



Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College
Type of college:	Sixth Form
Principal:	Christina Cassidy
Address of college:	Cheadle Road Cheadle Hulme Cheshire SK8 5HA
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Chair of governors:	Janet Beer
Unique reference number:	130515
Name of lead inspector:	Jan Bennett, HMI
Dates of inspection:	27 Nov - 1 Dec 2006

Background of the organisation

1. Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College is in the metropolitan borough of Stockport and operates on two main campuses; one is in Cheadle and the other is in Marple which is eight miles away. The college was established in 1995 following a merger of two sixth form colleges and was known as Ridge Danyers College until 2004.
2. The college offers a broad range of courses including traditional sixth form provision; a variety of work-based learning options; and short courses for leisure and recreation. There are courses in 14 of the 15 QCA subject sector/subject areas and 85% of the provision is at level 3. In 2004/05, the college had over 8,000 learners; nearly 3,000 were 16-18 year olds studying on full-time courses, and almost all the rest were adults on part-time courses. Around 86% of 16-18 year olds and 93% of adult learners are white. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher at the Cheadle campus than at Marple. The college has vocational provision for 14-16 year olds and is playing a major role in developing the 14-19 curriculum in the borough. The college also has work-based learning and Train to Gain contracts worth over £500,000. The college is the lead partner in a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) specialising in care of the elderly.
3. Stockport is the third largest borough in Greater Manchester with a population close to 300,000. Less than 5% of the population are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Unemployment in the area is low and the proportion of managers and professionals is high. Although the borough is relatively prosperous, there are pockets of social and economic disadvantage. In the borough, the proportion of Year 11 pupils achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C is slightly below the national average.

Scope of the inspection

4. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment 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 and care; science and mathematics; information and communication technology (ICT); sport, travel and tourism;

visual and performing arts and media; and English and modern foreign languages.

Summary of grades awarded

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

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

Curriculum areas

Health and care	Good: grade 2
Science and mathematics	Satisfactory: grade 3
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory: grade 3
Sport, travel and tourism	Good: grade 2
Visual and performing arts and media	Satisfactory: grade 3
English and modern foreign languages	Good: grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

5. Learners' achievements and standards are satisfactory. Most courses are at level 3 and success rates for level 3 courses are at the national average. Pass rates are around or above the national average overall but retention rates are low on many courses especially those for 16-18 year olds. The progress made by most learners is satisfactory compared with their prior learning. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory.
6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Very little teaching is inadequate but there is not enough good teaching. The use of information learning technology (ILT) to enhance learning is underdeveloped. The best lessons are well planned and include a good range of activities. The worst lessons are uninspiring, the teachers talk for too long and their questioning techniques are ineffective. Assessment and the review of learners' progress are good.
7. The college provides a good range of courses. Full-time learners enjoy participating in a wide range of enrichment activities. There are strong links with local schools and partnership work with employers is effective. The approach to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory. Pass rates on key skills and skills for life qualifications are good but retention rates are low on level 1 courses. Promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds is above that of the local area.
8. Guidance and support for learners are good. Learners receive good pre-enrolment advice and guidance. There is a wide range of support services that is well used by learners. Additional learning support is effective. Learners are given good individual support by teachers and tutors but much of the teaching on the tutorial programme is uninteresting.
9. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The accuracy of the self-assessment report is satisfactory and quality assurance procedures are much improved. Management data is comprehensive and well used. Curriculum management is satisfactory overall and is good in some areas. The rate at which key weaknesses have been tackled has been slow but the pace has quickened during the last year. The college under-recruited for several years and financial management was weak but the shortfalls are now being addressed. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: grade 3

10. The college has a satisfactory capacity to improve. The quality assurance system has improved recently. The self-assessment process is good and the report is reasonably accurate. Monitoring of progress on action plans is good.

A rigorous lesson observation system has been introduced to improve the quality of teaching. The college is in a weak financial position but has clear plans to recover. It has met its recruitment target for the first time in several years and financial management is much improved.

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

11. The college has made satisfactory but slow progress since the last inspection. Pass rates have improved but retention rates are still low in some areas. In 2005/06, the proportion of apprentices completing the full framework increased considerably and is around the national average. There is still insufficient good teaching and the poor quality of tutorials has not been addressed. The use of ILT to support learning remains a weakness in some curriculum areas. The programme of enrichment activities is much improved. Quality assurance systems have been strengthened and they are more consistently applied.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- good work-based learning
- good range of courses
- good support for students
- comprehensive and well used management information systems
- effective partnership working.

Areas for improvement

The college should address

- retention rates and learners' poor progress relative to prior attainment in some subjects
- proportion of good or better teaching
- quality of tutorials
- the promotion of equality and diversity
- the urgency with which key issues are tackled
- the financial stability of the college.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

12. Learners' achievements and standards are satisfactory which agrees with the college's own self-assessment. Around 85% of provision is at level 3 and success rates on these courses are consistently around the national average. Success rates on courses for adults have been around or above the national average for the last three years. On level 2 courses for 16-18 year olds, success rates were low in both 2003/04 and 2004/05, but unvalidated college data show a considerable improvement in 2005/06. Success rates on level 1 courses for 16-18 year olds were low in 2003/04 and improved to around the national average in 2004/05, but college data show a marked decline in 2005/06. Success rates on key skills courses are high. Work-based learning achievements have improved and overall success rates were around the national average in 2005/06. The proportion of apprentices achieving National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) is consistently high.
13. Achievement rates at all levels are around or above the national average but retention rates on courses for 16-18 year olds have been low since the last inspection. College data for 2005/06 show a rise in the retention rate at level 2 but a decline at level 1. The retention rate for the first three months of this academic year is much higher than the corresponding rate in previous years. Success rates for most learners from minority ethnic groups are around college averages but retention rates for learners from black Caribbean and Pakistani backgrounds are low.
14. Learners' progress, relative to their prior attainment, is satisfactory. There are a number of subjects however, where learners' progress has been poor for the past three or four years. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory overall and practical work is good in a number of areas. Learners enjoy their courses and their time at college. Most learners arrive at lessons on time and attendance is satisfactory and improving.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

15. Inspectors agree with the college's assessment that the quality of provision is satisfactory.
16. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There is little inadequate teaching but not enough good teaching. In the best lessons, teachers have clear objectives and are secure in their knowledge of the subject. They provide a good variety of activities and learners actively participate. There are good links between theory and practice in lessons for sport, travel and tourism and in health and care. Teaching and training are good in work-based learning.

17. Less successful lessons are poorly planned with insufficient variety in the teaching and learning activities used. Teachers spend too much time talking and pay insufficient attention to meeting the differing needs of learners. Questioning to determine learners' understanding and progress, is insufficiently skilful especially in mathematics, arts and media and information and communication technology (ICT). Too many mathematics and ICT lessons lack variety.
18. Learning resources are satisfactory. The use of ILT to support learning is insufficiently exploited although its use is constrained by limited investment in the latest technology. ILT subject leaders promote the use of ILT and the virtual learning environment but progress is patchy.
19. The teaching of essential skills is good and they are integrated well with other areas of learning. Attendance at key skills lessons is good and pass rates in tests are above national averages overall. Expert key skills teachers promote innovation and resources, provide staff development and mentor other teachers.
20. Assessment and the review of learners' progress are good. Regular and appropriately marked assignments are returned within agreed deadlines. Full-time learners are able to comment on their performance and to identify and agree future targets at twice-yearly progress reviews. Progress is appropriately reported to parents and carers. Assessment and internal verification for work-based learners are good.
21. An extensive range of courses meets the needs of 16-18 year olds, employers and the local community. Full-time learners are able to combine a vocational course with GCE AS and A level courses. There are good progression routes in most curriculum areas. Learners participate enthusiastically in a wide range of sporting, cultural and artistic enrichment as well as curriculum linked visits.
22. The CoVE in elderly care is successful in responding to the needs of employers. The college has good links with local childcare employers. There are insufficient opportunities for learners on business and ICT courses to gain work-experience. Whilst progression to higher education is satisfactory, low numbers of learners from the Cheadle campus take up university places. The college's approach to social and educational inclusion is satisfactory.
23. The provision for 14-16 year olds encourages them to succeed and to continue their education. Schools appreciate the support they receive from the college to develop their own vocational courses.
24. Learners receive good advice, guidance and support. Strong links with local schools ensure that they pick appropriate courses and settle into college quickly. There are good opportunities for learners to sample courses and receive guidance before confirming choices. Induction is effective. There are good systems to monitor progress and tackle unsatisfactory attendance. The

college does not monitor the progress of minority ethnic groups effectively and insufficient information is obtained about the destinations of early leavers from level 1 courses.

25. Individual support from subject staff and personal tutors is good. A wide range of support services, including counselling, dyslexia support and financial assistance, is well used by learners. The assessment of additional learning needs is effective and good quality support is provided promptly. The take-up of support is good and success rates for learners in receipt of support are higher than the college average.
26. Teaching and learning in tutorials are dull and, in some cases, inadequate. Tutorial activities are insufficiently challenging to sustain learners' interest. Teaching and learning in tutorials are not monitored effectively. Regular meetings of tutorial teams are held but too few tutors attend.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: grade 3

27. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The strategic plan for 2006/07 is realistic and sets clear strategic objectives but some of the long-term success rate targets are not sufficiently challenging. The operational plan for 2005/06 has been carefully monitored but a few actions have not been completed. Communication strategies are well planned but are not always effective.
28. Governance is satisfactory and has improved recently. Governors are kept well informed about the college's performance and have a satisfactory awareness of the key issues. The corporation board does not include a governor with human resources or legal expertise at a time when the college is undertaking a major restructure. On occasions, the information requested by governors has not been provided promptly by senior managers.
29. Partnership working with schools, other colleges, employers and other organisations is good and the college works well with the local LSC. Liaison with feeder schools has been strengthened significantly and the college is playing a major role in developing a 14-19 strategy for the area.
30. Quality assurance systems have been improved recently. Action plans across the college are closely monitored and underperforming curriculum areas are tackled. The self-assessment process is well structured and its accuracy is generally satisfactory. However, some key leadership and management issues were overlooked and there are some inconsistencies in the quality of course reviews.
31. The lesson observation process and the assessment strategy were significantly improved following the annual assessment visit in December 2005. The lesson observation system is now rigorous and grades are carefully moderated but tutorials have only been included in the observation schedule since September

2006. Actions arising from lesson observations are monitored well. There are strong links between staff development and the observation and appraisal systems but not all staff have been appraised in the last few years.

32. The college complies with legislation on equality and diversity, race relations and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002. Child protection actions are thorough and staff awareness is good. The promotion of equality and diversity around the college is satisfactory but this was a key strength at the last inspection. The college is improving its reporting on equality and diversity to enable managers to have clear points for action.
33. The college has under-recruited for several years, significantly so in 2005/06, and has been slow in addressing the shortfalls, although recruitment is above the target this year. Financial management has been weak and is now improved. The college has been in deficit for several years, although it plans to recover rapidly with the support of the local LSC.
34. Curriculum management is generally satisfactory and some is good. The management of essential skills and work-based learning are particularly effective. Management information systems provide a wide range of on-line reports that are well used by managers.
35. Teaching staff are well deployed but there is over-staffing in support areas. Most teachers have, or are working towards, teaching qualifications. Room utilisation studies are not complete. Class sizes are around the average for sixth form colleges and success rates are around national averages. The college offers satisfactory value for money.

Curriculum area inspections

Health and care

Good: grade 2

Context

36. The college offers full-time courses in health and social care at levels 2 and 3 at both campuses. There is a level 1 course in health and social care at the Cheadle campus. There are 15 learners enrolled at level 1, 68 at level 2 and 243 at level 3. There are also 45 foundation apprentices and 16 advanced apprentices in care and childcare. The college has a CoVE in care for the elderly in partnership with Stockport College and Tameside College. Through the CoVE, 176 learners are taking NVOs in health and social care at levels 2 and 3 and in care at level 4. There are also 31 Train to Gain trainees.

Strengths

- high success rates on full-time courses
- good teaching and learning and work-based assessment
- good work-based learning provision and good links with employers
- very good advice and guidance
- well managed provision.

Areas for improvement

- inadequate classroom accommodation at the Cheadle campus
- limited use of ILT in teaching and learning on full-time courses.

Achievements and standards

37. Achievements and standards are good. Success rates are high on courses for 16-18 year olds. Childcare learners achieve higher grades than predicted on the basis of their entry qualifications. In 2005/06, success rates were good for work-based learning at levels 2, 3 and 4 in both care and childcare. The quality of learners' work is good. They demonstrate good links between theory and practical work. In the workplace, learners show a high standard of client care.

Quality of provision

38. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is well planned and learners benefit from a wide range of activities. Very good links are made between theory and practice. Assessments on work-based learning courses are good. Accommodation at the Cheadle campus is poor and is hampering learning. For example, inadequate blinds restrict seating arrangements and some rooms are too hot. There is not enough access to ILT to support and enhance learning and ILT is rarely used in lessons.

39. Accommodation and resources in the CoVE are very good. There is a good range of courses that meets learners' needs well. Work-based learning is good. Links with employers are very well managed. Employers find the college approachable and responsive in meeting their training needs. There is a strong partnership between employers, social services, and partner colleges in the CoVE. The Care Cadets initiative is successful in providing well-qualified new entrants to the care profession.
40. Support for learners is good. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored and effective action taken to remedy problems. Learners receive very good advice and guidance about external and internal progression opportunities that are carefully tailored to their individual needs and circumstances. Both full-time and work-based learners make good use of it. Learners are very well supported and encouraged to progress into work or higher education. In-class support for learners with additional needs is good.

Leadership and management

41. Leadership and management are good. The curriculum is well managed. Careful thought has been given to which qualifications to offer at each level. Work-based learning is well managed and the co-ordination between managers, teachers and assessors is good. There is an accurate self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses. Managers are responsive to employer and school needs. Equal opportunities are promoted well in lessons.

Science and mathematics

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

42. The college offers GCE AS and A-level biology, chemistry, electronics, physics, mathematics and further mathematics plus GCSE mathematics and science to full-time learners predominantly aged 16-18. A small number of adult learners also study GCSE mathematics at day and evening classes. There are 1,169 enrolments in this area.

Strengths

- good, lively teaching of science
- strong curriculum support
- good progress monitoring and thorough marking
- well resourced science laboratories.

Areas for improvement

- low pass rates on GCE AS biology and chemistry courses
- insufficient variety of teaching strategies in mathematics
- limited access to computers for mathematics teaching at Marple
- lack of rigour in the self-assessment of mathematics.

Achievements and standards

43. Achievements and standards are inadequate. Pass rates are consistently low in GCE AS biology and chemistry and value added data show that learners are not making the progress expected of them. In GCE A-level mathematics, biology and chemistry, learners achieve lower grades than expected on the basis of their prior attainment. Pass rates at grades A* to C in GCSE mathematics are near to the national average but retention rates are consistently low. In electronics, pass rates are consistently high at GCE AS and A-level, and pass rates have improved to near the national average in physics. Success rates in GCE AS mathematics have improved steadily over the last three years and are now close to the national average. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Learners have good practical skills and the standard of written work is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Science teaching is good and includes a variety of activities, with effective use of ILT. Learners enjoy doing practical exercises; they find demonstrations, such as producing power from a

potato or making nylon, exciting and participate fully in group discussions. In the better lessons there is careful planning for the range of learners' abilities.

45. Mathematics teaching is satisfactory but dull. It is heavily dependent on completion of exercises or examination questions. Planning for the range of learner abilities is inadequate. Learners display confidence and interest when working in groups or explaining their work to the class but these activities are not always effectively managed.
46. Assessment and monitoring are good in science and mathematics. The regular progress tests, detailed feedback sheets and departmental monitoring strategies help learners to prepare for examinations.
47. There is a good range of courses and a level 2 mathematics course has been introduced as a much needed alternative to GCSE. There is a wide enrichment programme, including both mathematical and scientific activities.
48. Support for students is generally satisfactory and curriculum support is strong. Course booklets and revision materials are well planned. Learners speak appreciatively of the willingness of teachers to help them in and outside lessons.

Leadership and management

49. Leadership and management are satisfactory. In science, new managers have improved teaching and learning. In mathematics, there are strategies to improve learners' performance but the mathematics self-assessment process lacks rigour and has not adequately addressed the weaknesses in teaching and learning identified at the last inspection. Science laboratories are well resourced, and learners are able to gain experience using a wide variety of equipment. Mathematics teaching rooms at Marple have few computers and insufficient digital projectors to support learning.

Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

50. There are approximately 600 16-18 year olds on full-time courses in this area. Over 500 are on level 3 courses with the remainder on courses at level 2. The college offers a BTEC first diploma in e-media, a GNVQ intermediate course in ICT, three GCE AS/A levels and a BTEC national certificate course in e-media. There are around 450 learners on full-time vocational courses. In addition, there are approximately 165 adults on part-time courses; most are studying for the European Computing Driving License (ECDL) qualification. A BTEC first certificate in e-media is delivered to 14-16 year olds from two high schools.

Strengths

- good achievement on most vocational courses
- high pass rates on GCE AS computing
- effective and varied resources to support learning
- well structured vocational courses.

Areas for improvement

- low pass rates on GCE A-level courses in 2005/06
- ineffective questioning techniques and lack of variety of activity in lessons
- insufficient industrial links for vocational courses
- inaccurate judgements in self-assessment.

Achievements and standards

51. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Learners on vocational courses and GCE AS computing achieve well, with grades above those expected from their prior attainment. Pass rates on GCE A-level ICT and computing are below national averages; the ICT pass rate dropped by 10% in 2005/06 and there is a 3-year declining trend in computing pass rates. Retention rates and attendance are satisfactory on most courses but there was poor punctuality in many of the observed lessons. Students make satisfactory progress in lessons.

Quality of provision

52. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners make effective use of high quality, relevant and extensive learning materials. These are available on the college network for use in and out of lessons and from home. In theory sessions there is little variety in teaching methods and too much time spent on teacher exposition. There is insufficient direct questioning and many learners are not actively involved in question and answer sessions. Questions lack challenge and understanding is not checked. In practical lessons, learners work at their own pace towards clear deadlines but there is little variety in the

range of activities. In 2005/06, the proportion of good or better lessons, seen as part of the college's observation system, fell to 40%.

53. The match between the provision offered and learners' needs is satisfactory. There is a good range of courses on both college sites but there is no structured work-experience on any course and very few vocational students go on work-experience. There are no visits or speakers from industry and very limited updating of staff knowledge of current industry practices and requirements.
54. Support for learners is satisfactory overall. Learners receive good feedback on how to improve their grades and they appreciate staff help and encouragement. Staff and learners use target grades to report and reflect on progress. Tutors receive comprehensive reports on support requirements for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Leadership and management

55. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear structure to vocational courses and they are well co-ordinated. The proposed self-assessment grade is not accurate and does not reflect the weaknesses in teaching and learning identified during inspection and by the college's own observers. The analysis of the data is insufficiently critical. There are detailed course reviews but insufficient weighting is given to areas identified for improvement. Inappropriate accommodation at Marple, identified during the last inspection, remains an issue.

Sport, travel and tourism

Good: grade 2

Context

56. The college offers a level 1 course in leisure and tourism; BTEC first and national diplomas in travel and tourism and sport, and GCE A level in physical education (PE). There are 33 learners on the level 1 course; nearly 70 learners on first diploma courses and around 180 on national diplomas. There are approximately 170 learners studying GCE AS/A level PE.

Strengths

- high success rates on level 2 courses, GCE A level PE and national diplomas in sport and travel
- good feedback to learners providing clear guidance for improvement
- good enrichment activities
- highly effective support for students
- strong curriculum management.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on the level 1 leisure and tourism course and GCE AS PE
- insufficient access to ILT at Marple.

Achievements and standards

57. Achievements and standards are good and success rates on most courses are high. Success rates on GCE A level PE and BTEC national and first diploma courses in sport, travel and tourism are above national averages and have improved over three years. Success rates on the GNVQ foundation course in leisure and tourism and GCE AS PE have declined over three years. The standard of learners' written work is satisfactory and their practical skills are well developed. Travel and tourism learners develop appropriate workplace skills using the on-site travel shops. Learners enjoy their lessons and attendance is good.

Quality of provision

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well and draw on their own industrial experience to make lessons relevant for learners. Learning objectives are not always shared with learners. In the less successful lessons questioning is undemanding and does not check learners' understanding effectively. Learning is being hindered at the Marple campus by insufficient access to ILT facilities. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress has improved since the last inspection and is good. Feedback on marked work provides learners with clear guidance on how to improve.

59. The range of provision is good and learners' needs are met well. There is a wide range of courses at levels 1, 2 and 3. In addition, learners access a range of enrichment courses in sport, travel and tourism that supports their learning. Learners on sports programmes have access to coaching courses in football and lacrosse and learners on travel programmes have access to resort representatives, airline cabin crew and travel agency courses.
60. Support for learners is good. Learners value the extra support they receive from subject teachers but managers are not evaluating the impact of this support. Learning support is good.

Leadership and management

61. Leadership and management are good. Communications across the two sites are effective and staff work well in teams. Staff are appropriately qualified and several have recent industrial experience. Curriculum management is effective and success rates have improved on many courses. The self-assessment report accurately identifies strengths and areas for improvement. Minutes of team meetings do not effectively record action points and progress that has been made.

Visual and performing arts and media

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

62. The college offers a range of arts and media courses including a level 2 course in art and design and GCE AS and A levels in art and design, dance, design and technology; drama and theatre studies; media studies; music; music technology; performance studies; performing arts; and photography. There is a variety of part-time courses for adults including drawing and painting, fashion and interior decorative techniques. At the time of inspection there were 943 enrolments by 16-18 year olds and 202 enrolments by adult learners on part-time courses.

Strengths

- high success rates on GCE A level performance studies, photography and media studies
- good standard of learners' work in drama and design technology
- good teaching of practical skills.

Areas for improvement

- low retention rates in 2005/06 on GCE AS music technology and performing arts (applied) courses
- low success rates on the level 2 art and design and GCE AS dance and design technology courses
- insufficient development of learners' understanding of theory.

Achievements and standards

63. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Success rates in GCE A level performance studies, photography and media studies are high. There are low success rates on the level 2 art and design course and in GCE AS dance and design technology. In 2005/06, retention rates were low on GCE AS music technology and performing arts (applied) courses. Pass rates on many qualifications were above national averages in 2005/06 and most learners achieve the grades expected based on their prior attainment. The proportion of high grades achieved is low. Attendance rates are good but there is some poor punctuality.
64. The standard of learners' work in drama and design technology is good. Learners have a good understanding of use of physicality in GCE AS drama/theatre studies. There is good use of observational drawing and contextualisation in design technology. Practical work is of a good standard. Media learners have good knowledge of its wider context.

Quality of provision

65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is good teaching of practical skills and the teaching of performance vocabulary and technique in GCE AS dance is effective. However, there is insufficient development of learners' understanding of theory. Questioning is ineffective and undemanding. Quieter and more reticent learners are not sufficiently involved and teachers sometimes answer their own questions.
66. The range of provision is satisfactory. Participation is good in the many curriculum related enrichment opportunities including: life drawing, henna painting, college magazine, performance work and street jazz.
67. Guidance and support are satisfactory and additional learning support is good. Careers advice is readily available and the information on course requirements given on open evenings has been improved.

Leadership and management

68. Leadership and management are satisfactory and there is a developing culture of continuous improvement. Internal observations of teaching and learning are graded accurately and good practice is identified and shared. Teachers meet to discuss problems and seek solutions. A range of strategies are in place to improve retention and achievement but many are newly introduced and the impact is yet to be seen. Accommodation for performing arts, art and design and media is satisfactory but the photography accommodation is unsuitable. There is little evidence of the promotion of equality and diversity. There have been a number of improvements since the last inspection and the self-assessment report is reasonably accurate.

English and modern foreign languages

Good: grade 2

Context

69. The college offers GCE AS and A level courses in English, film studies, communication studies and modern foreign languages. Modern foreign languages courses are also offered in the evening at levels 1 and 2. There are 1,374 learners aged 16-18 on English, film studies and communication studies courses, and 102 on modern foreign languages courses. There are 428 adults studying modern foreign languages in the evening.

Strengths

- very high pass rates on many GCE AS and A level courses
- good progress relative to prior attainment in GCE AS English and communications
- much good teaching and learning in English
- extensive enrichment activities enhancing learning.

Areas for improvement

- low pass rates in GCE AS French and Spanish
- insufficient use of ILT by teachers and learners
- insufficient sharing of good practice to improve teaching.

Achievements and standards

70. Achievements and standards are good. Pass rates are high on many GCE AS and A-level courses. Value added data show that learners make good progress on most English courses and in GCE AS communications. Pass rates for adults studying modern languages were high in 2005/06. Pass rates on GCE AS French and Spanish courses are low and well below national averages.
71. Learners are enthusiastic to learn. Those studying English courses make very good contributions to discussions and they develop good analytical skills. Learners on advanced modern foreign language courses demonstrate good understanding of foreign languages spoken at natural speed, but they find some basic grammar points difficult.

Quality of provision

72. Teaching and learning are generally good. Much of the teaching in English and film studies is good. Learners are confident and well-motivated, and they work well during lessons. Teachers are enthusiastic and give detailed, helpful explanations in response to learners' questions. In the better modern languages lessons the foreign language is used throughout and learners make good contributions. Worksheets are well designed and allow learners to build on their previous knowledge. ILT is used well in English language lessons but it is not used

sufficiently in other subjects. Assessment is good. Written work is marked quickly and most is returned with helpful advice on how it can be improved.

73. The match between the range of provision and learners' needs is good. Learners benefit from extensive enrichment opportunities. English learners go to Italy and to the Somme to learn more about the setting of some of the literature they study. Learners take part in many theatre and study visits. Learners on languages courses do work-experience abroad. They have also taken part in international conferences abroad. Languages staff work very positively with local schools in order to maintain the number of learners recruited to modern languages courses.
74. Support for learners is good. Teachers give freely of their time between lessons and learners also take advantage of the timetabled support sessions.

Leadership and management

75. Leadership and management are good. Staff work well as a team and share responsibilities. Internal moderation processes are effective and teachers grade learners' work accurately. Some progress has been made in addressing issues from the previous inspection. Appropriate attention is paid to equality of opportunity. All teachers contribute to the curriculum area self-assessment report which makes accurate judgements about learners' achievements. There is insufficient detailed analysis of teaching and learning strategies and insufficient sharing of good practice.

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	163	56.4	60.2	-3.8	1151	62.9	55.2	7.7
	03/04	315	60.6	66.6	-6.0	1092	50.5	57.4	-6.9
	04/05	181	63.0	64.0	-1.0	1117	58.1	55.8	2.3
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	99	69.7	65.7	4.0	1	100		
	03/04	138	69.6	70.0	-0.4				
	04/05	107	75.7	73.5	2.2	2	100		
NVQs	02/03								
	03/04								
	04/05								
Other	02/03	64	35.9	59.5	-23.6	1150	62.9	55.3	7.6
	03/04	177	53.7	66.4	-12.7	1092	50.5	57.6	-7.1
	04/05	74	44.6	63.3	-18.7	1115	58.0	55.8	2.2

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	1066	66.7	69.5	-2.8	712	57.4	51.6	5.8
	03/04	1057	70.4	74.0	-3.6	731	55.7	55.3	0.4
	04/05	1334	67.8	73.1	-5.3	889	63.1	55.3	7.8
GCSEs	02/03	576	67.2	73.9	-6.7	99	60.6	58.1	2.5
	03/04	652	72.1	77.0	-4.9	108	74.1	62.5	11.6
	04/05	748	70.3	77.8	-7.5	119	66.4	65.1	1.3
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	260	66.9	68.2	-1.3	2	50.0		
	03/04	187	76.5	72.5	4.0				
	04/05	164	86.6	74.3	12.3	5	100.0		
NVQs	02/03	46	80.4	59.5	20.9	117	36.8	51.4	-14.6
	03/04	43	60.5	61.6	-1.1	124	46.8	57.9	-11.1
	04/05	42	76.2	61.6	14.6	122	57.4	54.9	2.5
Other	02/03	184	61.4	56.9	4.5	494	61.7	48.9	12.8
	03/04	175	60.0	67.7	-7.7	499	53.9	51.6	2.3
	04/05	380	53.7	61.8	-8.1	643	63.3	51.1	12.2

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	7245	75.9	79.3	-3.4	621	52.8	56.7	-3.9
	03/04	6597	79.5	80.4	-0.9	611	56.0	57.0	-1.0
	04/05	6356	82.4	82.1	0.3	516	54.7	58.8	-4.1
A/A2 Levels	02/03	2188	89.4	89.5	-0.1	105	81.0	72.5	8.5
	03/04	2076	90.1	91.3	-1.2	85	80.0	75.2	4.8
	04/05	1963	92.1	91.9	0.2	88	70.5	75.9	-5.4
AS Levels	02/03	4190	71.0	75.1	-4.1	108	61.1	54.7	6.4
	03/04	3686	74.0	75.9	-1.9	96	65.6	52.4	13.2
	04/05	3573	77.3	77.7	-0.4	74	64.9	53.6	11.3
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	832	65.7	63.3	2.4	22	63.6		
	03/04	675	81.3	68.1	13.2	25	72.0		
	04/05	628	84.9	74.5	10.4	18	72.2		
NVQs	02/03					103	32.0	45.7	-13.7
	03/04					89	67.4	50.9	16.5
	04/05					76	32.9	49.2	-16.3
Other	02/03	35	68.6	62.6	6.0	283	45.9	53.7	-7.8
	03/04	160	60.0	64.1	4.1	316	42.1	52.1	-10.0
	04/05	192	69.3	71.6	-2.3	260	51.5	55.2	-3.7

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2003/04 to 2005/06

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVO rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	64	20.3	32	65.6	47
	Advanced	37	8.1	31	45.9	48
2004/05	Apprenticeship	82	42.7	39	65.9	50
	Advanced	38	26.3	34	76.4	48
2005/06	Apprenticeship	70	55.7	53	65.7	58
	Advanced	46	45.7	44	58.7	53

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

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

b) Timely success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	71	11	16	24	24
	Advanced	26	0	19	42	30
2004/05	Apprenticeship	66	12	22	27	29
	Advanced	64	5	21	23	31
2005/06	Apprenticeship	2	100	32	100	36
	Advanced	31	10	26	35	33

* The number of learners who planned to complete their learning programme in the given year
 ** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'