



Eastleigh College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

Published
July 2006

Provider reference
130692

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Eastleigh College
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Tony Lau-Walker
Address of college:	Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 5FS
Telephone number:	023 8091 1000
Fax number:	023 8032 2131
Chair of governors:	Tom Calverley
Unique reference number:	130692
Name of reporting inspector:	Noelle Buick, ALI
Dates of inspection:	15-19 May 2006

Background of the organisation

1. Eastleigh College is a medium sized general further education college specialising in vocational education and training. The college has three main sites, near to Eastleigh town centre. The largest is close to a secondary school and Barton Peveril sixth form college. Over 35% of the college's provision is offered in collaboration with community organisations and on employers' premises in Hampshire. A residential facility accommodates 14 learners with moderate learning difficulties.
2. Eastleigh has a population of 116,169 and low unemployment. The area is relatively prosperous, situated at a major communication intersection with good motorway, rail and air links. There are pockets of social deprivation and below average levels of basic skills. Most of the businesses are small to medium sized enterprises. Average earnings in the borough are £50 per week below the Hampshire average.
3. The college's mission states its intention to respond to the diverse needs of the community. Its vision is to be the main provider of practical and applied lifelong learning excellence inspiring individuals and employers to achieve their potential. It offers a wide range of courses and is responding to the skills priorities in the south-east. The college received Beacon status in 2004. Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) recognition was awarded for electrical installation, refrigeration and air conditioning in 2002. Two further CoVEs have been developed through partnerships, marine industries in 2005 and retail and associated logistics in 2006.
4. The college has grown by 20% since the last inspection. In 2004/05, there were 1,272 learners aged 16-18 years and 8,112 adults funded through the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). A further 500 learners were on higher education programmes. Over 77% of the college's enrolments were adults. Around 3.8% of learners were from minority ethnic backgrounds. There were 327 learners aged 14-16 years. There are 30 work-based learners on construction and engineering courses, which have only been offered since September 2005/06. Adult and community learning continues to be offered although this is not funded through the LSC.

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.

Summary of grades awarded

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

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

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: grade 2

6. Achievements and standards are good. Success rates are above the national average at all levels except at level 3 for 16-18 year olds, where they have improved slowly and are broadly at the national average in 2004/05. Retention has improved since the last inspection. Pass rates are mainly above the national average at all levels. The standard of learners' work is good and they are making good progress.
7. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good and are supported by a rigorous and systematic lesson observation process which is successfully improving quality. Good use is made of the lesson observation outcomes to inform staff development. Most learners' work is assessed appropriately with good feedback from teachers.
8. Overall educational and social inclusion are good. Social inclusion, work with partners to widen participation, and the range of programmes to meet the needs and interests of learners are outstanding. Educational inclusion is good. Learners' support needs are very well catered for. Although diversity is respected, active promotion of equality and diversity in the curriculum and across the college is underdeveloped.
9. Guidance and support for learners are good. Enrolment and induction arrangements are very effective. Individual learning needs are assessed thoroughly and well catered for. Learners' progress is monitored closely and they are well cared for. Teachers need to make better use of the learning support assistants in some of their lessons. Adults and some part-time learners have insufficient access to careers advice.
10. Leadership and management are good. The strategy to continue to develop as a vocational college is clear and since the last inspection there has been a considerable growth in enrolments. Success rates are high especially at levels 1 and 2 although improvements in retention at level 3 have been slow. Curriculum management is good. Considerable investment has improved the quality of accommodation. Governance is good and financial management is very good.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding: grade 1

11. Inspectors agreed with the college that its capacity to improve is outstanding. The strategic direction and context the college is working in is very clear. Management is good. The appointment of the new learning managers last year has further strengthened the college's quality assurance processes and the capacity to carry through its improvement plans. There is a high level of accountability. The lesson observation scheme is rigorous and staff

development is good. Effective action is taken in response to any issues raised by learners. The new building project is in the advanced stages of planning and will further improve resources. Access to and use of data to promote improvements are good. The college has a number of external awards recognising the quality of its provision including Beacon status, three CoVEs and the Action for Business award for effective engagement with employers.

12. The self-assessment process is good and is fully inclusive of all stakeholders. It covers all aspects of the college's work and is effective in identifying areas for improvement. The resulting action plans have improved standards. Although the summary curriculum self-assessment reports presented to inspectors did not take sufficient account of the quality of the teaching and learning, underlying information showed this to have been given ample consideration.

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

13. The college has made good progress in dealing with the areas for improvement noted at the last inspection in 2002. Some accommodation has improved and more improvements are planned. Retention rates are now generally above national averages although retention rates at level 3 have been slow to improve. Enrolments have increased but the college has maintained its good quality provision. Inspectors agreed that health and social care and visual and performing arts have improved from their satisfactory grades at the last inspection to good. The recent curriculum management changes have promoted improvements in the effectiveness of tutorials, the take-up of additional learning support and work with employers.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- well defined and purposeful vision as a vocational college
- high success rates on long courses at levels 1 and 2
- high success rates on short courses (5-24 weeks)
- high pass rates in key skills
- very good provision for 14-16 year olds
- effective management action to improve quality
- successful strategies to meet local business and community needs
- good financial management.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- low retention rates on level 3 courses
- little use of information and learning technology (ILT) in teaching and learning
- narrow college-wide enrichment programme

- limited access to careers guidance for adults and some part-time learners
- some poor accommodation in engineering and construction and at Desborough.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Good: grade 2

14. Success rates are good and are above the national average at all levels except at level 3 for 16-18 year olds, where they have improved slowly and are broadly at the national average in 2004/05. This provision covers 17% of full-time equivalent learners. Although there has not been a continuously upward trend in success rates since the last inspection, they have been largely maintained above the national average. Success rates on all short courses are consistently above the national average except for short courses (less than 5 weeks) for adults which are at the national average.
15. Retention has improved since the last inspection when it was a weakness at all levels in the college. It is now good at levels 1 and 2 but it has been low at level 3 and is the reason for the lower success rates. It has been mainly below the national average for 16-18 year olds since 2001 and for adults since 2004. There has been a slow increase and in May 2006 it is broadly at the national average for 16-18 year olds at 78% and above it for adults at 73%. Good retention has been maintained at level 1 at 86% and at level 2 at over 80%.
16. Pass rates are above the national average at all levels except level 1 for 16-18 year olds where they are at the national average. Learners who remained on level 3 courses achieved well with pass rates at 89% and 87% respectively for 16-18 year olds and adults in 2004/05.
17. Key skills pass rates are significantly above the national average and are 69% overall. It is too early for any achievements in work-based learning but retention is very good for those learners in employment at 90%.
18. The standard of learners' work is good and they are making good progress. Most learners enjoy their work and comply with health and safety regulations. Learners aged 14-16 years perform well at the college and 77% progress to full-time courses. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly the residential learners, make good progress. Success rates for minority ethnic learners are above the national average except for Asian learners which are slightly below.
19. Good use is made of value added data for level 3 graded qualifications and first diplomas to set targets and raise learners' aspirations. This data also shows that learners on many courses such as the national diplomas in design, performing arts, public services and sport make better progress than might be predicted from their qualifications on entry.
20. Under performance on any course is identified through the self-assessment process and the college works effectively to improve the provision. In art and design, separate diploma courses which were underperforming have been replaced by one core qualification with a number of pathways. In care,

recruiting more assessors has resulted in faster achievement of NVQs, particularly at level 3. Changes to the GCSE programme ensure that the demands of the GCSE and the learners' main programme are compatible.

21. Average attendance in 2004/05 was satisfactory at 80% overall. Comprehensive destination data have been collected for the first time for learners who left the college in 2005 and are in the early stages of being used to raise the aspirations of learners on similar programmes.

Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

22. The college accurately assessed the quality of its provision in the self-assessment report. Teaching and learning are good. Learners enjoy lessons, work positively and produce good standards of work. Their work is assessed appropriately. Encouraging feedback is given to help most learners to progress, although in a few instances there is insufficient detail to challenge learners to achieve their full potential.
23. Lessons are well planned. Schemes of work and lesson plans are clear and well structured to ensure that the individual needs of learners are met and that they can make appropriate progress. In a few cases, opportunities for extension activities are not planned in sufficient detail. Tracking and monitoring of learners' progress is thorough, building on good initial assessment. Individual learning plans are well and frequently used for regular reviews of targets. Classroom management is sound. Respect is reinforced and there is good attention to health and safety.
24. The college has a rigorous and systematic lesson observation process which is successfully improving the quality of teaching and learning. The outcomes of the observations result in appropriate support for most teachers. Where teaching and learning is graded as unsatisfactory, the follow up actions are thorough. However, there is no systematic follow up of any weaknesses identified in teaching graded as satisfactory. The outcomes of observations are also used well to inform the staff development programme. For example, to help improve teaching by hourly paid staff, they are now paid to take part in peer observations as part of their professional development.
25. Three priorities for improvement were identified as a particular focus for this year's lesson observations. Improvements in two of these, classroom management and differentiated learning, are progressing well, but there has been insufficient progress in making more effective use of ILT in lessons.
26. There is a good range of other formal and informal strategies to improve teaching and learning. These include peer observation and mentoring and the use of advanced teaching practitioners. Views of learners are effectively used to make improvements in teaching and learning. More good practice is shared through informal mechanisms than through any formal system.

27. Key skills are fully integrated across all of the curriculum areas. The internal verification system is effective. It is applied across all areas comprehensively, on both internally and externally delivered programmes.
28. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory. The college is aware that some workshop accommodation requires improvement.
29. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The range of provision, for the learners that the college recruits, is outstanding with very good progression routes. The college focuses very strongly on its mission as a vocational college and does not offer GCE A/AS levels.
30. The college has an extensive range of effective strategies to widen participation. It has retained its adult and community learning provision on a full-cost basis. It offers a wide range of outreach programmes to meet the needs of disadvantaged communities through successful partnerships with community and voluntary organisations. Provision is flexible, responsive and accessible.
31. Responsiveness to the needs of employers is outstanding. The college focuses on providing for the needs of employers whilst giving priority to the needs of learners. The college monitors the performance of learners on programmes delivered on employers' premises well and manages the provision effectively. The college has increased its links with employers significantly in the past year. This success provides 700 excellent work experience placements for learners, although the range is still insufficient to meet the needs of all learners.
32. A very successful and relevant programme is offered to 14-16 year olds, many of whom progress on to full-time courses. Enrichment opportunities within programmes are excellent, though the provision and take-up of wider enrichment activities is insufficient, particularly in sport.
33. Guidance and support are good. Effective enrolment and induction arrangements enable learners to make a good start on their courses. Attendance, progress and achievement are monitored closely through individual learning plans in group and individual tutorials. The pastoral curriculum focuses on personal development and the Every Child Matters outcomes, particularly staying safe and adopting a healthy lifestyle. Learners are well cared for. They are encouraged to be independent and know where to go to get help.
34. Individual learning needs are assessed thoroughly and catered for very well. Learners at risk of under-achieving or dropping out of college are identified early. Well targeted support on programmes with a history of low retention and dedicated work with some of the most vulnerable learners are helping to ensure many more of them remain in learning and achieve their goals. There is good and improving take up of additional support and detailed monitoring and evaluation of its impact on achievement. Learners receive a flexible and

responsive service. Further work is required to ensure that all teachers make best use of the skills and expertise of learning support assistants in their classes.

35. A good range of careers information, advice and guidance is provided in partnership with the Connexions service. Full-time learners are well informed about progression opportunities but there is insufficient access to careers advice and guidance for adults and some part-time learners.

Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

36. Leadership and management are good. The strategic direction as a vocational college is clear and well understood by staff. Productive partnerships with local schools, the adjacent sixth form college, community partners, a local broker of training and employers are effectively benefiting learners and assisting workforce development.
37. Success rates are good. Management action has improved retention which was a weakness at the last inspection. However, this action has been slow to improve the persistently low retention rates at level 3. These have only just broadly reached the national average in May 2006. There has not been a continuous upward trend in success rates since the last inspection but although they have fluctuated or remained static, they have been largely above the national average.
38. Management of the curriculum and the new work-based learning provision is good. Management actions are effectively improving the quality of teaching and learning. The take-up of additional support by learners has increased significantly and is having a positive impact. Key skills success rates are good. The quality of tutorials has improved and is good. The new learning manager posts have been a very effective catalyst for many improvements including increasing employer engagement. The well thought out communications strategy aids good communications.
39. The comprehensive self-assessment process forms the basis of quality improvement. Academic and support areas follow common procedures. Governors, staff and learners and external consultants are closely involved. Self-assessment is effective in identifying areas for improvement and good use is also made of learner feedback to identify any further areas. The resulting action plans have improved standards. The summary curriculum self-assessment reports presented to inspectors did not take sufficient account of the quality of the teaching and learning.
40. The promotion of equality of opportunity is good. The profile of students and staff broadly reflects the local area. The close links with employers and community organisations are very successfully widening participation. The college has made good progress in its response to the implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act. The race equality policy, action

plan and the child protection procedures are appropriate. All staff are trained in child protection and there are suitable checks on staff and visitors to college sites.

41. Considerable investment has improved the quality of accommodation and learning resources. The main campus has a modern reception area, a weakness at the last inspection, and good communal facilities. Many improvements have been made to increase access for those with restricted mobility. Some accommodation remains dated, especially in engineering and construction. Further extensive remodelling of the main campus is due to begin in summer 2006 including engineering and construction. Staff are well qualified and either have a teaching qualification or are undertaking teacher training.
42. Governance is good. Governors have a clear understanding of their role. They closely monitor the college's educational and financial performance aided by a comprehensive monthly report covering key financial and non-financial information. Enrolment targets are met or exceeded consistently. The college's financial management is very good and it provides very good value for money.

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	276	63	56	7	1,111	65	55	10
	03/04	444	53	60	-7	997	65	59	6
	04/05	544	67			982	65		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	0				0			
	03/04	0				0			
	04/05	0				0			
NVQs	02/03	20	70	56	14	0		57	
	03/04	43	70	61	9	0		62	
	04/05	37	78			0			
Other	02/03	256	63	56	7	1,101	64	55	9
	03/04	401	52	60	-8	995	65	59	6
	04/05	507	66			981	65		

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	580	63	52	11	1,154	63	49	14
	03/04	591	62	56	6	1,276	67	53	14
	04/05	551	62			1,206	63		
GCSEs	02/03	54	52	57	-5	148	68	55	13
	03/04	45	49	61	-12	140	71	59	12
	04/05	45	62			121	73		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	33	85	59	26	0		53	
	03/04	0		63		0		57	
	04/05	106	75			0			
NVQs	02/03	216	60	42	18	171	57	49	8
	03/04	217	68	52	16	409	60	53	7
	04/05	228	60			263	56		
Other	02/03	277	65	50	15	835	63	48	15
	03/04	322	61	54	7	727	70	52	18
	04/05	172	58			804	63		

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	354	61	62	-1	987	61	51	10
	03/04	376	55	64	-9	771	55	53	2
	04/05	387	66			782	57		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	207	66	50	15	29	41	45	-4
	03/04	71	70	52	18	0		43	
	04/05	220	67			16	19		
NVQs	02/03	44	34	51	-17	250	43	45	-2
	03/04	45	20	54	-34	227	37	47	-10
	04/05	54	56			278	42		
Other	02/03	67	58	55	3	693	68	54	14
	03/04	260	57	56	1	523	64	56	8
	04/05	113	70			488	67		

Footnote:

The college no longer offers A/AS level provision.
Numbers of 15 or less are not included.