



Leyton Sixth Form College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
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Inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

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130457

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Leyton Sixth Form College
Type of college:	Sixth Form
Principal:	Sue Lakeman
Address of college:	Essex Road, Leyton, London E10 6EQ
Telephone number:	0208 928 9000
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Chair of governors:	John Lyons
Unique reference number:	130457
Name of lead inspector:	Meena Wood, HMI
Dates of inspection:	8-12 May 2006

Background of the organisation

1. Leyton Sixth Form College is a larger than average sixth form college in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. It is one of three colleges in the borough. The college has good links with the local colleges, schools and the local borough. The college's mission is to "to enable young people to achieve their full potential by fostering a culture of learning, personal development and high aspiration".
2. There are approximately 1,800 full-time learners aged 16-18. A further 30 learners aged 19+ study alongside them. Most of the college's small adult part-time provision will no longer be offered by the college after this year and was not inspected. A programme of NVQ 2 and 3 in Early Years continues to be offered and supports the development of a foundation degree in Early Childhood Education. A small number of learners from local schools aged 14-16 study a course in applied GCSE travel and tourism.
3. About three quarters of full-time learners aged 16-18 study at level 3. The majority of these enrol on advanced subsidiary level (AS level) programmes. A smaller number enrol on Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education and BTEC vocational courses. About 16% of learners enrol on level 2 courses including GCSE mathematics and English and 10% on level 1 courses. Courses are offered in 10 of the 15 sector skill areas. Over one fifth of the college's learners enrol on science and mathematics courses. The curriculum offer includes two full-time programmes at entry level for about 60 learners on a learning difficulties and disabilities course and an ESOL programme.
4. Around half of the learners reside in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. Just over one fifth of learners travel to the college from the London Borough of Newham. Some 85% of learners attending the college are from minority ethnic groups. One third of these are of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritages and about one fifth of African and Caribbean heritages.

Scope of the inspection

5. 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: mathematics and science; humanities; business and ICT; English and modern foreign languages; visual and performing arts.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Capacity to improve	Good: grade 2
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

Mathematics and Science	Satisfactory: grade 3
Humanities	Satisfactory: grade 3
Business and ICT	Satisfactory: grade 3
English and Modern Foreign Languages	Good: grade 2
Visual and performing arts	Good: grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

6. Leyton Sixth Form College provides a satisfactory standard of provision with good support and guidance for learners. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is good. Learners enjoy their studies and value their time in the college. The college has worked hard to raise the achievement and standards of its learners significantly, through changes to the curriculum and improved subject support for learners. However, since the last inspection, the college has not made sufficient progress in assuring the effectiveness of the quality of the provision.
7. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates at all levels have improved rapidly since the last inspection. The majority of the college's courses are at level 3, and most have success rates at or above the national averages. Learners who come to the college with significantly lower than average attainment make good progress.
8. Teaching is satisfactory. Good teaching includes materials that reflect the diverse backgrounds and local contexts of the learners. Learners are well motivated but in a significant number of lessons the most able are not sufficiently challenged. Not all teachers use information and learning technology (ILT) effectively in lessons. Many learners on level 3 courses do not receive appropriate teaching of key skills. The college's self-assessment report does not include sufficient evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching.
9. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion and meeting the needs of its learners is good. Strong links have been formed with schools and the local community and higher education (HE). Young people's social and personal development is enhanced by a stimulating range of enrichment activities. The college's approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of individual learners is good.
10. Most learners receive good guidance and support. The college's tutorial system is well planned and effective in most areas. Good personal and subject support, including a very effective mentoring scheme, helps learners to raise their aspirations. Progression to higher education is very good.
11. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers have a strong commitment to raising achievement and standards. The quality assurance system is not sufficiently rigorous and has not led to improvements in teaching and learning. Learning resources and accommodation are satisfactory overall. Financial management is good and the provision provides good value for money.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

12. The college demonstrates good capacity to improve. A new middle management structure supports the curriculum areas well. Governors, senior managers and staff are very committed to raising achievements and standards and this has resulted in significant improvements. Managers and staff successfully promote an ethos of respect and high aspirations amongst the learners. Data are generally accurate and timely. The implementation of the self-assessment process has improved at course and departmental level. The self-assessment report at college level recognises most of the strengths and weaknesses, but the college has not identified clear actions to improve the quality of the provision.

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

13. The college has made good progress towards improving achievements and standards since the last inspection. Success rates have improved at all levels. Pass rates and value added measures indicate very good progress for learners on GCE A level courses. Attendance has improved in line with national averages. Most learners receive good subject and personal support that meets their needs and abilities. The implementation of the college's quality assurance procedures and the rigour of self-evaluation at college level are not consistent enough.

Key strengths of the college

- high pass rates and significant value added progress on GCE A level courses
- high progression rates to HE
- well motivated learners with high aspirations
- effective subject and mentoring support for learners
- good take up of extensive curriculum-related enrichment activities
- good financial management.

Areas for improvement

- poor value added on many AS courses and low progression rates from AS to GCE A level courses
- low proportion of good or better teaching in many subjects
- insufficient challenge for more able learners
- weak teaching of key skills at level 3 and low pass rates
- inconsistent implementation of quality assurance.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Good: grade 2

14. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates have improved considerably since the last inspection. Pass rates on levels 1 and 2 courses are above national averages. Pass rates on GCE A level courses are high. At both AS and GCE A level, a low proportion of students achieve high grades. However, there has been a slight improvement at GCE A level in 2005. On vocational courses at all levels, pass rates are high with significant numbers of high grades.
15. Value added data for GCE A level courses show learners make significantly good progress. Learners who start GCE A level courses with low average General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) points scores make better progress than those who start with high point scores. In many AS level subjects, learners do not make the progress expected of them. Around one quarter of students who start AS levels as their main programme do not proceed onto a GCE A level programme of study. Most learners on advanced vocational courses make satisfactory progress.
16. Retention of 16-18 year olds on level 2 and level 3 courses fell significantly and was slightly below national averages in 2005. At the time of the inspection, retention on level 2 and vocational level 3 courses had improved. Attendance is generally around the national average, at 86%. Poor punctuality disrupts the start of lessons in a few curriculum areas and remains a barrier to learning.
17. The standards of learners' work are mostly satisfactory. In visual and performing arts and English, learners produce very good standards of work. Learners' pass rates in key skills are high at levels 1 and 2 in communication and application of number. At the time of the inspection, however, no learners had passed IT key skills in 2004/05. Key skills pass rates at level 3 are low.
18. The proportion of second year advanced learners completing their studies and progressing to HE has increased over the last three years and is good at around 80%. The college arranges elaborate progression and celebration of achievement events for learners, who rate them highly.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

19. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with some areas of very good practice. Most learners enjoy their studies and work effectively with peers and teachers in an atmosphere of mutual respect. In some subjects, teachers create stimulating teaching materials to reflect their learners' diverse backgrounds, and the local communities and cultures. Teachers provide appropriate activities and tasks that help learners to develop independent learning skills and to fulfil their academic potential.

20. In weaker lessons, teaching strategies do not take account of the different needs and abilities of all learners and there are poor checks on learning. In some subjects, an over reliance on whole class teaching fails to maintain the interest of learners and there is insufficient challenge for the more able learners. Most teachers make some use of ILT but little use of interactive ILT to enhance learning. Key skills are not well integrated in all subjects and many learners who need key skills in communication, application of number, and information technology at level 3 do not receive appropriate teaching.
21. The college does not adequately assess the overall quality of teaching and learning. In most areas, some unsatisfactory teaching was observed and in all areas the proportion of good and better teaching was low. Good and outstanding teaching practice is not shared consistently across curriculum areas or within areas.
22. Internal verification procedures are mostly satisfactory, but are not implemented robustly enough across all curriculum areas and in key skills.
23. Assessment is used well to monitor learners' progress. In most curriculum areas, teachers provide satisfactory or good written and oral feedback. However, subject tutors do not always act on weaknesses identified by learners in their individual subject learning plans. For example, in biology, tutors give learners concise and very helpful feedback on how to improve, whereas in psychology, some tutors do not recognise where learners have difficulty in learning and do not put in place appropriate targets and subject support, even when learners identify these weaknesses clearly in their plans. The use of individual learning plans remains varied, as noted in the college's self-assessment report. There are two parents' evenings each year and reports based on subject profiles are sent to parents every half term.
24. The initial assessment of learners' abilities and learning support needs at levels 2 and 3 fails to identify fully their literacy, numeracy and language needs. The identification of learners' key skills needs is underdeveloped. The college has good links with the local 11-16 schools, but in some cases there is an over reliance on using information from the schools to diagnose learners' support needs. Several learners were identified as needing support for dyslexia too late on their course. Additional learning support is effective and valued by those who receive it.
25. Teachers provide good additional subject support for learners in many areas and learners value the expertise of their teachers. A minority of learners on AS and GCE A level courses are very successfully mentored by learners from local universities, some of whom provide literacy and language support. The learners are very positive about the support and believe "mentors form a bridge between the teacher and the student".

26. Learners receive good advice and guidance. Prospective applicants are well informed through attractive promotional materials and website. Enrolment and induction procedures are effectively planned. Learners benefit from the wide range of specialist services, including counselling and careers guidance.
27. Most tutors use group tutorials and one-to-one interviews productively to review learners' progress. Explicit links to "Every Child Matters" themes in the Children's Act 2004 are being developed through the tutorial programme. In weaker group sessions, learners are not involved enough in discussing and understanding the issues.
28. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of its learners is good. The college ensures that learners work in a safe environment and that physical access to most areas is good. There is, however, insufficient suitable accommodation for the one-to-one tutorials and for those learners requiring additional learning support.
29. Enrichment activities, clubs and societies are broad ranging and include religious groups and sporting activities. These are generally subsidised and many learners welcome these opportunities, speaking highly of them.
30. The college has strong employer links in health. However, in many curriculum areas, links to employers are underdeveloped and very few learners on either vocational or academic courses experience a realistic work environment.
31. The college's response to educational and social inclusion is good. Through joint collaboration with local schools, colleges and HE institutions, and well structured college programmes from entry level to level 3, many learners without the necessary formal qualifications, successfully access AS level courses and progress to HE or to a range of careers within the health service. A new 'Access to AS Maths' course has been introduced for students who attain a GCSE grade C in mathematics but who would like to continue their studies at AS level. School pupils aged 14-16 attending the college, speak highly of the benefits they derive from the provision.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: grade 3

32. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college's mission is clear and shared by staff and governors. Governors, senior managers and staff have worked hard to raise achievements and standards and to promote high aspirations amongst learners. This has resulted in significant improvements particularly at GCE A level where pass rates are now high and learners achieve grades better than predicted from their GCSE results. There is still some improvement needed at GCE AS level where not all learners make the progress expected of them and where a significant number leave the college between the first and second years of study. The college has discontinued its adult provision so that it can focus entirely on its 16-18 year old learners. There has been a significant increase in the number of students on level 2 provision.

Staff and governors are fully involved in evaluating the quality of the provision and planning improvements. However, targets and action plans are not detailed enough for progress to be monitored rigorously. Some weaknesses in quality assurance identified in the last inspection still remain. Financial management is very good and the college offers good value for money.

33. A new middle management structure supports the curriculum areas well. Data are accurate and managers receive timely reports on attendance and retention. The response of senior managers to effectively implementing the cross-college aspects of Skills for Life and key skills has not been timely. Staff appraisals have not been completed. However, most staff have benefited from some development activities linked to appraisal targets. Induction for new staff is effective. The college self-assessment report identified most of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. Senior managers have not sufficiently evaluated issues in relation to the quality of the provision. Lessons observed by the college are graded too generously. The quality of teaching and learning and the use of ILT are uneven, and in most areas are broadly similar to that at the time of the last inspection. Implementation of the self-assessment process in most curriculum areas, including the monitoring of course reviews and action plans, has much improved.
34. Specialist equipment and learning resources are satisfactory. Accommodation is cramped in some areas and in performing arts is inadequate. The college has approved well resourced plans for an extensive building project.
35. Appropriate arrangements for child protection are well understood by staff and governors. The college is a safe and secure environment, although managers have been slow to implement a few aspects of the college health and safety action plan.
36. The college's response to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 is good. Managers and staff work effectively to eliminate oppressive behaviour and to promote an ethos of respect amongst learners. The college works very successfully with local schools, further and higher education providers, community and religious leaders to provide a coherent range of courses for young people in the area.

Curriculum area inspections

Science and mathematics

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

37. The college offers GCE A levels in physics, biology, chemistry, advanced vocational science and mathematics. An intermediate vocational science course is also offered. There are 480 learners on AS level courses and 230 learners at GCE A level; about one third of these are on biology courses. Some 200 learners are enrolled on GCSE mathematics courses.

Strengths

- high pass rates on GCE A level and vocational courses
- very high recruitment on most courses
- good subject support meeting learners' needs
- good progression rates to higher education.

Areas for improvement

- very few high grades on all courses
- poor attendance in mathematics and chemistry lessons
- poor development of learners' practical skills
- insufficient action to raise standards in teaching and learning.

Achievements and standards

38. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. GCE A level pass rates are close to the high national average but AS level rates are lower, particularly in mathematics and chemistry. Learners make the progress expected of them relative to their prior attainment but few achieve grades A or B. Vocational pass rates are well above average. GCSE mathematics A*-C results are improving but are still below the national average.
39. Over one quarter of the college's learners enrol on science and mathematics courses. Progression to higher education is good with over 70 learners progressing to science-related and medicine-linked courses each year.
40. Punctuality was satisfactory in the lessons observed but attendance was poor in some mathematics and chemistry lessons. Practical skills are not well developed and learners do not demonstrate understanding of underlying principles. Learners' written coursework is detailed and shows good use of IT skills, but in many cases, with poor recording of experiment results and little awareness of the need for accuracy.

Quality of provision

41. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In better lessons, teachers relate topics to learners' experience and culture, use a good balance of presentation, discussion and group work and make effective checks on learning. In weaker lessons, teachers focus on recall of information rather than developing clear understanding and there is little development of learners' independent learning skills. In most lessons, the interactive potential of ILT is not exploited.
42. Accommodation is satisfactory. The science laboratories are well appointed and provide a good working environment. However, a separate fume cupboard is not provided in the chemistry preparation room and all potentially hazardous preparation takes place in the fume cupboard in the laboratory.
43. Learners' needs and interests are enhanced through enrichment activities based on good links with local businesses and visits to European countries. Courses are well structured to enable learners to progress through the levels.
44. Learners receive good subject support and are encouraged to attend additional revision sessions. University student mentors provide very good support for learners on level 3 courses. Teachers update personal tutors on learners' progress effectively through individual subject reports.
45. Assessment of work is satisfactory, but feedback to learners often lacks detail on how to improve. A robust internal verification procedure for vocational courses and key skills is not yet in place.

Leadership and management

46. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Weaknesses in teaching are identified through lesson observations and appraisals, and staff are provided with training and development. These initiatives have not yet impacted on improving teaching and learning in some subjects.
47. Self-assessment and action planning within the area are robust, but not reflected in the final college report. Action plans are monitored regularly. Managers have not effectively addressed the low standards of learners' practical skills and have been slow in providing a health and safety policy for the science department. There is an insufficiently rigorous focus on risk assessment with too much reliance on technicians' expertise.

Business and ICT

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

48. Courses offered by the college include AS and GCE A level business, economics, computer studies, accounts and law, foundation, intermediate and advanced vocational business, and access to higher education. Some 761 learners aged 16-18 study full-time with 57 learners on level 1 courses, 127 learners at level 2, and 577 learners at level 3. Almost 96% of learners are from a minority ethnic background which is above the college average.

Strengths

- high pass rates on advanced level business, law and economics courses and vocational computing courses
- diverse business teaching materials reflecting local context
- good support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- high progression rates to HE.

Areas for improvement

- low and declining retention rates on level 3 courses
- poor success rates in AS level accounts and ICT
- poor punctuality
- insufficient emphasis on raising standards in teaching and learning.

Achievements and standards

49. Learners' achievements are satisfactory. Retention rates on most courses have declined during the period 2002-05. Pass rates are good or outstanding on GCE A level courses in business, law, economics and vocational computing courses and learners make good progress on these. However, success rates on the AS level courses in accounts and computing are poor. The standard of learners' work in lessons is generally satisfactory but good in some subjects.

Quality of provision

50. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, teachers prepare case study materials within the local context of the multicultural nature of business and IT in east London and other diverse communities. In the weaker lessons, teachers do not take account of learners' abilities in planning lessons and do not avail themselves of the interactive potential of IT technologies to enhance learning. Learners do not have sufficient work experience opportunities at levels 2 and 3, except through Young Enterprise and visiting speakers. A local business education organisation provides very good one day workshops for business studies learners.

51. Learners benefit from a good range of business and IT courses and there is good progression to higher level courses. Progression to higher education is also good. Many learners supplement their studies with the varied enrichment activities.
52. Support for learners is good. Learners with learning difficulties receive very effective support in lessons. All learners meet with their tutors regularly to review their progress. Most teachers assess learners' work effectively so that learners have a clear understanding of how they may improve their work. Poor punctuality disrupts the start of too many lessons.

Leadership and management

53. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are some inconsistencies in the way managers in the area carry out their responsibilities. The self-assessment report is generally accurate but does not sufficiently identify the weaknesses in teaching and learning, in particular, in computing and IT. There is effective monitoring of action plans arising from self-assessment by course teams and managers.

English and modern foreign languages

Good: grade 2

Context

54. The college offers a range of AS and GCE A level courses in English, French and Spanish. In addition, courses are available in GCSE English, NVQ Spanish levels 1 and 2 and Key Skills. There are 654 learners on English courses and 144 on modern foreign languages.

Strengths

- high pass rates on AS and GCE A level English courses and on most AS and GCE A level language courses
- improving pass rates for GCSE English and NVQ Spanish level 1 courses
- significant value-added progress on many courses
- much good teaching and learning
- good subject support for learners.

Areas for improvement

- low and declining retention rates on AS and GCE A level French and on AS Spanish courses
- declining enrolments for GCE A level English language and AS courses in English language, English literature and French.

Achievements and standards

55. Pass rates on AS and GCE A level English courses and on most AS and GCE A level modern foreign language courses are high. Pass rates for GCSE A*-C English and NVQ level 1 Spanish courses are good and improving, at above national averages. Learners make good progress in AS and GCE A level courses in English language and literature and in English literature. Retention rates on AS and GCE A level French and on AS Spanish courses are low and declining and well below national averages.
56. Enrolments for English and French GCE A level courses are declining and for AS English literature have declined significantly this year. Learners' attendance is just below national averages. Learners' work demonstrates a good grasp of specialist concepts, terminology and skills. Some work is very good, displaying sophisticated and creative use of language.

Quality of provision

57. Much teaching and learning is good. Through their knowledge and enthusiasm, teachers motivate learners of all abilities and some successfully integrate cultural issues relating to their learners' backgrounds into teaching materials. Well planned lessons encourage learners to participate in a variety

of stimulating activities that develop their skills and understanding.
Communication Key Skills are integrated effectively into GCSE English lessons.

58. In a minority of lessons, attendance and punctuality are poor and learners are not challenged and engaged in their learning. In modern foreign language lessons, teachers do not sufficiently encourage learners to use the target language where it is appropriate to do so. Assessment of most learners' work is detailed and accurate with helpful feedback for improvement
59. Learners' studies are enhanced by enrichment activities and a good range of courses meets learners' needs.
60. Teachers provide good subject support for learners and some learners receive good mentoring support. Group tutorial sessions are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

61. Leadership and management are good. Managers provide good guidance and support to staff and create effective opportunities for sharing of good practice. There are satisfactory arrangements for internal verification and moderation. Managers undertake lesson observations but some language teachers have not been observed. At the time of the inspection, few teachers had been appraised. All teachers contribute to the curriculum area self-assessment report and to curriculum reviews, which are detailed but include little evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning.

Visual and performing arts

Good: grade 2

Context

62. The college offers a wide range of arts courses. This includes first diplomas in art and design, media and performing arts; national diplomas in performing arts and popular music; national certificates in art and design and media, AVCE art and design; AS and GCE A levels in art and design, 3D design, graphic design, textiles, photography, performance studies, media studies and music; and a foundation diploma in art and design. There are 586 full-time learners.

Strengths

- high pass rates on GCE A level and vocational courses
- good teaching and learning
- high standards of learners' work
- good progression to higher level courses and HE
- effective enrichment opportunities
- good guidance and subject support.

Areas for improvement

- low and declining success rates and reduction in high grades in AS courses
- inadequate performing arts accommodation.

Achievements and standards

63. Achievements and standards are very good on GCE A level and vocational courses. Pass rates are 100% on most of these courses. However, there are declining success rates in many AS subjects and a significant reduction in high grades on most AS and GCE A level courses, some with three-year declining trends. The grades learners achieve on AS and GCE A level courses are often lower than would be expected from their GCSE performance. Progression rates are good, both to higher education courses and to internal higher level courses. Attendance rates are good.
64. The standard of learners' practical work is good and sometimes exemplary across the range of subjects and levels. Art and design learners produce work of high quality that is well researched and diverse. Learners' work in performing arts is both highly disciplined and creative.

Quality of provision

65. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers give effective one-to-one subject support in lessons, and provide learners with professionally relevant assignment briefs. Learners' IT skills are well developed. Music teaching is well planned and carefully checked. There is good classroom control in an

atmosphere of mutual respect. In a few lessons, more able learners are not sufficiently challenged.

66. Assessment and internal verification procedures are thorough. Careful records are kept of individual progress and good feedback is given to learners telling them what they need to do to improve.
67. Learners benefit from a wide range of subject specific enrichment opportunities including theatre in education tours, community projects and visiting arts practitioners.
68. Resources and accommodation are good in art and media. However, performing arts accommodation is inadequate. The theatre space is not suitable for vocational performance courses and restricts lesson and rehearsal opportunities for learners. Access to the staffroom is through the dance studio which is disruptive.
69. Guidance and support are good. Some arts learners benefit from good mentoring support. Tutorial practice is well planned and effective with learners reflecting actively on issues presented through good use of the "circle technique".

Leadership and management

70. Leadership and management are good. Teachers are observed regularly and this process links effectively to the appraisal system. However, there is no clearly defined way of identifying and sharing good practice. The self-assessment report does not fully identify all strengths and weaknesses in the area, but managers are very aware of most areas that need improvement and action plans are in place and monitored.

Humanities

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

71. There are 684 learners following AS and GCE A level subjects in history, geography, government and politics, general studies, philosophy, psychology and sociology. Enrolments have been increasing in these curriculum areas, particularly in AS sociology and AS psychology. From September 2005, AS critical thinking is offered as part of the enrichment programme.

Strengths

- high pass rates in GCE A level subjects
- effective integration of diversity issues in teaching
- good take up of enrichment activities
- high level of progression to higher education.

Areas for improvement

- low AS level pass rates
- insufficient checks on learning in lessons
- poor punctuality
- insufficient teaching of key skills
- unsatisfactory quality assurance of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

72. GCE A level pass rates are very good; all five subjects had very good pass rates of 100% in 2005, and GCE A level retention rates are satisfactory. AS pass rates are unsatisfactory, apart from AS history with 100% pass rate. Retention on AS courses is satisfactory overall, but AS general studies has unsatisfactory retention and achievement. In most subjects, learners make satisfactory progress, except in AS general studies and AS psychology where learners do not make the progress expected of them. The standard of learners' written work is satisfactory. Most learners use specialised vocabulary confidently and have a good understanding of concepts, although a significant minority use simplistic and unsupported arguments.

73. Attendance is low. Poor punctuality continues to disrupt the quality of learning in many lessons.

Quality of provision

74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most teachers effectively ensure participation by learners in a range of activities. Equal opportunities issues are sensitively incorporated into teaching materials. Teachers use ILT well in lessons but little use is made of the interactive potential of ILT. A stimulating sociology discussion board is available on the intranet that learners find

helpful. Teachers do not meet the needs of all the learners through appropriate planning of teaching, particularly at AS level. In too many lessons, checking of learning is insufficient and questioning techniques do not ensure that all learners participate.

75. Assessment of learners' work is timely. Learners receive detailed guidance on how to improve and are familiar with examination board assessment criteria. Except in AS geography lessons, there is insufficient teaching of key skills within the curriculum area. Evidence on learners' key skills is drawn from subject assignments, but not co-ordinated between the humanities subjects.
76. Learners enjoy stimulating enrichment activities, including a debating society and trips abroad, and take up is good. Learners' needs are well met through a good range of courses.
77. Support for learners is good. Many benefit from subject support for revision and study techniques and some learners are effectively mentored. Progression to higher education for most GCE A level subjects is good. It is very good in history and philosophy.

Leadership and management

78. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers are highly focused on supporting staff to raise achievement at GCE A level. The department self-assessment report and action plans are mostly self-critical, and include specific targets. However, they do not identify weaknesses arising from teaching and learning observations. Progress against targets is not reviewed rigorously by all staff.

Learners' achievements

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	210	75%	68	7	49	45%	40	5
	03/04	235	74%	74	0	71	20%	49	-29
	04/05	326	88%			58	28%		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	57	74%			2	50%		
	03/04	53	92%			0	N/A		
	04/05	55	85%			1	0%		
NVQs	02/03	0	N/A			0	N/A		
	03/04	0	N/A			0	N/A		
	04/05	0	N/A			0	N/A		
Other	02/03	153	75%	68	7	47	45%	40	5
	03/04	182	68%	73	-5	71	20%	50	-30
	04/05	271	88%			57	28%		

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream Level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2002 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	533	76%	71	5	121	47%	48	-1
	03/04	623	82%	75	7	92	57%	47	10
	04/05	736	80%			75	77%		
GCSEs	02/03	324	79%	73	6	65	52%		
	03/04	393	83%	77	6	52	65%		
	04/05	447	79%			39	74%		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	144	74%	69	5	0	N/A		
	03/04	140	81%	71	10	0	N/A		
	04/05	166	80%			0	N/A		
NVQs	02/03	1	0%			26	35%		
	03/04	0	N/A			29	55%	52	3
	04/05	3	67%			18	72%		
Other	02/03	64	67%	62	5	30	47%	41	6
	03/04	90	80%	73	7	11	18%	32	-14
	04/05	120	84%			18	89%		

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2002 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	3,458	71%	72	-1	84	37%	53	-16
	03/04	3,467	76%	75	1	65	51%	58	-7
	04/05	3,542	77%			57	75%		
A/A2 Levels	02/03	896	92%	88	4	10	90%		
	03/04	978	95%	89	6	22	95%		
	04/05	998	94%			16	100%		
AS Levels	02/03	2,285	66%	66	0	29	38%		
	03/04	2,273	68%	69	-1	7	57%		
	04/05	2,286	70%			18	56%		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	239	51%	63	-12	7	29%		
	03/04	121	73%	68	5	2	100%		
	04/05	157	69%			5	60%		
NVQs	02/03	1	0%			38	24%	52	-28
	03/04	0	N/A			32	16%	51	-35
	04/05	0	N/A			13	77%		
Other	02/03	37	59%	54	5	0	N/A		
	03/04	95	74%	57	17	2	50%		
	04/05	101	73%			5	80%		

* 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'