



Brooklands College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

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Basic information about the college

Name of college: Brooklands College

Type of college: General Further Education College

Principal: Mr Colin Staff

Address of college: Heath Road, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 8TT

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Chair of governors: Margaret Hicks

Unique reference number: 130825

Name of lead inspector: Kenneth L. Jones HMI

Dates of inspection: 16-20 January 2006

Background of the organisation

1. Brooklands College is a large General Further Education College with its main campus situated close to the town of Weybridge in Surrey. Part-time courses, mostly in basic skills, are offered at 26 other venues including community centres and the work place in the Elmbridge, Surrey Heath and Spelthorne areas. The largest centres are in Camberley and Staines. The college works in collaboration with schools, sixth form colleges and private providers in the area and draws its learners, in the main, from the north of the Surrey Learning and Skills Council area. Although the area is one of the most affluent in the country with low unemployment and high staying on rates, there are large numbers of young people and adults with low educational attainment, many of whom come from small but significant pockets of deprivation and for whom, in the main, the college is the only local provider. There are few large employers in the area and most employment is in the service sectors.
2. The college enrolls around 2,700 students aged 16-18 and 10,000 adults. Of these, some 10.5% are from minority ethnic backgrounds compared with 5% for Surrey overall. Provision at level 1 and 2 has grown significantly since the last inspection. The majority of adults are enrolled on level 1 and 2 courses. Most 16-18 year olds follow full-time courses at levels 2 or 3. Courses are offered in 14 QCA subject/sector areas and the college manages a work-based apprenticeship programme. Flexible training through e-learning is provided in response to the needs of employers. The college has a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) in public services and is one of three partners in a CoVE in aeronautical engineering. Provision for 400 learners aged 14-16 is offered in partnership with local schools.
3. In its mission the college prides itself “on providing innovative and effective programmes for learners of all abilities thereby raising the knowledge, skills and aspirations” of its communities.

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 visit; 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, social care and child care; engineering; information and communication technology (ICT); sport, recreation and travel; visual and performing arts; preparation for life.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: grade 3
Achievements and standards	Good: grade 2
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: grade 3

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, social care and child care	Satisfactory: grade 3
Engineering	Satisfactory: grade 3
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Good: grade 2
Sport, recreation and travel	Good: grade 2
Visual and performing arts	Good: grade 2
Preparation for life	Satisfactory: grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

5. This is a satisfactory college. Learners are motivated, behave well and are willing to learn. Retention rates have improved since the last inspection and are good. Success rates are good overall but not consistently so across all courses. Learners mostly produce work of a good standard, develop good practical skills and enjoy their work. The achievement of the full framework by work-based apprentices is low although the numbers of learners are comparatively low. Few learners achieve key skills qualifications.
6. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and the level of unsatisfactory teaching has reduced since the last inspection. The level of good teaching is not as high as indicated by the college in its self-assessment, but is good in information and communication technology, sport recreation and travel and visual and performing arts. Key skills teaching is satisfactory. Assessment is well planned and the marking of learners' work is satisfactory. Initial assessment procedures are appropriate and a high proportion of those identified as requiring additional help receive good support.
7. The range of provision and progression opportunities in most curriculum areas is good. There are good opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Effective use is made of community venues to increase participation by adults. Employer engagement is satisfactory. The college's response to education and social inclusion is good. Overall success rates of minority ethnic learners are above the college average. However, as identified by the college in its self-assessment, some groups underachieve.
8. Advice, guidance and support for learners are good. Prospective learners receive good advice and guidance. Tutorial provision, pastoral and academic support for 16-18 year olds is good. Procedures for monitoring learners' progress are good, but the personal targets set for learners in their individual learning plans are often too general. Attendance is monitored carefully and is above the average for general further education colleges.
9. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The principal and governors set appropriate strategic priorities for the college. The management of curriculum areas is mostly satisfactory. The management of work-based learning is unsatisfactory although the numbers of apprentices are comparatively low. Quality assurance procedures are well designed. However, the effectiveness with which they are implemented, although satisfactory overall, varies across curriculum areas. Lesson observation procedures have been effective in reducing the level of unsatisfactory teaching and in identifying areas for improvement but overestimate the level of good or better teaching. Self-assessment is mostly accurate in identifying areas for improvement. However,

the co-ordination of cross-college strategies to improve the quality of work-based learning, key skills and to implement the college's skills for life strategy is ineffective. Financial management is good and the college provides good value for money overall.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: grade 3

10. Since the last inspection the college has demonstrated satisfactory capacity to improve. The volume of provision at level 1 and 2 has increased significantly. Comprehensive quality systems are now in place, but the effectiveness with which they are implemented, whilst being at least satisfactory, varies across curriculum areas. Lesson observations lead to improvements but often overestimate the quality of teaching. Success rates have improved and the support provided for learners is good.
11. The college's self-assessment report identified most of the college's main strengths and areas for improvement. However, it overstated the overall quality of teaching and failed to identify weaknesses in skills for life provision. Course reviews vary in their quality and some are not sufficiently evaluative and lack clear improvement targets. Of the curriculum areas inspected, inspectors agreed with all but two of the grades awarded by the college.

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

12. Overall, the college has made satisfactory progress in addressing areas for improvement since the last inspection, but progress has not been consistent across all areas. The breadth and volume of provision at levels 1 and 2 and for 14-16 year olds have increased considerably. Success and attendance rates have improved and learners are well supported. Management information is now accurate and accessible and there has been significant investment in ILT. Whilst the level of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced teaching remains satisfactory overall. Numbers of learners following apprenticeship frameworks have reduced significantly but achievements continue to be low. There has been little improvement in learners' achievements of key skills.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- good support, advice and guidance for learners
- motivation and behaviour of learners
- attendance and retention rates
- overall success rates
- good partnerships and links with the community
- use of value added procedures for monitoring learners' progress.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- pace of implementation of actions to bring about improvement
- proportion of good or better lessons
- rigour of implementation of lesson observation procedures
- success rates on key skills programmes
- success rates in work-based learning provision
- co-ordination of skills for life strategy

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Good: grade 2

Contributory grades:

Work-based learning

Unsatisfactory: grade 4

13. Achievements and standards are good overall but more variable within and across curriculum areas. The number of learners enrolling on full-time level 1 courses has increased since the last inspection. Success rates at this level have been consistently above the national average for the three years prior to the inspection, 2003 to 2005 inclusive. They declined slightly in 2005 due to a fall in retention rates. Performance at level 1 has been well above average for both 16-18 year olds and adults.
14. Success rates for 16-18 year olds following full-time courses at level 2 have improved over a three year period and were well above the national average in 2005. For adults, success rates at level 2 have also been above average.
15. During the period 2003 to 2005, success rates for 16-18 year old learners on full-time level 3 courses were consistently just above the national average. Overall success and pass rates for GCE A-level courses over the same period were at the national average. However, learners following many of these do not make sufficient progress relative to their qualifications on enrolment. Some of these courses had been discontinued at the time of the inspection and entry requirements on others have been raised. Success rates for adults following full-time level 3 courses were above average in 2004 but declined to below average in 2005.
16. Success rates for adults at levels 2 and 3 were well above the national average with the exception of low success rates on e-learning courses in web site design. These learners acquired the necessary skills, but chose not to travel to an assessment centre to gain accreditation thus depressing overall retention rates. In 2005 the college discontinued these courses.
17. Overall success rates of minority ethnic learners are above the college average. However, as identified by the college in its self-assessment, some groups underachieve. Success rates for apprentices and advanced apprentices on work-based learning programmes are poor although the numbers of learners are comparatively low. Success rates on key skills programmes are also poor.
18. In 2005, success rates for short courses improved significantly to well above the national average. The college provides level 2 e-learning courses in food

safety and health and safety through a franchise arrangement for some 6,000 adults. Success rates on these courses are high.

19. Learners are enthusiastic and eager to learn. The standard of their work is at least satisfactory and mostly good. Learners observe good health and safety practices. Attendance rates are good and overall retention rates are above the national average. The college-devised value added system indicates that many learners following vocational courses make good progress relative to their qualifications at enrolment. Internal progression of learners to college courses, other than from English as a second or other language (ESOL) courses, is good and progression rates to higher education are mostly good.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

20. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are now few unsatisfactory lessons. A mentoring system helps new teachers and those in need of support to develop their skills. Key skills teaching found to be poor during the last inspection is now satisfactory. The overall level of good or better teaching is not as high as determined by the college through its lesson observation procedures. Despite this overestimation of teaching quality, the self-assessment report correctly identifies the main strengths and areas for improvement in teaching and learning. Assessment is appropriately planned and internal verification procedures are implemented carefully. The marking of learners' work is satisfactory.
21. The majority of teachers have good vocational experience and keep up to date with current industry practice. Teachers are generally well prepared and follow clear schemes of work. In the better lessons, teachers maintain a challenging pace and regularly assess learners' understanding and progress. A combination of appropriate teaching methods and tasks makes learning enjoyable in many lessons. During practical lessons, teachers use their time well to respond to the individual needs of learners.
22. Less successful lessons lack challenge and teaching is uninspiring. The college provides training to help teachers differentiate their teaching approaches according to the needs of their learners. However, some teachers do not plan sufficiently to provide appropriate tasks. The college has made significant investment in information and learning technology (ILT), but this is not used sufficiently to enhance learning in many lessons. Attention to health and safety is good.
23. The college's response to social and educational inclusion is good. The range of provision and progression opportunities in most curriculum areas is good. There are good opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college has increased its provision at entry level and level 1 significantly since the last inspection. Many learners progress to higher levels of study, but for ESOL learners opportunities are limited. Provision for learners aged 14-16 is good and the college works well in partnership with local

schools. The college is responsive to the learning needs of different communities. Partner organisations value the level of service offered by the college. The college is generally responsive to employers' needs. Links with employers in engineering and public services are good. However, ICT employers are not consulted sufficiently about local training needs.

24. All full-time vocational learners benefit from work experience. This is effectively planned and managed and learners develop a good understanding of the world of work. The college enrichment programme offers a broad selection of activities, but access to the provision is limited for some learners because of timetable clashes.
25. Advice, guidance and support for learners are good. Prospective learners receive good initial advice and guidance. Marketing materials are well designed and informative. The college takes great care to place learners on appropriate courses. Induction is satisfactory. Support for learners with learning difficulties is good and they make good progress. Learners aged 16-18 are routinely tested at the start of their programmes to determine their additional learning needs. A high proportion of those identified as requiring additional help receive good support and most complete their programmes successfully. Arrangements for most part-time students are not as well developed.
26. Tutorial provision for full-time learners is well structured. Activities including sessions on drugs and finance contribute to learners' capacity to stay safe and be healthy. Tutors are selected carefully and they follow a well established tutorial curriculum. Learners' attendance is carefully monitored. Individual learning plans are used consistently and learners are routinely set target minimum grades at the start of their course. In general, however, personal targets set out in individual learning plans are often very general and give insufficient indication of what learners need to do to improve their performance. Careers guidance, counselling and student liaison are good. Generally, support services are well managed, but some policies and practices are new and quality assurance procedures are not fully developed. Few part-time learners take advantage of the services offered, but plans are in place to extend their involvement.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: grade 3

Work based learning

Unsatisfactory: grade 4

27. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The principal and governors set clear and appropriate strategic priorities for the college. Communication between managers and staff is good. Since the last inspection, success rates for most learners have improved and are at or above national averages. Attendance has improved significantly. The college has been too slow, however, in addressing poor key skills achievements and WBL success rates. The co-ordination of cross-college actions in these areas and of the college's skills for life strategy is ineffective. Working relationships with local schools

- and communities are productive. Where established, links with employers are good. The financial position of the college has improved and financial management is good. The college provides good value for money.
28. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are highly committed and appropriately informed. They act as critical friends to help shape the strategic direction of the college. Although the college has extensive structures for ascertaining the views of learners, they are not represented on some relevant college committees.
29. The quality of curriculum management varies across the college but is satisfactory overall. The volume of work-based learning has been reduced. Its management is unsatisfactory and little progress has been made since the last inspection. Target setting for improvement is poor and the roles and responsibilities of managers in relation to work-based learning are not sufficiently clear. Quality assurance systems are well designed, but the effectiveness with which they are implemented varies across curriculum areas. Management information is now reliable and timely, and most managers use data well to help to improve learners' outcomes. Lessons are observed regularly and, together with annual appraisal, help managers identify areas for development. However, as correctly identified by the college, there have been insufficient observations in some areas and tutorials and additional learning support sessions are not monitored systematically. The moderation of observations has not been effective in some areas resulting in an inflated view of the quality of teaching and learning. A staff mentoring scheme supports teachers well and good practice is shared. The college has developed its own system for determining the progress learners make relative to their qualifications at enrolment for both vocational and academic courses. It does not, however, regularly benchmark learners' outcomes using other national systems.
30. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. Sports facilities and the college learning centre have been improved since the last inspection. Half the hatted accommodation has been removed and the college has plans to remove the remainder within two years. Unsatisfactory facilities in engineering and art and design are scheduled to be replaced by 2007. Significant investment has been made in ILT. Staff training is responsive to need, but there is insufficient monitoring of its impact.
31. The college's response to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 is satisfactory. Most of the main college site is accessible and clear plans are being implemented to provide access to the remaining areas. The performance of learners by age, gender and ethnicity is monitored, but the time scales for implementing actions to promote equality of opportunity and diversity are not sufficiently clear. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are well documented and most staff have received appropriate training. A training programme for governors has yet to be completed.

Curriculum area inspections

Health, social care and child care

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

32. The college offers a satisfactory range of full-time courses in early years and care at levels 1 to 3. National Vocational Qualification (NVO) programmes in care are provided at levels 2 to 4. These include the registered managers' award. Some 60 learners aged 16–18 and 70 adults follow full-time courses. Around 300 learners follow part-time courses and there is provision for some 25 local school pupils aged 14-16. In care there are 30 pre apprentices. In early years there are 33 advanced apprentices and 8 apprentices. Some 110 learners undertake NVOs at levels 2 and 3 in care and early years in the workplace. Short courses include first aid, health and safety.

STRENGTHS

- high and improving retention and pass rates in care and early years programmes
- good academic and personal support for learners
- well integrated theory and practice in lessons
- good standard of learners' work.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- poor management of work-based learning
- insufficiently demanding teaching in some lessons
- ineffective use of individual learning plans to promote achievement.

Achievement and Standards

33. Achievements are satisfactory. Success rates on level 2 care and early years courses are good. On the certificate in child care and education, the success rate has been above the national average for two years. In 2005, success rates on the diploma in child care and education improved from well below to above the national average. Retention is good and improving on level 2 and level 3 courses. At level 1, success rates have declined and in 2005 were below the national average. The standard of learners' work is mostly good. Learners achieve high grades in assignment work. Apprentices' achievement of full framework qualifications is very poor. Learners' attendance rates and behaviour are good.

Quality of Provision

34. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Theory and practice are successfully integrated and learners develop good vocational skills for the workplace.

Portfolios are well organised and of a good standard. In some lessons teaching is insufficiently demanding to meet the needs of more able learners. In other lessons, the range of teaching methods practised is too narrow and fails to stimulate some learners.

35. Assessment is satisfactory. Progress made by full-time learners is tracked carefully. Individual learning plans are well designed, but their use to promote learning is ineffective. Targets set are too general and insufficiently challenging. Tutorial arrangements are good and learners receive good academic and pastoral support. Literacy and numeracy needs are met and learning support assistants are well qualified.
36. Good progression opportunities are available for early years learners from entry level to level 4, but progression routes for learners in care are limited. Resources are good and teaching accommodation is satisfactory. Staff and learners make appropriate use of ICT resources available.

Leadership and management

37. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Equality and diversity are promoted well. There are well established links with employers. The management of work-based learning is poor. Quality assurance procedures are satisfactory and staff work together well as a team. Self-assessment is generally effective in identifying areas for improvement. However, insufficient lessons were observed during the year prior to the inspection. The internal grading of lesson observations gives an inflated view of the quality of teaching and learning.

Engineering

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

38. The college offers a broad range of full and part-time courses at levels 1 to 4 in aeronautical, manufacturing and motor vehicle engineering, courses for 14 to 16 year olds, higher national diplomas and foundation degrees in motor sport engineering. The college is a partner in a new CoVE in aeronautical engineering. There are some 770 learners, half of whom are on full-time courses. There are 91 14-16 year olds and 83 learners on level 4 courses. Only 3% of learners are female. Of 107 work-based learners, 83 are following advanced apprenticeships.

STRENGTHS

- high pass rates on most full-time courses
- good attendance and punctuality
- good development of learners' practical skills
- very good aeronautical and motor sports workshops

- good support for learners.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- very low success rates for work-based learners
- unsatisfactory teaching in a minority of theory lessons
- unsatisfactory management of work-based learning
- weak monitoring of action plans.

Achievements and Standards

39. Learners' achievements are satisfactory overall. Pass rates are high for many courses, but poor for work-based learners. Success rates are very high for first diploma and NVQ level 1 performing engineering operations courses. Pass rates on national diploma courses have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now above the national average. Pass rates are below the national average on the level 1 motor vehicle progression award. Advanced apprenticeship framework success rates are well below the national average.
40. Learners enjoy workshop lessons and develop good practical skills. Full-time learners benefit from work experience in local industry. Learners are confident and express themselves well. Learners' attendance rates are high with good punctuality. Progression between course levels is good, including from programmes for 14-16 year olds.

Quality of provision

41. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Practical lessons are more effective than theory lessons and a minority of theory lessons are unsatisfactory. Teachers use their vocational experience well to develop learners' practical skills. Good use is made of projects and practical assignments to promote learning. Teachers do not use the outcomes of initial assessment to identify individual learning needs and plan lessons accordingly. Learners are enthusiastic, but often insufficiently challenged in theory lessons. ILT is little used to promote learning. The layout of some rooms restricts group activities. Learners observe health and safety requirements fastidiously.
42. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress is satisfactory although learners have too many assignments to complete at certain times. Assessed work is returned promptly with good feedback from teachers. Initial assessment and additional support arrangements are good. Tutorial support is good and valued by learners. Target setting for work-based learners is poor. Not all work-based learners are assessed for additional learning support needs. There are insufficient internal verifiers.
43. A good range of courses has been developed at levels 1 and 2 in response to the needs of local employers. Workshop facilities in aeronautics and motor sports are of an industry standard and are good. An outdated general purpose

workshop is scheduled to be replaced in 2007. All workshops are well resourced, but classrooms are bland with insufficient display of vocationally relevant materials. Learners have access to a good range of engineering texts, videos and journals.

Leadership and management

44. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college has been slow to address some of the weaknesses identified during the last inspection. Insufficient action has been taken to improve work-based learning success rates. Despite self-assessment being thorough and key weaknesses correctly identified, the preparation of action plans and the monitoring of their impact has not been sufficiently rigorous. Internal audits of the provision and lesson observation procedures are well conceived. However, insufficient lessons have been observed in recent years. However, a new management team has been in post for twelve months and is having a significant impact. Teachers are well qualified and have good industrial experience. Professional development opportunities are good and new teachers are well supported. All staff in the area are committed to bringing about improvement and are focused on raising standards.

Information and communication technology

Good: grade 2

Context

45. The college offers an appropriate range of courses in information and communications technology from entry to advanced level for some 250 learners, including 14-16 year olds, and progression opportunities to level 4. Of these, 56% are aged 16-18. Full-time courses include a bridge to foundation qualification and a higher national diploma in computing. IT application courses for part-time learners include the computer literacy and information technology certificate (CLAIT) and the European computer driving licence (ECDL). Similar proportions of learners enrol at levels 1-3 with lower numbers at entry level.

STRENGTHS

- high pass rates and good retention on most courses
- good attendance
- effective planning and monitoring of learning
- effective and well organised work placement programme.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- inadequate identification of employers' needs
- insufficient data projection facilities.

Achievements and standards

46. Learners' achievements are good. Success rates for most full-time courses are well above the national average and, with the exception of the AVCE single award in ICT which was discontinued the year prior to the inspection, have shown an upward trend. Success rates for CLAIT, CLAIT Plus and ECDL courses are at or above the national average. The standard of learners' work is generally satisfactory. However, multimedia work produced by learners at level 2 and the programming skills displayed by GCE A-level computing learners are good. Most learners have good keyboard skills and demonstrate fluency in the manipulation of the software packages. Foundation learners achieve very high level 1 key skills pass rates. Learners are well motivated and attendance rates are high.

Quality of provision

47. Most teaching is good. Most lessons are well planned and a range of carefully differentiated activities meet individual learning needs well. There is good integration of practical and theory teaching and learners' progress is monitored carefully. Teachers use data projection equipment well when it is available and devise a variety of interesting activities for their learners. In the weaker lessons, the pace of learning is slow and learners' understanding is insufficiently checked. These lessons lack variety and fail to stimulate some learners. All full-time vocational learners follow a highly relevant two week work experience programme annually. Learners make good use of the progression opportunities offered by the college.
48. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress is very effective. A comprehensive file is held on each learner. This is updated frequently and the information it contains is used well for planning lessons. Learners' work is marked thoroughly. Constructive comments help learners improve their performance. Internal verification procedures are good.
49. Learner support is good. Initial screening is thorough and appropriate support is arranged for those requiring it. Teachers or learners can also request support should a need be identified subsequently. Group-tutorials support learners' personal and social development well. Subject specific support is good and students value the guidance provided through individual tutorials.

Leadership and management

50. Leadership and management are good. Success rates have improved consistently since the last inspection. Quality assurance procedures are implemented rigorously and are used well to identify areas for improvement. Lessons are observed systematically and weaknesses identified, although there is a tendency to grade lessons too high. Staff development and mentoring procedures are used well to address any weaknesses in teaching. Staff across the area are involved in self-assessment. The report prepared prior to the

inspection is thorough and constitutes an accurate reflection of the area. Resources have improved since the last inspection and are generally good, but there are insufficient data projection facilities. Employers are not consulted sufficiently about their training needs and there is insufficient analysis of the needs of local communities. Arrangements to promote equality and diversity are satisfactory.

Sport, recreation and travel

Good: grade 2

Context

51. The college offers a satisfactory range of courses for 220 full-time learners from entry level to level 3 in sport, travel and tourism. Some 140 learners follow courses at level 3, the majority on national certificate courses in travel and tourism and sport and exercise science. Level 2 courses include air cabin crew service, overseas resort operations, travel operations and a first diploma in sport and exercise science. There are 17 learners on a level 1 bridge to foundation sport course and 5 on a foundation certificate in travel. Pupils aged 14-16 from local schools follow a course in sport. Learners pursue a wide variety of additional qualifications.

STRENGTHS

- high pass rates on level 2 full-time courses
- high retention rates
- high success rates on most additional qualifications
- good teaching
- good management.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low pass rates on sports courses for 14-16 year olds
- poor integration of IT key skills on the first diploma sport.

Achievement and Standards

52. Pass rates on level 2 full-time courses are high. Retention rates are high for all courses in the area. Pass rates on the 14-16 first certificate course in sport are low. Learners develop good occupational skills and are successful in acquiring qualifications in addition to their main programme. Learners' attendance is good and the standard of learners' work is good overall.

Quality of provision

53. Teaching is good. Lessons are well organised and teachers use a variety of resources well to promote learning. Teachers set high standards which learners generally meet during lessons. Teachers control lively groups of

young people well and use a variety of teaching methods to motivate learners. Discussions during lessons are lively and productive. In most lessons teachers check that learners have grasped key points. However, in some lessons, teachers do not pay sufficient attention to the needs of individual learners. There is insufficient integration of IT key skills teaching on the first diploma in sport. All learners benefit from work experience opportunities and good use is made of links with employers to enhance learning. Residential outdoor activities and trips abroad shadowing resort representatives help learners develop their understanding of their chosen vocational area.

54. The tracking of learners' progress is good overall. However, some learners progress to the second year of two-year programmes without completing the first year's work. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory, but some teachers do not adhere to deadlines set for assignment and sometimes learners have to wait too long for feedback. Internal verification procedures are rigorous.
55. Learners are supported well through group and individual tutorials and are positive about their programmes. Their views are sought regularly and they are informed about the actions taken. Resources are good overall. They include a newly built sports hall and gym and very good facilities for the cabin crew programmes.

Leadership and Management

56. Leadership and management are good. Teachers are well motivated and work together well as a team. Lessons are observed regularly and the procedures are effective in bringing about improvement. Teachers meet regularly to monitor attendance, retention and learners' progress, but there is insufficient sharing of good practice between full and part-time teachers. Self-assessment is accurate and correctly identifies strengths and areas for development.

Visual and performing arts

Good: grade 2

Context

57. The college offers a good range of courses. These include introductory and first diplomas in art and design and performing arts, national diplomas in art and design, fashion and clothing, acting, dance and popular music. The provision also includes GCE AS and A level courses in art and design, dance, and theatre studies, GCSE photography, open college network courses and a foundation diploma in art and design. There are 238 full-time learners of whom 219 are aged 16-18. Part time enrolments total 306 and there are 61 learners aged 14-16.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates
- well planned and responsive teaching
- good standard of learners' work
- wide range of course specific enrichment opportunities.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- some poor and inappropriate accommodation
- low retention rates on national diploma in art and design and foundation diploma art courses.

Achievements and standards

58. Achievements and standards are good overall and many learners achieve better than would be predicted by their qualifications at enrolment. Success rates on many courses are above national averages. The success rate on the first diploma in performing arts has risen steadily since 2003 and is now significantly above the national average. Retention rates are low on art and design national diploma courses and the foundation diploma in art and design. Success rates are declining in a minority of additional qualifications and key skills achievements are poor. Progression rates to higher education are good, but have declined for art and design programmes.
59. The standard of learners' practical work is good across the range of subjects and levels and is particularly strong in dance and photography. Learners have many opportunities to celebrate their work through exhibitions and performances.

Quality of provision

60. Teaching and learning are good. Dance and drama teaching is well disciplined and photography lessons are well structured. Learners on music programmes make good use of well designed assignments and opportunities to perform to consolidate their learning. Detailed information about the needs of individual learners is used well by teachers when preparing schemes of work and lesson plans. Learners organise their work well and their progress is carefully monitored by their teachers. Provision for learners aged 14-16 and community-based provision for adults is good and is valued by learners.
61. The advice individual learners receive in most lessons is very effective and tutorial practice is good and often outstanding. Learning support is integrated into lessons well and there is a wide range of course specific enrichment opportunities which enhances and extends the learners' experience. Assessment and internal verification procedures are thorough.

62. The college has identified that some accommodation is poor and inappropriate. Art rooms are too small with insufficient storage facilities. Some practical drama lessons are taught in inappropriate rooms. Art and music areas are not accessible to learners with limited mobility. The ceiling in the dance studio is too low and restricts the breadth of work possible. At the time of the inspection the construction of new specialist accommodation was about to start and is scheduled for completion in 2007.

Leadership and management

63. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Retention, pass and attendance rates are monitored by staff, but quality assurance procedures are not implemented consistently across the area. All teaching staff are observed in some areas, but not in others. At the time of the inspection action was being taken improve outcomes on key skills programmes as well as retention on the national diploma in art and design. Early indications show signs of improvement. Self-assessment is effective in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. However, the implementation of action plans is at times too slow in producing improved outcomes.

Preparation for life

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

64. The college offers a satisfactory range of skills for life courses at entry, level 1 and level 2 and a good range of supported learning programmes for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). There is a total of some 2,600 learners. Approximately 1,100 learners follow courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and 500 enrol on literacy and numeracy courses. Additional learning support is provided for 588 learners aged 16-18. Some 350 young people and adults with LDD follow courses at the college. There is also provision for 109 learners who are below the age of 16. Programmes are offered in community and employer venues to help young people and adults with LDD progress to other courses and find employment.

STRENGTHS

- good achievement on programmes for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
- good teaching to meet learners' cultural and social needs in ESOL classes
- good leadership and management of programmes for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- insufficient attention to individual learning needs particularly in literacy, numeracy and ESOL lessons
- insufficient planning and support for learners to progress from ESOL programmes
- ineffective implementation of lesson observation procedures.

Achievement and standards

65. The achievements of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities following supported learning programmes are well above national averages. They develop good personal, social and employment skills, enjoy their courses and are proud of their work. Progression to other college and community courses or employment is good.
66. The achievement of literacy and numeracy and ESOL qualifications is satisfactory. Overall, 69% of all learners on accredited courses gained a qualification in 2005. The individual rates for numeracy, ESOL and literacy courses are 57%, 60% and 97% respectively. Portfolio work and attainment in lessons is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

67. Teaching is mostly satisfactory, but some is unsatisfactory. In the more effective ESOL lessons, teachers use relevant materials which meet learners' cultural and social needs well. Materials are appropriate for the age groups, interests and background of learners. In the better LDD lessons, teachers plan well to develop skills for independent living and work. Numeracy learners become confident in problem solving and in literacy classes learners extend their reading and writing skills. However, insufficient attention is paid to individual learning needs in a high proportion of lessons. In these lessons, teachers do not always take into account learners' prior experience or differing abilities when planning activities. In some lessons there is inappropriate use of whole class teaching and group activities. Teachers do not use ICT sufficiently to develop and enhance learners' skills. In the weaker lessons, ESOL teachers give insufficient feedback on spoken language to help learners improve their pronunciation, intonation and grammar. There is insufficient planning and support to enable learners on ESOL programmes to progress to mainstream programmes or employment.

Leadership and management

68. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Leadership and management of the LDD provision are good and satisfactory for ESOL, literacy and numeracy.

69. The LDD curriculum is well planned. Tracking of learners' progress and reviews of provision are used well to ensure programmes meet the individual needs of learners. Specialist staff work well together across the LDD area and communication is good. LDD teachers are supported well and are provided with good training opportunities.
70. Across the area, lesson observation procedures are not implemented effectively. Insufficient lessons are observed and many reports are overly descriptive and insufficiently evaluative. The quality of teaching and learning is overestimated. Insufficient use is made of course and learner data to monitor outcomes, review programmes and plan provision. There is insufficient co-ordination of different aspects of the provision across the college.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 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
1 Long	01/02	755	67	53	15	967	60	50	10
	02/03	579	66	56	9	1,463	57	55	2
	03/04	782	63	60	3	2,112	77	59	18
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	54	74	54	20	3	100	41	
	02/03	47	85	60	25	1	0	47	
	03/04	49	78	65	12	0		52	
NVQs	01/02	27	81	52	29	2	50	49	
	02/03	73	77	56	21	21	5	57	-52
	03/04	133	31	61	-30	14	57	62	-5
Other	01/02	674	66	53	13	962	60	50	10
	02/03	459	62	56	6	1,441	58	55	3
	03/04	600	69	60	9	2,098	77	59	19

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 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
2 Long	01/02	1,029	51	50	0	994	64	48	15
	02/03	1,460	52	52	0	1,080	57	49	8
	03/04	874	67	56	11	1,097	63	53	9
GCSEs	01/02	265	67	54	13	166	54	53	1
	02/03	373	68	57	11	161	70	55	14
	03/04	277	70	61	8	160	68	59	9
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	198	62	56	6	20	65	50	15
	02/03	117	64	59	6	4	75	53	
	03/04	78	71	63	8	36	53	57	-4
NVQs	01/02	236	38	43	-5	164	59	45	15
	02/03	285	31	42	-11	87	43	49	-7
	03/04	128	72	52	20	100	51	53	-2
Other	01/02	330	39	49	-10	644	67	48	19
	02/03	685	49	50	-1	828	56	48	8
	03/04	391	63	54	9	801	63	52	11

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 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
3 Long	01/02	2,111	65	60	5	971	54	50	4
	02/03	2,053	65	62	3	1,109	33	51	-18
	03/04	1,917	65	64	1	874	54	53	1
A\A2 levels	01/02	516	86	80	6	76	70	57	13
	02/03	410	87	82	5	65	74	63	11
	03/04	403	83	84	-1	82	80	66	15
AS levels	01/02	969	63	60	4	151	50	47	4
	02/03	973	65	61	4	147	52	48	3
	03/04	652	70	63	7	115	56	50	6
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	508	51	47	4	66	48	43	5
	02/03	487	49	50	-2	36	44	45	-1
	03/04	289	30	52	-22	28	21	43	-22
NVQs	01/02	28	68	49	19	92	34	41	-7
	02-03	52	40	51	-10	138	23	45	-21
	03/04	33	42	54	-11	147	38	47	-9
Other	01/02	90	33	54	-20	586	56	54	3
	02/03	131	63	55	7	723	27	54	-26
	03/04	540	67	56	11	502	56	56	0

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2003/4 to 2004/5.

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVO rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	10	0	32	20	47
	Advanced	50	10	31	40	48
2004/05	Apprenticeship	23	4	38	22	50
	Advanced	56	9	34	32	48

* 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'

b) Timely success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	11	0	16	0	24
	Advanced	46	2	19	9	33
2004/05	Apprenticeship	34	3	21	6	30
	Advanced	53	8	21	28	31

- * The number of learners who planned to complete their learning programme in the given year
- ** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'
- *** Not available