Shipley College

ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Inspection report

Contents

Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Shipley College
Type of college:	General further education
Principal:	Jean McAllister
Address of college:	Shipley Road Exhibition Road Shipley West Yorkshire BD18 3JW
Telephone number:	01274 327 207
Fax number:	01274 327 208
Chair of governors:	Mr Ronnie Mallinson
Unique reference number:	130534
Name of lead inspector:	Fred Brown, ALI
Dates of inspection:	27 February – 3 March 2006

Background of the organisation

1.   Shipley College is a general further education college, four miles north of the centre of Bradford in West Yorkshire. Small and medium size employers offer most of the employment in the area. The Bradford metropolitan district has one of the lowest 'staying in learning' rates after the age of 16. In year 11 young people achieve fewer A*-C grades at GCSE than elsewhere in West Yorkshire. There is a high level of poverty in the district with 63.3% of wards falling within the 20% most deprived wards in England. The unemployment rate, at about 5%, is above the national average and the level of youth unemployment is even higher. Some 16% of the population of Bradford are of a minority ethnic origin. Around 10% of enrolled learners are from a minority ethnic background. Thirty nine per cent of learners aged 16 to 18 are from a minority ethnic background, mostly of south Asian origin.

2.   The majority of courses are offered in Saltaire in historic buildings, college-owned or leased from the Salt Foundation. The college also provides courses in many local community centres and on employers' premises.

3.   The college offers courses across all subject sector areas except for engineering and construction. The total number of learners in the college in 2004-05 was 5,780. The highest numbers of enrolments were in information and communication technology (ICT), arts, media and publishing and preparation for life and work. The number of adult learners was 5,204, of whom just over 90% were part-time. More than two thirds of learners aged 16-18 are full time. Just over 60% of learners are women. Around 10% are from minority ethnic groups. The college had 122 work-based learners in 2004-05.

4.   Local Skills Council (LSC) funded, work-based learning is available in five areas of learning. Adult learners have traditionally comprised the majority of the college's provision. For 2005-06, the college has been funded for 76 work-based learners aged 16-18 and 65 learners over 19. The college has been awarded Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status for its provision in health and care of the elder person.

5.   The college's mission is to provide '... a broad, balanced programme of provision at all levels for both young people and adults'; to be a 'college for business' with very good links with local employers; a 'college for the community' with a clear commitment to widening participation; a 'college for the individual' where all students are included and encouraged to achieve their personal best.

Scope of the inspection

6. 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
- specialist provision in: health, care and public services; ICT; leisure, travel and tourism; crafts, creative arts and design; and foundation for learning and life

Summary of grades awarded

| Effectiveness of provision | Good: grade 2 |

| Capacity to improve | Good: grade 2 |

| Achievements and standards | Good: grade 2 |

| Quality of provision | Good: grade 2 |

| Leadership and management | Good: grade 2 |

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.

Curriculum areas

Health, public services and care	Good: grade 2

Information and communication technology	Good: grade 2

Leisure, travel and tourism	Satisfactory: grade 3

Crafts, creative arts and design	Good: grade 2

Foundation for learning and life	Satisfactory: grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision   Good: grade 2

7.   This is a good college. Learners' achievements are good overall. Success rates are good on short qualifications. Success rates have improved significantly by over 10 per cent for the 60 per cent of learners on long qualifications at levels 2 and 3 for adult learners and for 16-18 learners at levels 1 and 2 in 2004-05. Success rates on level 1 long courses are consistently high and improving. Retention rates for over 85 per cent of learners are at or above national averages. There are low success rates for 16-18 learners at level 3 in 2004-05. Standards of work are good for most learners in the college, the workplace and the community. The progression rate for Entry to Employment (E2E) learners to positive destinations is high. Framework achievements by apprentices are low.

8.   Teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection in most curriculum areas. Teaching is particularly good in health, public services and care, ICT, and crafts, creative arts and design. Its quality in foundation for learning and life is uneven. Teachers are well-qualified. They use effective teaching methods to provide good learning and develop learners' skills well. Teachers provide effective guidance to learners on how to improve. Information technology is increasingly used to enhance teaching and for independent learning.

9.   The colleges approach to social and educational inclusion is outstanding. Many courses are targeted successfully at those under-represented in education. The provision is very responsive to employer and community needs. The college's approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners is very good.

10.   Learners receive good guidance and support. Well-resourced support services contribute effectively to improving learners' performance. Support is particularly good for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and additional needs in literacy and numeracy. Tutorials help full-time learners make good progress in their studies. These are carefully linked to "COAVAS", the college's system for measuring how far learners' progress meets or exceeds their expected outcomes.

11.   Leadership and management are good. Governors and the principal set a clear direction for the college. Governors monitor and challenge the performance of managers appropriately. Managers are effective at raising standards of provision.

Capacity to improve   Good: grade 2

12.   The college demonstrates a good capacity to improve its provision for
      learners. The implementation of quality assurance systems has brought about
      improvements in learners' experiences. The college has improved learners'
      pass rates in many areas and most retention rates are at or above national
      averages. Quality assurance arrangements have not yet had sufficient impact
      on teaching and learning in some areas of the college.

13.   Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment report in most areas. The
      self-assessment process is rigorous and comprehensive. Much of the report is
      evaluative but parts of it are too descriptive. The college over-graded the
      quality of its teaching and learning. Course and sector action plans take
      account of local and national priorities. The self-assessment process has been
      successful in supporting improvements in ICT and in health, public services
      and care, but has been less successful in foundation for learning and leisure.

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

14.   The college has made good progress in addressing the areas for improvement
      noted in the last inspection. The central data for monitoring performance are
      now more accurate, readily available and accessible to more managers and
      teachers. Managers now use data appropriately to inform decisions. Teaching
      has improved in most curriculum areas. Learners' retention rates are mostly at
      or above national averages. The quality assurance processes have improved
      since the last inspection. Most managers implement them well. The
      coordination of literacy and numeracy provision has improved and is now
      satisfactory.

Key strengths of the college

STRENGTHS

- good progress by learners in developing vocational skills
- high achievement rates by adult learners
- good standard of learners' work in the college, the community and the
  workplace
- the effective provision for additional learning needs
- highly effective links with external partners
- good support for learners
- the outstanding arrangements to ensure that every child matters
- outstanding promotion and practice of equality and diversity
- outstanding governance

Areas for improvement

THE COLLEGE SHOULD ADDRESS

- the low success rate for 16-18 learners at level 3 in 2004-05
- the low framework achievement in work-based learning
- the need to improve the quality of teaching and learning in foundation for learning and life
- the insufficiently thorough implementation of quality assurance in some areas

Main findings

Achievements and standards   Good: grade 2

Contributory grades:
Learners aged 16-18   *Satisfactory: grade 3*
Work-based learning   *Satisfactory: grade 3*

15.   Achievements and standards are good overall. Since the last inspection,
       success rates for learners aged 16-18 on long courses at level 1 have been
       high. At level 2 they have steadily improved and are now satisfactory and just
       above the national average. The level 3 success rate was low in 2004-05
       having declined considerably from its rate in the previous year which was
       satisfactory. The retention rate at level 1 is consistently high. At level 2 it was
       high in 2004-05. The rate is low on level 3. College data on previously poorly
       performing level 3 courses show improved in-year retention at the time of the
       inspection by comparison with twelve months ago. Arrangements for
       additional learning support are particularly effective in improving retention.
       Retention rates for learners receiving support are seven per cent higher than
       for those without support. Key skills achievements are improving steadily in
       most areas.

16.   Success rates are good overall for adult learners who form more than 65% of
       college learners. Success rates are high for adult learners on long courses at
       level 1 although they declined in 2004-05 to the national average. Since the
       last inspection they have steadily improved at levels 2 and 3 and are high in
       2004-05 when they increased by over 10%. Short course success rates are
       consistently good on courses lasting between 5 and 24 weeks.

17.   In adult and community learning most learners successfully achieve their
       learning goals and develop their confidence and self-esteem.

18.   The proportion of E2E learners, in 2004-05 who progressed to other training
       programmes or work is high, a strength recognised in the self-assessment
       report. The proportion of work-based learners that successfully complete their
       apprenticeship is improving but still very low.

19.   Learners make good progress in developing their vocational skills. Health and
       care learners develop good professional skills through work experience.
       Learners aged 14-16 in ICT acquire a particularly good knowledge of
       computer programmes. The written work of travel and tourism learners is well
       presented and makes good use of hyperlinks and good quality graphics. More
       confident crafts learners successfully undertake ambitious projects that test
       their skills. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities improve their
       literacy and numeracy skills and their readiness for work. The self-assessment
       report is thorough and accurate with regard to learners' skills development.

Quality of provision   Good: grade 2

Contributory grades:

Work-based learning   *Satisfactory: grade 3*

20. The inspection in 2002 found teaching and learning to be satisfactory. It has improved overall with examples of good practice in three curriculum areas. It remains uneven in quality in Foundation for learning and life. The teaching of learners aged 14-16 is good. The teaching of E2E learners is good. The teaching in work-based learning enables learners to achieve successfully their NVQs but has been slower in bringing about full framework achievements. The improvement of teaching has been a key priority for managers. New teachers are well supported and their early performance is carefully monitored. Inspectors found some improvements in teaching since the last inspection. However, the lessons observed in 2004-05, and used to inform the college's self-assessment report are over-graded. The college failed to identify pockets of unsatisfactory teaching in one curriculum area. The college has subsequently improved its lesson observation scheme.

21. Teachers are highly motivated. Some lessons are inspirational. Most lessons include a good range of activities which take good account of the learning needs of all students. Teachers work closely with learning support assistants and this helps learners receiving support to make good progress. Many course teams successfully incorporate key skills in vocational learning. Learners work hard. Some make good use of e-portfolios to collate evidence of key skills achievement. Information technology (IT) is increasingly used to enhance teaching and for independent learning. Good IT resources are available in most classrooms but there are not enough in some outreach centres. In a minority of lessons too little account is taken of what learners already know and there is insufficient challenge for more able learners. Some lessons are unsatisfactory. In these lessons learning objectives are too general to support individual learning needs. Some lessons focus too much on completing tasks rather than the acquisition of new knowledge or skills. Teachers are well qualified and many have appropriate industrial experience.

22. Teachers make good use of the information gained from the initial assessment of full-time learners to identify specific additional learning support needs. Entry and level 1 learners attend a half day assessment and many entry level learners have an opportunity to shadow a course before it begins. Support is provided quickly. Work is thoroughly assessed. Teachers provide helpful written feedback with suggestions for improvement. The progress of most learners is carefully monitored and there is good communication with parents or carers. In some areas individual learning goals are not sufficiently specific or challenging.

23. The college very effectively meets the needs and interests of learners. The wide range of courses meets the needs of employers, the community and individuals. Since the last inspection, the college has established a CoVE in health and care of the elder person, and introduced more provision at entry levels 1 and 3. Most programmes have good progression routes from entry level to level 3. Links with employers, schools and community organisations are outstanding. Over 60 employers are involved in work-based learning. College managers work collaboratively with schools and other providers. There is a successful vocational programme for 14-16 year olds. Through good collaboration with local community groups, adult learning programmes are delivered in over 50 centres. The college's approach to inclusion is outstanding. Governors, managers and staff effectively support initiatives to widen participation. Recruitment levels from minority ethnic groups, and disadvantaged wards are high. Full-time learners benefit from an imaginative range of enrichment activities. A significant programme is devised specifically for entry level learners. The college successfully develops collaborative bids, for example, for AimHigher funding for enrichment. All full-time learners benefit from an effective personal and social development programme and many undertake an extended work-placement.

24. Enthusiastic and caring staff provide good guidance and support for learners. Potential learners benefit from impartial advice. Admissions systems are effective. Publicity and promotional events provide good information for prospective learners. The part-time prospectus is comprehensive but dull. Initial assessment and identification of learning support needs for all full-time and most part-time learners is good except for adults studying in the community. In-class additional learning support is effective. Good links with schools contribute to effective transition to college. Support for learners aged 14-16 is particularly good. Course inductions are thorough and tutorial support for all learners is good. Target setting and monitoring of learners' progress is effective in most areas. Most learners are set clear learning targets and are aware of the progress they are making. Assignment action planning has led to a reduction in the number of late submissions for many learners. Strategies are in place to improve punctuality and attendance. Learners receive effective careers advice and guidance for higher education entry, in collaboration with external organisations and agencies.

Leadership and management   Good: grade 2

25. Leadership and management are good. The principal, governors and senior managers provide a very clear strategic direction to improve learners' experiences. They communicate this effectively to all staff and to external partners. The college collaborates well with other agencies and organisations to bring about improvements in education and training.

26. The quality assurance systems, policies and procedures are detailed and comprehensive but overly complex. Self-assessment is thorough, inclusive and

has contributed to the successful improvements in the quality of provision. Quality improvement strategies have improved learners' success rates. The consistency of implementation however, is variable. In most sectors, managers take effective action to raise standards. In other sectors, managers give insufficient attention to areas of concern and the review process is less effective. The lesson observation process is thorough but internal observers grade lessons too highly.

27. Leadership and management of most curriculum areas and community provision are good. The management of work-based learning has been strengthened. Senior managers and heads of service give high priority to improving facilities and resources for learners. In a few areas managers are not as effective and learners' success rates have declined or are below national averages.

28. The promotion and practice of equality of opportunity are outstanding. The college provides a safe learning environment for learners from diverse backgrounds. Governors and managers work extensively with staff, learners and outside agencies to promote an ethos of respect for others' race, culture and faith. The college meets effectively the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. It analyses data rigorously by gender, ethnicity, age, disability and ward uplift and takes appropriate action. The college has excellent arrangements to support improvements in outcomes for children and young people as required by the Children Act and to meet the requirements of the Child Protection Act.

29. Staff are well qualified and the procedures for staff induction, staff development and appraisal are very thorough. The college takes care to avoid prejudice in the selection of staff. Managers do not report on recruitment and promotion trends in terms of gender, ethnicity, age and disability.

30. Appropriate health and safety policies are in place. The accommodation is well maintained and the college has improved its information communication and information learning technology resources. The library and learning resource centres are well equipped.

31. Financial management and control are good. Governors and managers prioritise investments to improve learners' facilities and use rigorous planning and purchasing systems. The college expects to remedy its planned deficit by 2007. Success rates of learners improved in some areas in 2004-05 but declined in others. The college provides good value for money.

32. Governance is outstanding. Governors are very committed to improving learners' experiences and outcomes. They put to highly effective use in sub-committees their wide range of relevant skills. Governors probe and challenge proposals from senior managers and intervene appropriately.

Curriculum area inspections

Health, public services and care   Good: grade 2

Context

33. The college offers full-time BTEC courses in care and early years at levels 1 to 3 and health studies at level 3. Part-time courses include counselling, NVQs in early years and care and a registered manager's award. There are 134 full-time learners and 826 part-time learners. The college has a CoVE in health and care of the elder person. A portfolio of short courses for employers includes first aid and safety courses. Twenty three young people aged 14-16 attend a choice of BTEC Introductory and First Certificates in care. GCSE human physiology is provided during the evening. There are 12 apprentices on level 2 and 17 on level 3 early years programmes.

STRENGTHS

- high retention and pass rates on NVQ courses
- high pass rates on short courses
- very effective development of personal and professional skills
- much good teaching
- very good response to employer needs
- effective programme management

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low success rates on some courses
- poor completion of apprenticeship frameworks

Achievements and standards

34. Success rates for the large number of learners on NVQ care courses at levels 2 and 3 are consistently high and more than 25% above national averages. Retention and pass rates on short courses are high. They are improving for most learners on full-time courses and over 40% of learners achieve higher than their predicted grade. They are low for the small number of learners on the BTEC Introductory Diploma in health and social care and the National Diploma in early years. Achievement of full frameworks is poor. Learners develop diverse personal and professional skills through well-planned work experience. By gaining additional qualifications, such as in paediatric first aid, they enhance their career prospects. There is good progression to further study or relevant employment at all levels.

Quality of provision

35.   Much of the teaching is good and inspires learners to succeed. Teachers plan lessons well and make good use of the additional support provided by learning support assistants. Topics are varied and this engages learners well. The better teachers provide additional activities to challenge more able learners. Learners are encouraged to be responsible for their own learning and to develop their research skills. Key and wider key skills are developed through vocational assignments with additional workshops in the application of number. There is a good range of physical resources in all main rooms. Lap top computers are available for loan.

36.   Learners understand set tasks and grading criteria. Learners appreciate teacher's comments which enable them to improve their work. Internal verification is well planned and systematically recorded. Tutorials are used effectively to set and monitor challenging targets for individuals.

37.   A broad range of full and part-time provision, from levels 1 to 4, meets local, employer and national priorities. Programmes are offered flexibly to meet learners' shift patterns. Assessment is arranged on employer premises during night shifts as required. Courses for Year 10 and 11 pupils are a product of good school links. The CoVE is well managed and informed by very good liaison with employers.

Leadership and management

38.   Programme management is good. Effective action has been taken to rectify most weaknesses identified in the last inspection. Staff use data effectively to review the curriculum and action plans. Revised quality assurance procedures have improved assessment practice. Staff have relevant vocational qualifications and experience. Checks on staff qualifications and expertise occur through appraisal. Equality and diversity is actively promoted in all aspects of provision. Personal and social development sessions enable learners to study the requirements of the Children Act. Additional lessons enhance learners' understanding of health and safety.

Information and Communication Technology   Good: grade 2

Context

39.   The programme includes full- and part-time courses at Foundation,
        Intermediate and Advanced levels. There are 975 part-time learners on
        courses that include European Computer Driving License (ECDL), and
        Computer Literacy and Information Technology (CLAIT). Of these, 149 attend
        Learndirect courses. There are 144 learners on full-time courses that include
        level 1 IT, and BTEC First and National Diplomas. Seventy three percent of
        these learners are aged 16-18. Fifty two learners aged 14 to 16 from partner
        schools attend employment-related courses.

STRENGTHS

   •   high and improving retention
   •   good standard of learners' work
   •   effective teaching and learning
   •   outstanding support
   •   the wide range of programmes
   •   good curriculum management

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

   •   some poor achievement

Achievement and standards

40.   Retention rates on full- and part-time courses at level 1, 2 and 3 are good and
        have improved steadily for three years. Pass rates on level 2 courses are
        mostly good. However, pass rates for Level 1 CLAIT courses and Level 3 AVCE
        are very low. Learners acquire good IT skills and pay careful attention to
        health and safety in practical workshop sessions. Assignments include clear
        goals for learner achievement and this has led to a reduction in late
        submissions and improved standards in learners' work. Learners aged 14-16
        acquire particularly good knowledge of a range of computer programmes.
        Attendance rates are high for all learners.

Quality of provision

41.   Much of the teaching and learning is good. Well planned group learning
        activities are combined with specific tasks to support less able individual
        learners. Many lessons successfully blend short explanations and frequent
        learner activity. Teachers make good use of Intranet materials and a virtual
        learning environment to support learners. The quality of assignment feedback
        is frequently outstanding. Data projectors are available to teachers in most
        classrooms. Reference materials in the learning resource centre are up-to-

date. Parents and carers of children are kept regularly informed of learners' progress.

42. The range of programmes available to meet learners' aspirations is good. Learners can progress from level 1 programmes to more specialised courses at levels 2 and 3. The enrichment programme is diverse. One group were able recently to contrast work in a coal mine with employment in a newer, high-technology industry.

43. The guidance and support learners receive is outstanding. One-to-one tutorials are arranged daily for learners identified as being at risk. Tutorials include topics such as the potential damage caused by anti-social behaviour. Careers advice is particularly valued by learners. Learners are motivated by congratulatory letters, signed by senior managers, sent in recognition of their achievements. There is a particularly high level of care for the 14-16 age group. Support for part-time adult learners is also good. Many adult learners benefit from programmes that allow them to study at times that suit them. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress is good. Initial assessments are used effectively to plan for individual support.

Leadership and management

44. Leadership and management are good. Communication between staff is good. There are regular team meetings and good opportunities for staff development. Managers focus clearly on raising standards. Management information is used well to improve retention and achievement. Staff demonstrate their good understanding of equal opportunities when designing schemes of work. Policies on harassment and bullying are reinforced during tutorials. Self-assessment is accurate and good progress has been made in addressing weaknesses of the last inspection report.

Leisure, travel and tourism   Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

45.   Full-time courses include introductory, First and National Diplomas in sport
       and travel and tourism. There are 15 learners on Foundation, 31 at
       Intermediate and 46 at Advanced level. Most full-time learners are aged 16 to
       18. Fourteen adult learners attend the cabin crew qualification. Part-time
       additional qualifications are available to full-time sports learners in sports
       leadership and coaching. GSCE travel and tourism is offered to learners aged
       14-16 from local schools.

STRENGTHS

   • well planned lessons
   • good opportunities for key skills assessment in vocational programmes
   • good monitoring of learners' progress

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

   • poor retention on level 3 courses for 16-18 year old learners
   • ineffective quality improvement plans

Achievements and standards

46.   There are very few courses where learners' success rates are good. High pass
       rates on many programmes are often accompanied by low retention rates.
       Success rates at levels 1 and 2 are around the national average. However, a
       pattern of low retention, particularly at level 3, affects adversely overall
       success rates. The pass rates on key skills are variable. In ICT they are high at
       64% at level 1 but low at level 2 for application of number. Learners' work is
       of a good standard. Learners demonstrate well developed IT skills in their
       work. Work is thorough, detailed, well presented with hyperlinks and good
       quality images and graphics.

Quality of provision

47.   Lessons are well planned. They include varied learning activities that engage
       all learners and build knowledge and practical skills step by step. Learners
       display a sound knowledge and draw on industrial examples and visits to
       hotels to illustrate their work. Learners use the internet confidently to
       research current methods of travel and fares. A few teachers fail to
       successfully maintain learners' interest or reinforce key learning points.

48.   Opportunities for learners to acquire and to be assessed for their key skills in their vocational assignments are good. Learners value highly these opportunities and collate their evidence in an e-portfolio, using their IT skills to create hyper-links from the electronic assessment front cover sheets.

49.   Classrooms are well equipped with networked computers. Sports resources have improved since the last inspection although available gym space limits the type and scale of activities. Some lessons are held in a large local sports hall but this has limited teaching space. Access for wheelchair users is difficult. Staff are well qualified and have relevant industrial experience.

50.   Learners' progress is well monitored. Learners are aware of their progress towards their target grades. They receive supportive written feedback on their assignments, for example on how to improve their content and presentation. The personal and social development programme is comprehensive. Internal verification is rigorous. A few assignment briefs are issued to learners before verification and require subsequent amendment. The range of courses offers good progression opportunities for full-time learners.

Leadership and management

51.   Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear commitment to improve the learners' experience. Staff development focuses on the impact on successful learning of the use of ILT and measures to provide for learners with different abilities. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory.

52.   Quality improvement plans are ineffective particularly at course level. Areas for improvement are not defined in sufficient detail and action plans are not specific enough. Course reviews and self-assessment focus insufficiently on the quality of teaching and learning and the outcomes of lesson observations.

Crafts, creative arts and design   Good: grade 2

Context

53.   The full-time programme includes BTEC Diploma courses in art, design and media at levels 1, 2 and 3, an art and design AVCE, and GCE AS and A2 courses in graphic design. There are First Diploma courses in performing arts and dance and a National Diploma in performing arts. Thirty part-time practical craft courses run in the main college and six community learning centres. The college uses two specialist dance studios. Thirty learners attend full-time art and craft programmes and 37 attend full-time performing arts programmes. There are 605 part-time learners. About two thirds of learners are female.

STRENGTHS

- high achievement rates
- learners' good technical skills
- effective teaching and learning
- good support for learners
- effective curriculum management

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- insufficiently rigorous observation of teaching and learning

Achievements and standards

54.   Success rates of full-time learners are high with 75% of the 36 who started in 2004-05 successfully achieving their qualification. Retention and achievement rates are good for part-time learners on creative crafts courses. Several of the many full-time learners who progress to higher education are the first in their family to do so. Learners are motivated, acquire good technical skills, and make rapid progress. Standards of finished work are good. Learners' design ideas are imaginative and original. More confident learners share their skills with others and many successfully undertake ambitious projects that test their skills. Dressmaking learners design and make complex items such as bridesmaids' dresses and tailored jackets some of which have special features such as a Chanel style lining. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

55.   Teaching and learning are good. Learners work with energy and conviction to build their skills. Teachers use their professional expertise well to motivate learners. Teachers make good use of demonstrations to inspire the learners. Feedback to learners focuses appropriately on points for improvement to their assignments. Teachers monitor thoroughly individual learners' progress. Challenging learning goals are set by teachers which raise the aspirations of

learners. Assignments are illustrated by good graphics. Particularly effective handouts use diagrams to consolidate learners' understanding of techniques. Some learners keep comprehensive reference files as source materials which include samples of their work. A few lesson plans do not focus sufficiently on learning objectives. Some tutors are not sufficiently aware of the need to identify specific learning outcomes.

56. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory. Some specialist equipment such as cutting machines for rug making is of good quality. Good use is made of specialist dance studios. Learners using an open plan art studio are liable to disturbance from other users. Computers with digital imaging software are available in all studios. Access to accommodation is satisfactory and technical support is good.

57. Caring staff provide good support for learners. Additional support needs are assessed efficiently. One to one support is arranged quickly to enable learners to participate fully in lessons. Learners receive detailed feedback in tutorials every six weeks on the progress they are making. Learners' progress in key skills is carefully monitored.

Leadership and management

58. Curriculum management is effective. There is a strong drive for quality improvement. Measures to tackle problems in key skills and retention are starting to work. Course assessment reports are used effectively to identify the need for prompt action. Tutors are well supported. Management data is used well to support course reviews. Self-assessment is mostly accurate but did not identify the weakness found by inspectors.

59. The observation of teaching and learning is insufficiently rigorous. Grades awarded are too generous. Observation reports are insufficiently evaluative and actions for improvement are sometimes unclear.

Foundation for learning & life   Satisfactory : grade 3

Context

60.   The college offers part-time day and evening courses for adults in literacy,
       numeracy and in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) in the college
       and at local community venues. There are 274 enrolments in ESOL and 427
       enrolments on literacy and numeracy programmes. Forty nine learners aged
       16-19 and 19 adults attend full-time day courses for entry level learners on
       provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In addition
       there are 19 part-time adult learners on these courses.

STRENGTHS

   •   good development of independent living and leisure skills
   •   strong community links which provide good learning opportunities
   •   effective in-class support for entry level learners

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

   •   some unsatisfactory teaching for ESOL and entry level learners
   •   insufficiently thorough monitoring of learners' progress
   •   insufficiently clear action planning

Achievements and standards

61.   In most lessons learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities develop
       good independent living and leisure skills. These learners are confident and
       grow in self-esteem. They improve their literacy and numeracy skills and their
       readiness for work. Learners developing their numeracy skills are able to do
       complex subtractions, estimate costs, calculate shopping bills and work out
       change. Learners make satisfactory progress in ESOL and literacy and
       numeracy classes. Adult learners, in 2004-05, achieved many of the personal
       learning goals set for them.

Quality of provision

62.   Effective partnerships with local community organisations enhance learning
       opportunities for disadvantaged groups. Courses are successfully targeted at
       Bangladeshi women and groups with mental health difficulties. Adult learners
       value the locally accessible provision that is supported by crèche facilities.
       Young learners benefit from the health and careers advice from referral
       agencies.

63. Highly-valued specialist support is an integral part of the good in-class support for entry level learners. Teachers enhance learner progress by integrating the contribution of learning assistants into their lesson planning. Good support is given to adult learners in the community.

64. Some teaching in ESOL and for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is unsatisfactory. In some ESOL lessons, learning objectives are too broad and do not focus sufficiently on the development of language skills. The range of teaching methods is narrow. Some community venues have insufficient ILT facilities. There is an over-reliance on published materials which are not always relevant to the individual needs of learners. In both ESOL and entry level provision insufficient attention is paid to individual learner needs. Tasks are sometimes inappropriate and not suitably adapted to challenge the more able learners.

65. The monitoring of learners' progress is insufficiently thorough. Learning targets are often not sufficiently specific, measurable or adapted to the individual learner. In ESOL classes individual learning targets are not reviewed frequently enough to help learners know how to improve. Learners' day to day progress is not systematically recorded by tutors. Learners keep a diary of topics covered in classes but this does not include a record of progress made.

Leadership and management

66. Programme management is satisfactory. Motivated staff benefit from a broad staff development programme. Equality is promoted through course materials and teaching methods.

67. Some course reviews are insufficiently evaluative and self-critical. They are not detailed enough and data is not analysed effectively. They include no suggestions for improving the low attendance in literacy and numeracy. The targets in action plans are insufficiently quantifiable to plan effectively for improvement. The sector action plan lacks specific measurable objectives. Some weaknesses identified at inspection were not recognised in the self-assessment report.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2002 to 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	02/03	259	59	56	2	1117	63	55	8
	03/04	313	61	60	1	1111	75	59	16
	04/05	301	71	-	-	1379	61	-	-
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	79	67	60	7	4	25	47	-22
	03/04	67	67	65	2	2	50	52	-2
	04/05	5	80	-	-	-	-	-	-
NVQs	02/03	0	-	56	-	8	0	57	-57
	03/04	0	-	61	-	8	50	62	-12
	04/05	10	60	-	-	8	63	-	-
Other	02/03	180	55	56	-1	1105	64	55	9
	03/04	246	60	60	0	1101	75	59	16
	04/05	286	71	-	-	1371	61	-	-

Figures for 2004-05 based on college data.

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2002 to 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	02/03	300	47	52	-5	606	42	49	-7
	03/04	237	50	56	-6	740	56	53	3
	04/05	230	59	-	-	533	66	-	-
GCSEs	02/03	76	42	57	-15	68	32	55	-23
	03/04	40	40	61	-21	59	58	59	-1
	04/05	80	44	-	-	83	60	-	-
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	72	60	59	1	12	25	53	-28
	03/04	52	58	63	-5	24	42	57	-15
	04/05	14	86	-	-	-	-	-	-
NVQs	02/03	2	50	42	8	73	41	49	-8
	03/04	6	50	52	-2	94	65	53	12
	04/05	3	33	-	-	123	68	-	-
Other	02/03	150	43	50	-7	453	44	48	-4
	03/04	139	50	54	-4	563	56	52	4
	04/05	133	65	-	-	327	67	-	-

Figures for 2004-05 based on college data.

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2002 to 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*
3 Long	02/03	365	47	62	-15	950	46	51	-5
	03/04	218	61	64	-3	512	47	53	-6
	04/05	243	47	-	-	452	59	-	-
A/A2 Levels	02/03	41	54	82	-28	21	71	63	8
	03/04	41	95	84	11	6	50	66	-16
	04/05	27	52	-	-	7	86	-	-
AS Levels	02/03	129	48	61	-13	39	38	48	-10
	03/04	62	56	63	-7	18	50	50	0
	04/05	90	46	-	-	13	46	-	-
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	146	35	50	-15	100	28	45	-17
	03/04	58	40	52	-12	59	32	43	-11
	04/05	43	33	-	-	7	86	-	-
NVQs	02/03	7	0	51	-51	185	31	45	-14
	03/04	1	0	54	-54	126	48	47	1
	04/05	-	-	-	-	133	65	-	-
Other	02/03	42	86	55	31	605	54	54	0
	03/04	56	63	56	7	303	50	56	-6
	04/05	83	55	-	-	292	55	-	-

Figures for 2004-05 based on college data.

Table 4

Success rates on mainstream higher level qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2001/02 to 2003/04, 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*
H Long	01/02	0		40		11	18	37	*-19*
	02/03	0		51		41	0	41	*-41*
	03/04	0		51		92	43	44	*0*
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	0				0			
	02/03	0				0			
	03/04	0				0			
NVQs	01/02	0				11	18	36	*-17*
	02/03	0				41	0	38	*-38*
	03/04	0				79	37	39	*-3*
Other	01/02	0		41		0		38	
	02/03	0		53		0		42	
	03/04	0		54		13	85	47	*38*

Table 5

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2003 to 2005

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	66	17%	33%	47%	50%
	Advanced	50	28%	32%	64%	50%
2004/05	Apprenticeship	73	27%	40%	34%	51%
	Advanced	49	0%	38%	14%	52%

*   Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

**   College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'