



Greenwich Community College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published June 2006	Provider reference 130405
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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Greenwich Community College
Type of college:	General Further Education College
Principal:	Geoff Pine
Address of college:	95, Plumstead Road, London SE18 7DQ
Telephone number:	020 8488 4800
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Chair of governors:	Iain Smith
Unique reference number:	130405
Name of lead inspector:	Garth Clucas, ALI
Dates of inspection:	24-28 April, 2006

Background of the organisation

1. Greenwich Community College is a large general college of further education. It has 5 main centres and a further 35 satellite venues located in different parts of the borough of Greenwich. The college is located in an area with high levels of social deprivation. The borough is ranked 41 out of 354 local authorities in England in terms of average deprivation. In March 2006, the proportion of unemployed in the borough was 4.2%, compared with 3.4% for London and 2.6% nationally. At the last census, minority ethnic communities comprised 23% of the local population.
2. In 2005, the proportion of school leavers with 5 or more GCSEs A*- C in Greenwich was 45.7% compared with the national average for England of 57.1%. In 2001, the borough's school sixth forms were replaced by the 'GPlus' network of post-16 providers which includes the college.
3. The college provides courses in all 15 subject sector areas with minor provision in agriculture, horticulture and animal care. Courses range from entry level to level 4. The college has a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) in health and social care which operates in collaboration with a neighbouring college. A second CoVE in tourism is under development. A major programme of non-accredited adult and community learning is provided on behalf of Greenwich local education authority. The London Leisure College is a partnership between the college and Greenwich Leisure Ltd at Charlton Athletic football club. The college's Business Development Unit manages short course and workforce development provision including an Employer Training Pilot (ETP) programme.
4. In 2004/05, there were 16,252 enrolments. Approximately three quarters were adult learners. Some 59% of learners were female, 68% of learners were from areas that are classified as socially deprived, and 64% were from minority ethnic groups. A significant number of learners do not speak English as their first language. There were 150 learners on Learndirect programmes. 120 pupils aged 14 to 16 attended college courses.
5. Since the last inspection there has been a significant increase in enrolments at entry and level 1 and a decrease at level 3 and on higher level qualifications. Some 69% of those aged 16 to 18 are on programmes at levels 1 and 2, and 78% of adults are on programmes at entry and level 1. Of the 16 to 18 year olds who joined the college in 2004/05, 15% had 5 GCSEs at grades A* to C or their equivalent.
6. The College's vision is to be 'an engine of learning that drives the local economy by transforming lives'. Its mission is 'to meet the educational and training needs of communities by being an excellent provider where all learners are empowered to realise their aspirations and achieve their goals.'

Scope of the inspection

7. 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, social care and child development; information and communication technology; sport, leisure and recreation; arts, media and performing arts; languages, literature and culture; preparation for life and work.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Capacity to improve	Good: grade 2
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Achievements and standards	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Quality of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Leadership and management	Good: grade 2
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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 development	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Information and communication technology	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Sport, leisure and recreation	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Arts, media and performing arts	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Languages, literature and culture	Good: grade 2
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Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

8. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners make good progress relative to their prior attainment. Overall success rates have improved since the last inspection. Success rates on long courses are close to the national average for 16 to 18 year olds. Success rates for adults have also improved and are above the national average for courses at level 3, but remain below the national average for courses at level 2. Success rates are good for key skills, for 14 to 16 year olds, and for those on Learndirect programmes. Success rates on short courses are poor.
9. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen since the last inspection. Some teaching is not effective in meeting the needs of all learners and in providing sufficient challenge for them. The assessment and monitoring of learners' work are satisfactory. There are good arrangements for identifying and providing support for learners' additional learning needs.
10. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is good. The range of provision and progression opportunities in most curriculum areas are good. The college has been very successful in widening participation and targeting the more disadvantaged groups of learners. The overall success rates of some minority ethnic groups are above national averages. However, white learners underachieve on courses at levels 1 and 2. The college's partnership work with schools, community agencies and higher education is outstanding. It works particularly well with employers in the development of provision to meet local labour market needs.
11. Advice, guidance and support for learners are good. College strategies have been effective in improving attendance and punctuality. The provision of financial and other support to enable learners to participate in programmes is well managed. Pastoral support and mentoring arrangements are good. The use of individual learning plans is poor and target setting is weak. Tutorial arrangements are not as well developed for part-time learners.
12. Leadership and management are good. The strategic direction of the college is clear. Measures to secure improvement in learners' achievements have been effective. Equality of opportunity is promoted particularly well. Quality assurance systems have been refined since the last inspection and better use is made of learner-related management information. Self-assessment is well established and inspectors broadly agreed with most judgements in the self-assessment report. In some cases, the quality of analysis at departmental level is insufficiently critical. Governance and financial management are strong. The college provides good value for money.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

13. The college demonstrates a good capacity to improve. There is an improved focus on raising standards. Data are used well by most curriculum managers to set targets at course level and to monitor progress in meeting them. Decisive action is taken where underperforming courses are identified. The college's assessment of teaching and learning is broadly accurate. Staff development is targeted effectively to secure improvement.
14. The college's self-assessment process is good and involves all staff. The self-assessment report identifies most of the college's main strengths and areas for improvement. Grades in the self-assessment report are accurate and judgements well evidenced. Some course reviews are insufficiently evaluative.

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

15. Overall the college has maintained the strengths identified at the last inspection and made good progress in addressing areas for improvement. The proportion of learners who achieve the qualification they enrol on has improved, but pass rates on some courses are still low. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced and attendance and punctuality have improved. Learner-related management information is now used more effectively at course level. There has been significant investment in information learning technology, although it has yet to be fully utilised by all staff to enhance learning.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- success rates for adults at level 3
- broad range of provision and opportunities for progression
- strong focus on inclusivity and the promotion of equality of opportunity
- productive links with employers and community organisations
- good guidance and support for learners
- clear strategic direction
- strong governance.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- further improvements in success rates for 16 to 18 year olds
- success rates for adults at level 2
- success rates on short courses
- greater variety in teaching to meet the needs of all learners more effectively

- the setting and monitoring of individual learner targets which challenge and promote improvement
- greater consistency in the application of quality monitoring procedures at course level.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

Contributory grades:

Learners aged 14-16

Good: grade 2

Learndirect

Good: grade 2

16. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. During the past three years, the overall success rate for learners aged 16 to 18 on long qualifications has improved to close to the national average for similar colleges. The overall success rate for adults has also improved but remains below the national average.
17. Success rates on long courses for learners aged 16 to 18 have improved to the national average at levels 1 and 2 and to slightly above the national average at level 3. Success rates on long vocational courses are below national averages at levels 1 and 2, but improved to above the national average at level 3. The success rate at AS level has improved to the national average. GCE A level success rates are consistently below national averages. Key skills success rates are good in ICT and communications. They are satisfactory in application of number.
18. Success rates for adults have risen to close to the national averages at level 1 and to above the national average at level 3. Success rates have declined to below the national average at level 2. NVQ success rates are below the national average at levels 1 and 2, but improved to the national average at level 3 in 2004/05. Success rates for AS and GCE A levels have fluctuated but were above national averages in 2004/05.
19. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall on Employer Training Pilot (ETP) programmes. Achievement is good in customer service and skills are well developed in the heritage programme. Standards of work in care are satisfactory but learners are making slow progress in the completion of their programmes. Success rates on Learndirect courses are good.
20. Success rates for 16 to 18 year olds on short courses of less than 5 weeks' duration are above the national average, but are below for adults. Success rates are below national averages on short courses of 5 to 24 weeks' duration.
21. Pass rates on programmes for 14 to 16 year olds are good. Many of these pupils progress on to college courses. Progression to higher level courses, further training or employment is also good. The majority of learners make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. In 2004/05, success rates for Black African learners were above national averages at levels 1 and 3. However, success rates for white learners were below national averages at levels 1 and 2.

22. Learners are well motivated and enjoy their studies. There are particularly good standards of practical work in creative arts and media. Learners' understanding of health and safety is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory overall but remains an area for improvement on some courses. Improvements have been made in learners' punctuality since the last inspection and it is satisfactory in most areas.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

Contributory grades:

Learndirect

Good: grade 2

23. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Inspectors agree with the college's assessment of its teaching and learning, which has improved since the previous inspection. Lessons are generally well planned and effective in securing learners' participation and their involvement in learning. In the best sessions, tasks and activities are well designed and chosen to provide a variety of learning experiences. Teachers give clear explanations and check learning effectively. However, some teachers do not use a sufficient range of strategies to meet individual learners' needs and do not provide sufficient challenge for more able learners. There is too much instruction in some lessons and teachers do not do enough to encourage independent learning. Some lessons are dull and are not effective in maintaining learners' interest.
24. Information learning technology is used well by some teachers to enhance learning. In some curriculum areas, such as modern foreign languages, it is underdeveloped. Learners on Learndirect programmes are supported well. The college's strategy for the development and achievement of learners' key skills is effective. All learners are encouraged to take at least one key skills qualification and to develop others. Key skills success rates have improved and are now good.
25. The assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. However, teachers do not always give learners a clear indication of the standard of work achieved, or show what they need to do to improve. The college has good arrangements for identifying and meeting learners' additional needs for literacy, numeracy and language support. Initial and diagnostic assessment are effective. Support for learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties is particularly good. The impact of additional support is closely monitored and has been shown to improve learners' progress on their chosen courses. Arrangements for providing additional learning support at the Meridian Music Centre are less well developed.
26. The college offers a good range of courses which allows learners to progress. Since the previous inspection, the college has significantly increased the number of courses at level 1. Access courses and foundation degrees provide an effective route into higher education. Curriculum planning is particularly responsive to local needs. The college is an active member of the local

provider network and places a strong emphasis on ensuring that provision in the borough is effectively co-ordinated and planned. Learndirect learners benefit from flexible appointment and study times and a wide range of courses to suit their individual circumstances. The range of discrete literacy and numeracy provision is too narrow to meet the wider needs of the community.

27. Partnerships with schools, the community and universities are outstanding. Links with schools which do not have a sixth form are used effectively to promote further education opportunities to pupils who might otherwise not continue in education or training. Short courses and taster courses are offered at a wide range of venues in the community.
28. Much customised training is directly linked to job opportunities in the borough. Links with industry are particularly productive in the leisure and music and performing arts departments. The college's employer training pilot has been successful in engaging new learners and employers. In contrast, in ICT, links with employers are poorly developed and there are insufficient opportunities for learners to carry out vocational work experience. A full and varied enrichment programme is provided for learners aged 16 to 18.
29. Learners receive good guidance and support for their studies. All learners applying for courses leading to accreditation receive a thorough initial assessment to identify their suitability for the course before they enrol. Induction is thorough and effective.
30. The college's careers guidance and education service, supported by Connexions, provides good support for learners' applications for employment and further study. Particularly good support is available for learners applying for HE courses. A very effective mentoring system supports learners and helps them to develop their academic and personal skills. Recent strategies have improved learners' attendance and punctuality on most courses. The college responds quickly to remedy poor behaviour both during lessons and recreational activities. Education Maintenance Awards and learning support funds are used well to enable learners to participate in programmes.
31. Tutorials are used well to provide pastoral support. However, the use of individual learning plans is underdeveloped and target setting is weak. Action planning is not always used effectively to raise achievement. There are less formal arrangements to support part-time learners who do not have timetabled tutorial sessions.

Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

32. Leadership and management are good. The strategic direction of the college is clearly defined. The principal, governors and managers have identified the need to improve learners' success rates as a key priority. Much management activity, therefore, focuses directly on raising learners' achievements and has begun to have a positive impact.

33. Areas identified as weaknesses in the last inspection have been addressed. Overall, success rates are improving. Quality assurance systems have been tightened and refined. In addition to reviews of provision by the principal, managers monitor the quality of teaching and learning and learners' achievements regularly and effectively. Learner-related management information is readily available to managers and consequently they are now better able to monitor trends and to identify good practice and areas of concern.
34. The self-assessment process is clearly understood and well established. Inspectors broadly agree with the judgements in the self-assessment report. However, the quality of analysis at department level varies and in some cases is insufficiently critical.
35. Where unsatisfactory provision is identified, action is taken. Courses with poor success rates are subject to 'achievement improvement measures' and, in many cases, this has been successful. When support measures fail to bring about improvement, courses are closed and, if appropriate, alternative provision is offered.
36. Lesson observations, appraisals and a newly introduced system of staff support and supervision provide managers with a broadly accurate assessment of the quality of teaching and learning. Some records of observations do not focus sufficiently on learning. When lessons are judged unsatisfactory, teachers are given appropriate support and their progress is subsequently monitored. Staff attend a good range of development activities that are closely linked to strategic aims.
37. Financial management is strong and resource management is effective. Accommodation and specialist learning facilities are satisfactory and teachers have appropriate qualifications. ICT facilities, identified as a weakness in the last inspection report, have improved significantly. The college provides good value for money.
38. The college provides a very welcoming and inclusive environment for learners, visitors and staff. Equality of opportunity is a strong feature of the college's culture. Positive action to attract learners, governors and staff at all levels from under-represented groups has been successful. Data analysis of achievement by age group, gender, ethnicity and postcode is used well to initiate and monitor specific projects. The college's response to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 has been good. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place although not all staff and governors have received specific training.

39. Highly supportive governors monitor performance against clear targets. The work undertaken by governing body committees is particularly productive. Governors value, and encourage, the forward-thinking approach the college is taking to place itself at the heart of current and planned developments within the local area. The accuracy, quality and relevance of the information they are supplied with have improved in recent years. While proud of the college's achievements and the role it plays in the community, governors are realistic about the need to maintain momentum and to continue to improve success rates for all learners.

Curriculum area inspections

Health, social care and child development

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

40. Full-time courses in health and childcare are offered from entry level to level 3. Access courses to nursing, midwifery and social care provide progression to professional studies. NVQs at levels 2 and 3 are available in care and early years. Short courses such as first aid meet the needs of specific employers and community groups. A cadet scheme, ETP and the CoVE are delivered in partnership with the NHS, social services, employers and local colleges. Holistic therapy courses are offered at levels 2 and 3 and counselling from levels 2 to 4. 373 learners are enrolled on full-time courses and 505 learners on part-time courses of which 184 are NVQ learners, including 43 on ETP. The substantial majority are adults. 12 pupils aged 14 to 16 from five local schools attend work related courses.

STRENGTHS

- high pass rates on access to nursing courses
- high pass rates in key skills IT and communications at levels 1 and 2
- good employer links
- effective action to improve provision.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- success rates on NVQ in early years at level 2
- teaching strategies to meet individual learners' needs effectively
- target setting.

Achievement and standards

41. Learners' achievements are satisfactory. Success rates on the majority of courses have improved to at or above national averages. Pass rates on access to nursing and key skills in IT and communications are good. The NVQ in care completion rates are satisfactory. The success rate for level 2 in early years is low. Standards of work are satisfactory. Learners demonstrate effective collaborative skills in lessons and develop good practical skills in the workplace. Childcare learners acquire very good display skills related to aspects of child development.

Quality of provision

42. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Theory and practice are well linked and enhanced by the vocational expertise of teachers. Multicultural issues are fully integrated with good use of the varied ethnic backgrounds of the learners to

illustrate different practices in all aspects of care. Individual learner needs are not routinely addressed in lesson planning. Insufficient account is taken of learners' prior knowledge. The language needs of ESOL learners have insufficient attention and opportunities are missed to extend and challenge learners.

43. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. Initial assessment effectively identifies their literacy and numeracy needs. Written work is thoroughly marked with good feedback giving clear guidelines for improvement. Progress is regularly reviewed but academic targets are not routinely set. Targets are not effective in challenging learners to reach their potential. The assessment of the work of some NVQ learners has been slow.
44. The programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of the learners effectively. Productive links with a wide range of employers and higher education colleges provide work experience and good progression opportunities. The CoVE works effectively with the local NHS and social services. Guidance and support for learners are good. They receive good individual support through personal tutors and central college services.

Leadership and management

45. Leadership and management are good. Regular meetings effectively review success rates. Self-assessment is broadly accurate and the accompanying development plan is detailed and reviewed regularly. Most weaknesses identified during the last inspection have been addressed. Strategies to improve punctuality have been effective. Staff are well supported and they make effective use of good opportunities for occupational updating and professional development. Resources are satisfactory. Most classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards although further staff training is required for their full utilisation.

Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

46. Courses in ICT are offered on a full- and part-time basis at a variety of college venues throughout the borough of Greenwich and at a Learndirect centre on the main campus. Courses in using IT and IT for practitioners are available from foundation to advanced levels. There are 493 learners on level 1 courses, 351 at level 2 and 46 learners at level 3. Of these, 13% are aged 16 to 18. Currently 43 are enrolled on Learndirect courses. 15 learners aged 14 to 16 from partner schools are enrolled on programmes for ICT users.

STRENGTHS

- high completion rates on Learndirect courses
- high IT key skills achievement rates
- wide range of flexible learning options
- particularly effective strategies to improve the quality of provision.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- success rates on some courses
- work experience for full-time vocational learners
- the use of individual learning plans and individual target setting.

Achievement and standards

47. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Course completion rates on Learndirect courses and ICT key skills success rates are high. However, success rates for a number of the IT user and IT practitioner qualifications for a three year period until 2005 were mostly unsatisfactory. The college has ceased to offer many of the poorly performing courses and introduced alternative programmes. Learners are developing satisfactory practical ICT skills that are appropriate to their course, for example, in the use of office applications and supporting and installing computer hardware.

Quality of provision

48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, teachers plan a good range of learning activities and give close attention to monitoring learners' progress. In the weaker lessons, teaching is not tailored to meet individual needs and learners are given insufficient direction. Most ICT classrooms at the main site and an ICT workshop at a local supermarket have good resources. Much improvement has been made in computer hardware and to improve access to the intranet for all staff and learners at remote sites.

49. The standard of assessment is satisfactory. Initial assessment is effective. Assignments are satisfactorily marked and learners on modular courses have good records kept of their progress.
50. The range of programmes meets the needs of learners well. A wide range of flexible learning options are offered. Many courses are also offered in community venues and specific courses are available for learners with disabilities and for those aged over 50. Full-time vocational learners have insufficient opportunities for work experience. Learners have the opportunity to practise their newly acquired skills in the college but no experience is gained in the workplace.
51. Learner support is satisfactory. In-class support for learners with English language difficulties is good. Technical language is well explained using clear handouts. The use of individual learning plans (ILPs) and the target setting for learners are poor. ILPs are not used on some ICT courses and, where they are used, they do not record progress in sufficient detail or set targets which clearly identify those aspects which require improvement.

Leadership and management

52. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A recent management reorganisation has considerably improved communication between staff and the sharing of good practice. Courses are monitored closely and under-performing courses have been withdrawn. The observation of teaching is more robust, but the self-assessment report for this curriculum area is not sufficiently evaluative. Female tutors act as ambassadors for some courses in order to attract more female learners. Course materials promote equality and diversity well.

Sport, leisure and recreation

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

53. Greenwich Community College works in partnership with Greenwich Leisure Limited and Charlton Athletic Football Club in the operation of the London Leisure College. The college offers a range of full-time programmes and additional short courses in sport, recreation and leisure. Several other schemes are also in place such as the talent scheme that combines coaching performance for particular sports alongside academic study. There are currently 811 learners aged 16 to 18 and 407 adults enrolled on programmes. Most of the provision is delivered at Charlton Athletic Football Club. A range of other venues are also used including sports centres and football training grounds.

STRENGTHS

- innovative curriculum that meets the needs of the community and employers
- good guidance and support for progression
- effective recent changes to curriculum management to improve standards.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- success rates on long courses at level 2
- the use of target setting to promote high achievement.

Achievement and standards

54. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Success rates are satisfactory or better on most coaching awards. The success rates on the access course and national diploma have improved to a satisfactory level. The success rate on the BTEC first diploma is low. Success rates on the progression awards in sport and leisure are also low but have improved in the current year at level 1. Learners' written work and coaching skills are satisfactory. Some learners display high standards of sports performance, and a number have been selected for professional or international teams or coaching roles. A minority of learners have poor exercise technique.

Quality of provision

55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better sessions, teachers devise a good range of learning activities and use questioning well to test understanding. ILT is used adequately. In some sessions learners are insufficiently challenged. Assessment practice is effective and learners receive sufficient feedback. Initial assessment for literacy and numeracy is thorough and additional needs are identified and supported appropriately. Target setting is ineffective. Individual learning plans do not include information on course

units and additional courses or identify completion dates for these. Learning objectives set by learners are too vague and insufficiently challenging. There is little recorded input from tutors to encourage learners to reach their full potential.

56. The curriculum offer is particularly innovative and meets the needs of the community and employers well. Liaison with employers is strong and informs curriculum planning effectively. The talent scheme involving different partners offers a flexible programme to develop the skills of individual learners. Advice and guidance to support learners' progression are good. The college has well established and effective links with universities. There is a good programme of talks and mock interviews provided by employers and higher education representatives. Work placements prepare learners well for employment.

Leadership and management

57. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There have been effective recent changes to curriculum management to improve standards. The observation of teaching and learning has been successful in identifying areas for improvement. Staff have been supported well through regular development days, peer assessment and the support and supervision programme. Several changes have been made to the delivery of programmes, and attendance and progress are now closely monitored. Learners' views are elicited and used to inform self-assessment. Teachers are involved well in the self-assessment process which accurately identified strengths and areas for improvement. A well formulated development plan has been closely followed this year.

Arts, media and performing arts

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

58. The college offers a wide range of pre-entry to level 3 full- and part-time accredited courses in creative arts, music and media at four of the main college centres. There are 303 learners on creative arts and crafts courses, and 336 learners on music and media courses. Approximately half are adults, the majority of whom study on level 2 qualifications. Most of the learners aged 16 to 18 study AS, GCE A level and music courses.

STRENGTHS

- good standards of applied crafts
- creative use of technology on music courses
- productive industrial links which enrich learning
- good strategic leadership of the area.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- attendance and punctuality on some courses
- the range of teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of all learners
- additional support arrangements at the Meridian Music Centre
- rigorous implementation and monitoring of quality improvement measures at course level.

Achievement and standards

59. Learners' achievements and success rates are satisfactory overall. The success rate in AS level media studies was high in 2005 with a good proportion of learners achieving high grades. Success rates on art and design and music access courses are satisfactory. Pass rates are low on the City and Guilds progression award in photography. Attendance rates on a significant number of courses are low, particularly in music. Punctuality is poor in some art and design classes. This impedes learners' progress in group performance and project work.
60. The standard of learners' practical work is good. In art and design, learners' applied craft work demonstrates good use of traditional techniques and processes. On music technology courses, learners use technical skills well to create original compositions and arrangements.

Quality of provision

61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Well maintained specialist equipment is used effectively by teachers to facilitate learning. Teachers demonstrate skills and techniques well. However, in many lessons, tutors use too narrow a range of teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of all learners

adequately. In some music lessons, the least able learners make slow progress. Assessment and the monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. However the standard of assessment feedback is inconsistent across full- and part-time courses.

62. The programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners well. There are productive links with the creative industries to enhance learning. Learners have the opportunity to exhibit their work in professional settings. Music equipment manufacturers provide resources. Work experience opportunities, external performance events and master classes further enrich learning. Links with higher education institutions facilitate learner progression.
63. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory overall. Target setting for learners is insufficiently detailed. Learners have good access to support at the Plumstead and Greenwich sites. Support arrangements at the Meridian Music Centre are not sufficient to meet the needs of all learners. Communication arrangements between course leaders and support staff on this site are ineffective and learners have insufficient access to careers and financial guidance.

Leadership and management

64. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Strategic leadership is good. Curriculum managers have a very good understanding of local community and employer needs and a distinctive vision for the development of provision. New course team structures have led to improvements in communication, but in some cases it remains too informal and irregular. Where underperforming courses have been identified, measures are having an impact on improving achievement. However, monitoring of quality improvement measures at course level is insufficiently rigorous. Observation of teaching and learning is carried out regularly but the college internal grades are too generous. Course reviews are not sufficiently evaluative.

Languages, literature and culture

Good: grade 2

Context

65. There are approximately 1,130 enrolments on courses in English and modern languages. Approximately a quarter of the learners are aged 16 to 18, many of whom are on full-time programmes. There are some 200 enrolments on AS and GCE A level courses and 260 on GCSE courses. A significant majority of learners in modern languages study Spanish and French. In English, a pre-GCSE course at level 1 enables learners to progress to level 2. There are also courses at entry level for modern languages. British Sign Language is taught at levels 1 and 2.

STRENGTHS

- good success rates for GCE A level modern languages, AS English and GCSE English
- very effective initial assessment of learners' needs
- effective leadership and management leading to improved achievements for learners.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- the focus on strategies to challenge able learners
- specialist facilities and e-learning materials in modern languages.

Achievement and standards

66. Learners' achievements are good. Success rates are at or above national averages for most courses and levels. Achievement has improved since the college's last inspection. Learners consistently achieve well in modern languages at levels 2 and 3. Success rates are high in GCE A level modern languages and AS level English. Learners demonstrate confidence in both speaking and writing. They express personal opinions clearly and analyse texts well.
67. Achievement rates in GCSE English have improved significantly and the proportion of learners attaining an A* to C grade is above the national average. A significant majority of learners improve upon the grade that they attained at this level at the age of 16. The proportion of learners attaining a high grade on A level English courses is low.

Quality of provision

68. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are appropriately planned to include varied activities and many learners are able to work well independently. Pair work and group work tasks are productive. In some lessons, teachers do not successfully challenge more able learners.

69. Assessment and the monitoring of learners' progress are good. Guidance and support at enrolment and at the start of the course are effective and successfully identify learners' needs. Learners are able to make well informed choices about courses in consultation with subject specialists and arrangements for diagnostic testing are very effective. Learners have a good grasp of how they will be assessed. The programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners' well. The range of courses offered in modern languages matches local demand and enrolments have increased.

Leadership and management

70. Leadership and management are good. Effective curriculum management has led to improved learner achievement in many courses over the last 3 years. Lesson observation forms an integral part of personal and team development. Weaknesses identified in lesson observations are not, however, highlighted in the self-assessment report.
71. There is very good communication between staff in the curriculum area and regular sharing of new and innovative ideas. Managers are focused on how to improve learning and meetings are used well to work towards improvements. In particular, learners' views regarding areas for improvement to learning and resources are acted upon. Learners are aware of the impact of actions arising from their proposals.
72. Teachers are well qualified and regularly undertake training to update their skills. ILT resources are regularly used in English lessons. There is insufficient use of ILT in modern language courses and existing materials are uninspiring. Facilities to practise listening skills are inadequate for advanced level courses.

Preparation for life and work

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

73. The college offers courses in literacy and numeracy, Learndirect skills for life, key skills, basic skills learning support and literacy and numeracy development as part of full-time entry level vocational courses. The college also provides ESOL courses from pre-entry level to level 2 at the main college sites and in a number of community venues. Of the 1,396 learners on preparation for life and work courses, 1,018 are on ESOL programmes. 20% are full-time including 48 learners on skills for working life programmes. The majority of learners are adults. Most courses lead to national qualifications.

STRENGTHS

- good achievement in national tests in literacy
- good literacy, numeracy and language development on Skills for Working Life courses
- good progression from ESOL courses onto vocational courses

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- learning targets in individual learning plans
- literacy and numeracy provision to meet wider community and employer needs

Achievement and standards

74. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Success rates in national tests in literacy are good and satisfactory on ESOL courses. The achievement of numeracy qualifications in the past year has improved considerably and is now satisfactory. Learners make good progress from level 1 to level 2 on Learndirect skills for life courses. Learners on skills for working life courses develop their literacy, numeracy and language skills effectively. Standards of work are satisfactory on discrete literacy and ESOL courses, particularly the development of speaking and listening skills in ESOL. There is good progression from ESOL courses onto vocational courses. Attendance is satisfactory but some lessons are disrupted by late arrivals.

Quality of provision

75. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most lessons are well planned and have clear objectives. ILT is being used imaginatively to enhance learning on the main site. In weaker lessons, insufficient attention is given to meeting the individual needs of learners. Individual learning plans do not contain specific short term targets and are not effective in enabling learners to monitor their progress towards their learning goals.

76. The range of ESOL provision is satisfactory. Courses are provided at all levels and in a range of community settings. The range of literacy and numeracy programmes is narrow and available mainly at the two college centres. There is insufficient provision in community settings and the workplace and too few short courses or taster opportunities. Learners have access to a limited range of enrichment activities and take-up is poor.
77. Support and guidance for learners are satisfactory. Effective individual support is provided for ESOL learners in the learning support centre. Learners with specific or additional learning needs are well supported. Information, advice and guidance for adults are not easily accessed by learners who do not attend the main centre during the day.

Leadership and management

78. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The restructuring of the provision to create a Skills for Life directorate has been effective and team working and communication are good. Staff qualifications and experience are satisfactory. Accommodation and teaching resources are satisfactory.
79. Quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. Weak teaching is identified, but this is not always followed by effective action. Actions identified in course quality review meetings are not always followed up. The self-assessment process is satisfactory with course review information, learner feedback and contributions from staff appropriately taken into account. Inspectors were broadly in agreement with the judgements in the self-assessment report.

Learners' achievements

The headline success rates shown in the following tables are based on college data which has been revised with the agreement of London East LSC. The data for 'Other' qualifications' in 2002/03 and 2003/04 is unreliable and is shown as * in the tables.

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, 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	524	40	55	-15	2,870	38	54	-16
	03/04	608	40	59	-9	2,491	46	58	-12
	04/05	582	61		2	2,671	56		-2
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	42	55	56	-16	56	50	47	3
	03/04	23	52	62	-12	55	36	55	-19
	04/05	15	20		-42	2			
NVQs	02/03	47	30	58	-29	42	22	66	-40
	03/04	59	34	60	-26	42	14	69	-55
	04/05	27	52		-8	34	56		-13
Other	02/03	*	*	55		*	*	54	
	03/04	*	*	59		*	*	58	
	04/05	540	62		3	2635	57		-1

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, 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	709	44	51	-7	1,460	43	50	-7
	03/04	738	50	55	-5	1,743	45	54	-10
	04/05	729	54		-1	1,912	36		-18
GCSEs	02/03	356	58	58	1	234	52	54	-3
	03/04	413	56	64	-8	253	59	58	2
	04/05	379	65		1	225	66		8
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	81	28	53	-25	14	29	50	-22
	03/04	70	51	57	-6	15	53	57	-3
	04/05	85	45		-12	9	56		-1
NVQs	02/03	35	23	41	-19	318	38	53	-15
	03/04	41	73	50	23	156	49	55	-6
	04/05	50	58		8	313	38		-17
Other	02/03	*	*	48		*	*	48	
	03/04	*	*	51		*	*	52	
	04/05	215	37		-14	1,365	28		-24

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, 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	606	49	58	-9	1,044	53	49	4
	03/04	810	51	60	-9	1,325	52	52	0
	04/05	938	63		3	1,218	60		6
A/A2 Levels	02/03	119	74	79	-5	60	65	65	0
	03/04	186	67	83	-16	116	63	68	-6
	04/05	222	70		-13	114	75	70	5
AS Levels	02/03	355	46	57	-11	136	60	47	13
	03/04	435	46	59	-14	164	41	49	-8
	04/05	512	61		2	161	58		9
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	75	31	47	-17	27	33	45	-12
	03/04	112	54	50	4	25	24	43	-19
	04/05	67	60		10	20	40		-3
NVQs	02/03	4		47		150	37	45	-8
	03/04	7	29	47	-18	237	35	47	-12
	04/05	19	74		26	236	49		2
Other	02/03	*	*	48		*	*	50	
	03/04	*	*	49		*	*	52	
	04/05	118	47		-2	687	59		7

Table 4

Outcomes for Employer Training Pilots and National Employer Training Programmes managed by the college 2004 to 2006.

Year	Number of starts in year	Planned learning completed *	Still in learning
2003/04	107	7	0
2004/05	109	65	0
2005/06	51		50

* These are key learning objectives identified for each learner following an ETP or NETP programme

Table 5

Outcomes on Jobcentre Plus programmes managed by the college 2003 to 2005

Year	Number of starts in year	Planned learning completed *	Gained employment	Still in learning
2002/03	275	157	55	
2003/04	236	155	50	
2004/05	255	105	40	43

* These are key objectives identified for each learner following a JC+ programme