



# Langdon College



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published February 2007	Provider reference 50048
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## Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Langdon College
Type of college:	Independent, specialist, residential
Principal:	Chris Mayho
Address of college:	Leicester Avenue Salford Manchester M7 4HA
Telephone number:	0161 740 5900
Fax number:	0161 741 2500
Chair of governors:	Simon Olswang
Unique reference number:	50048
Name of reporting inspector:	Gill Reay, HMI
Dates of inspection:	28-30 November 2006

## Background of the organisation

1. Langdon College is a specialist residential college for Jewish learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities aged between 16 and 25 years of age. The college is located in the heart of an active and supportive Jewish community in North Manchester. Langdon focuses on helping learners to develop independent living skills in an environment that is culturally and religiously appropriate. Learners also develop skills in literacy, numeracy, communication and information technology. Langdon provides vocational courses in information and communication technology (ICT) up to Computer Literacy and Information Technology (CLAIT) Plus level. The college has a formal agreement with a range of further education colleges and work-based learning providers to ensure that learners have access to a wide range of vocational courses. A good range of vocationally relevant work experience placements enable students to develop work related skills that contribute towards the achievement of qualifications.
2. The college currently has 19 learners, nine of whom are male and ten female. Eighteen learners live in semi-detached houses or flats within walking distance of the college and one has a day placement. As learners become less dependant on residential support they can progress through the range of accommodation with decreasing but appropriate levels of support. All learners are funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Most come from the major Jewish communities in North Manchester and North London.
3. An extended curriculum exploits the learning opportunities presented by the outline of a residential environment that adheres to Jewish protocols and Kashrus law. Good use is made of the community and its resources to enhance learners' independence and employability. Langdon college focuses on the development of confident and competent young people able to play a full and active role in the economic and cultural life of their community on leaving the college. Emphasis is also placed on preparing students for life-long learning. Most learners achieve a nationally recognised qualification chosen from the wide range of courses provided by Langdon and its partner organisations.
4. The college's mission is to "contribute towards an inclusive national further education service by providing high quality further education for young Jewish people whose needs cannot be met by local providers".

## 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](http://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	Good: grade 2
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. Achievement levels and the quality of learners' work are good. Learners make good progress in a range of national awards and especially in communication and personal skills. The setting of clear and challenging targets has significantly improved since the last inspection. Quality assurance systems, for recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA), are in their early stages of development. However, staff have a good understanding of how to recognise and record achievement using a wide variety of methods including video, photography and information communication technology (ICT).
7. Teaching and learning are good. The use of practical activities in realistic settings is stimulating and engages learners. Initial and baseline assessments are comprehensive, with input from appropriate specialists identified during the first half-term. Good lesson planning, linked to individual learning plans and skilful evaluation of learning, are common features of good teaching and learning. The teaching observation scheme has been effective in improving teaching. Learning support workers are skilled observers who know their learners well. There is a good match between learners' interests and aspirations and their individual programmes. Work experience programmes are well developed.
8. The college's response to social and educational inclusion is good. There is very good promotion of the concept of Judaism and the knowledge and skills required to promote a Jewish lifestyle. Inclusion in the wider community is satisfactory and care is taken to understand and promote other cultures. There are high levels of trust between staff and learners. The college's response to gender and sex education is underdeveloped. The college meets the requirements of the Special Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) (2001). Accommodations have been made to enable a learner with mobility problems to access the college and a residence in the community. However, the college is not fully compliant with the Race Relations Amendment Act (RRA) (2000); an action plan is in place but has not yet been approved by the governors. Access for learners with restricted mobility is limited and a full audit of the college's buildings is planned. Issues related to oppressive behaviour and harassment are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
9. Guidance and support for learners are good. Support from personal tutors and key workers is good. Learners value the support provided and say that they have good access to staff. The induction programme is well managed. Multi-disciplinary input into pre-entry assessment is limited. Behavioural incidents are well managed and all staff are trained to manage behaviour. Specialist speech and language support is good. However, tutors and support staff have had too little training in supporting learners' communication needs. The use of

assistive and augmentative communication is underdeveloped. Transition planning is good. Communication with parents and carers is good.

10. Leadership and management are good. Leaders and managers set a clear vision based on an understanding of learners' needs. Systematic quality assurance is underdeveloped; however, the college has recently introduced a range of measures to improve the effectiveness and rigour of quality assurance. The teaching observation scheme is effective but not yet routinely linked to appraisal. The draft self-assessment report, whilst containing some inaccuracies, identifies most of the key strengths and areas of improvement identified through inspection. The monitoring and promotion of equality and diversity is good. All the essential aspects of learners' personal development and wellbeing are well met. The college has good links with local colleges, the community and local businesses. Good support is provided by the governors. The college provides good value for money.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

11. The college shows a good capacity to improve. In September 2006, a new principal was appointed and the roles and responsibilities of the senior management team have now been more clearly defined. Inspectors found the self-assessment arrangements to be satisfactory with contributions from the majority of staff. Whilst the quality assurance cycle lacks rigour it is currently under review and some changes have already demonstrated impact. The lesson observation scheme is effective and has been successful in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Actions are in place to address issues raised at the last annual assessment visit. The college has good governance and appropriate arrangements to monitor both the work of the board and the principal.

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

12. The college has made good progress in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection. Literacy, numeracy and language were unsatisfactory at the last inspection and are now good. Management of the curriculum was also unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Significant changes have been made to the management and content of the curriculum and these are now good. New senior managers, including a recently appointed principal, are providing the college with a clearer vision and mission. Learners now have opportunities that are appropriate to their individual needs and interests. Initial assessment is much improved and recording of learners' progress more effective. Some improvements have been made to the overall resources. However, some accommodation still remains inaccessible to learners with restricted mobility. The completion of criminal record bureau checks on families offering to share Shabbat meals with learners, are in place. Arrangements for regular staff appraisal have very recently been agreed.



## Key strengths of the college

### *Strengths*

- good achievements and standards of learners' work
- effective learner focussed curriculum
- comprehensive initial and baseline assessment
- effective promotion of the Jewish culture and community
- good care and support
- effective transition arrangements
- good external partnerships
- good oversight by committed governors.

### *The college should address*

- pre-entry specialist assessments
- quality assurance systems
- access for learners with restricted mobility
- performance management of staff.

## Main findings

### Achievements and standards

Good: grade 2

13. Learners' achievements and the quality of their work are good. Success rates, in an appropriate range of national awards for 2005/06, were good. The setting of clear and challenging targets has significantly improved since the last inspection. The self-assessment report realistically assessed this area as good.
14. Learners gain a wide range of appropriate qualifications from pre-entry to level 2. Learners' achievements are well monitored and successfully celebrated through tutorials, displays of their work and celebration events. The majority of leavers achieve their primary learning goal and enter open and sheltered employment and/or further education programmes. Retention and achievement rates for 2005/06 are good.
15. All learners make good progress in their social skills and many gain a greater insight into and understanding of Jewish culture and community life. An extended curriculum enables learners to take advantage of their culturally rich community by becoming involved in activities during the evening and weekend. These can include synagogue attendance or participation in sporting activities with members of the local Jewish community. Many learners share Shabbat meals with local families.
16. Quality assurance of the RARPA framework is in its early stages of development. However, staff have a clear understanding of how to recognise and record achievement using a wide variety of methods; for example, using video, information communication technology (ICT) and photographs. Many learners also make gains in the development of their independent living skills, through independent travel and organisation of their own leisure programmes.
17. The practical nature of much of the curriculum increases learners' motivation, enjoyment and understanding of a healthy life style. There are good opportunities for learners to attend courses at general further education (FE) colleges and opportunities to develop work related skills are good.

### Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

18. Teaching and learning are good. The college's self-assessment report accurately records improvements in teaching. The college's teaching and learning observation scheme is well developed and successfully identifies key strengths and areas for improvement. Individual learning plans focus on learners' aspirations and include independent living skills, personal development, literacy, numeracy, communication, ICT and behaviour targets. Good lesson planning is closely linked to individual learning plans, and learners receive helpful feedback on their progress. Effective use of language

and questioning encourages learners to participate. Learning support workers are skilled observers and use their knowledge to help learners manage their own behaviour. In less effective lessons, tasks are not related to realistic or practical activities and learners are insufficiently challenged.

19. Initial and baseline assessments are comprehensive and recording of learning has improved. Where multi-disciplinary assessment is used during baseline assessment it is effective. However, there is currently insufficient input from specialists into learners' pre-entry assessment. Specialist assessments take place during the learners' first term but this takes insufficient account of the skills and knowledge that learners bring on entry to their programmes. Pre-entry assessment has been revised for 2006/07 to ensure better use is made of information from specialists, parents/carers and previous settings. At the time of inspection, one learner had been through the new procedures. There are good links between the college and learners' residences. Learning targets are shared and monitoring of achievement in the extended curriculum is good. Learning support workers provide an effective bridge between educational and residential settings. There is very good communication with parents/carers.
20. There is a good match between learners' needs and their programmes. Learners have access to a wide range of pre-vocational and vocational programmes. Partnerships with local further education colleges and private providers are well managed and extensive. The extended curriculum, which includes personal development and independent living skills, prepares learners well for the next stage of their lives. Learners' residences are effectively used for teaching. Literacy, numeracy and communication are well embedded into learners' activities.
21. The work experience programme is well developed. Placements are thoroughly risk assessed and there is good attention to health and safety issues. Learners' progress, whilst on placement, is carefully monitored and recorded. There is good development of work related skills. Many learners are offered part-time paid employment following a successful placement.
22. Support and guidance for learners are good. Learner groups are small with high levels of support. Support from personal tutors and key workers is good. There are regular meetings between learners, tutors and key workers. Learners value the support provided and say that they have good access to staff at all times. The induction programme is well managed. Time is taken to enable learners to become comfortable with their tutors and allocated support workers, through visits to the college and home visits. Staff have very good training and support in managing behaviour and deal with incidents well.
23. Transition planning is good. The Connexions service personal adviser attends all learners' reviews. Learners also have good opportunities to attend the local Connexions office to access careers information, planning and interview practice. This is supported by a well planned college programme. Specialist speech and language support, following assessment in the first term, is good.

However, tutors and support staff have had too little training in supporting learners' communication needs. The use of assistive and augmentative communication is underdeveloped. Multi-disciplinary support in the first term is satisfactory. Therapists work well together and plan effectively to meet individual needs. However, they are not routinely involved in learners' reviews. Communication with parents and carers is very good. The college's response to social and educational inclusion is good. There is very good promotion of the concept of Judaism and the knowledge and skills required to promote a Jewish lifestyle. Inclusion in the wider community is satisfactory and care is taken to understand and promote other cultures.

## Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

24. Leadership and management are good. The new principal is working closely with staff to identify areas for development. Currently, a review has given greater clarity to senior managers' roles and responsibilities. Leaders and managers set a clear vision based on an understanding of learners' needs. Staff have a good understanding of this vision and a strong commitment to providing high quality education. Managers have been effective in building and developing a strong learner focused curriculum. Staff effectively prepare learners to successfully move on to the next stage in their lives.
25. Communication between senior managers and staff is good. A series of regular meetings enables good practice and developments to be shared across the college. However, some meetings lack focus and clarity. The curriculum manager and tutors are aware of this and are currently considering the format for these meetings. A weekly learners' forum provides good opportunities to propose changes and improvements. Learners are actively involved in the recruitment of new staff. Links with the parents are good and they hold the college in high regard.
26. The quality assurance lacks rigour. However, this is currently being developed and some changes have been implemented. The college has recently introduced a range of quality initiatives to improve the effectiveness of quality assurance. These initiatives are not fully embedded and have yet to demonstrate impact on continuous improvement. Management information systems are underdeveloped. Observations of teaching are accurate, cover relevant issues constructively and provide comprehensive, detailed and supportive feedback. Internal and external observers moderate judgements. Observation outcomes do not routinely inform appraisals and staff development.
27. Self-assessment procedures for 2005/06 are satisfactory, but the current draft report contains some inaccuracies. It includes most of the key strengths and areas of improvement identified through inspection. However, not all staff understand the self-assessment process and its role in bringing about continuous improvement. Action plans address aspects of provision requiring development. However, monitoring of the implementation of these plans does

not sufficiently focus on the effects of actions taken, or the standards achieved and the quality of the provision.

28. The number of tutors and support staff, together with their experience and expertise, match the needs of the learners well. Most teachers are qualified and many have specialist qualifications. Residential staff have appropriate qualifications for their role. Induction of new staff is good. Comprehensive training ensures new staff quickly learn important aspects of their role, including managing challenging behaviour. Continuing professional development opportunities for established staff are good. The arrangements for appraisal are inadequate and most staff have not had a formal appraisal in the last year. Plans are in place for all appraisals to take place during January 2007. Currently, staff do not have clear targets to work towards and training needs are not clearly identified. Staff training and development does not link to the college strategic and development plans. Staff and governors have not received training on the new disabilities legislation, although this is planned for December 2006.
29. The monitoring and promotion of equality and diversity is good. The promotion of equality and diversity is effectively integrated into the learners' curriculum. Arrangements for safeguarding learners, including appropriate recruitment procedures and training for staff in child protection, are in place and in line with recent DfES guidance. The college meets the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) SENDA. Adaptations have been made to help learners who have physical disabilities and further improvements are planned. An audit of all college buildings is planned and the governors are investigating the possibility of new premises. The college has recently begun to monitor staff recruitment with respect to ethnic minority, although this information is not routinely reported to the governors. A process for monitoring the race equality plan is currently being discussed by the governors, but has not yet been approved.
30. The college has good links with local colleges, the community and local businesses. Good support is provided by the governors. Formal and informal communication takes place regularly with the principal, staff and learners. The governors closely monitor the quality of the provision and have key roles in improving all aspects of the college's work. Financial management is good; planning is matched well to priorities identified through self-assessment. The college provides good value for money.