
23. Managers, teachers and governors share a strong focus on raising achievement and supporting learners. This includes personal development as well as academic performance. Overall college success rates have risen steadily over the last 3 years. The college has made good progress in addressing most weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The quality assurance framework is well established, effective and understood by staff. The self-assessment process is comprehensive and rigorous. All curriculum areas and support services evaluate their own performance. Senior managers moderate all the resulting reviews which form the basis of the overall college report. The college has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Where underperformance has been identified, managers take appropriate actions promptly to bring about improvements.
24. The college sets challenging targets at all levels, using success rates and value added progress measures, with reference to previous performance and national benchmarks. Challenging targets for improvement are also set in the operational plan and progress is regularly monitored by senior managers and governors.

25. Equality of opportunity permeates the life of the college. Managers have successfully established a community in which every person matters and is treated equally, whatever their gender, ethnic origin or role within the college. The college has clear equal opportunities and race equality policies. There is an appropriate child protection policy and staff and governors are aware of their legal responsibilities. Issues are monitored effectively by managers and governors through reports that utilize equality and diversity impact measures.
26. The college has begun to monitor the performance of different groups of learners through examination results and progress relative to prior attainment at GCSE. The underperformance of boys has been identified as an area for improvement and the college is working with partner schools on early intervention strategies.
27. Resources are good. The college has invested significantly in accommodation since the last inspection, including a new sports hall and converting the old gym into new classrooms. The learning resource centre has a good range of resources and is well used. The college complies with the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act. Staff are well qualified in their subjects and all teachers have a teaching qualification or are in training to acquire one. Carefully differentiated appraisals systems cover all teaching and support staff. Staff find appraisal supportive, with time to reflect on their practice and achievements. Staff development needs are identified through lesson observations, staff appraisal and the self-assessment process.
28. Governance is very strong. Governors demonstrate a clear commitment to the college and have a clear sense and understanding of the Catholic ethos. They monitor performance and learners' achievements closely and know the college's strengths and weaknesses. They receive regular and appropriate reports, such as, management accounts and reports on health and safety issues and complaints. Relationships between governors and senior managers are excellent. Financial management is strong and the college provides excellent value for money.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age.

For courses completed between 2002 and 2004, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	01/02	14	93	54	39	0		32	
	02/03	14	100	68	32	0		40	
	03/04	22	91	74	17	10	100	49	51
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	14	93			0			
	02/03	14	100			0			
	03/04	22	91			0			
NVQs	01/02	0				0			
	02/03	0				0			
	03/04	0				0			
Other	01/02	0		47		0		32	
	02/03	0		68		0		40	
	03/04	0		73		10	100	50	50

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream Level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age.

For courses completed between 2002 and 2004, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	01/02	446	73	69	4	3	33	40	
	02/03	501	71	71	1	10	40	48	-8
	03/04	530	79	75	4	13	85	47	37
GCSEs	01/02	279	76	72	5	3	33		
	02/03	323	67	73	-6	10	40		
	03/04	349	77	77	-1	13	85		
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	126	64	70	-5	0			
	02/03	138	79	69	10	0			
	03/04	137	84	71	13	0			
NVQs	01/02	0				0			
	02/03	0				0			
	03/04	0				0		52	
Other	01/02	41	78			0		29	
	02/03	40	75	62	13	0		41	
	03/04	44	89	73	15	0		32	

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age.

For courses completed between 2002 and 2004, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

National Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts-Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts-Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	01.02	2,876	71	71	0	10	90	49	41
	02.03	4,378	72	72	0	18	44	53	-9
	03.04	4,074	78	75	3	7	71	58	14
A/A2 levels	01.02	1,026	87	85	2	8	88		
	02.03	1,069	88	88	1	8	50		
	03.04	1,079	87	89	-2	6	83		
AS levels	01.02	1,761	63	66	-4	0			
	02.03	1,917	69	66	3	1	100		
	03.04	2,018	74	69	5	1	0		
GNVQs and Precursors	01.02	69	53	50	3	2	100		
	02.03	127	30	63	-33	4	25		
	03.04	222	78	68	11	0			
NVQs	01.02	0				0		56	
	02.03	0				0		52	
	03.04	0				0		51	
Other	01.02	0				0		21	
	02.03	1,265	66	54	12	5	40		
	03.04	755	39	57	-18	0			