



Kingston College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published March 2007	Provider reference 130448
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Basic information about the college

Name of college: Kingston College

Type of college: General further education

Principal: Dr Nick Sinnamon

Address of college: Kingston Hall Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey,
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Chair of governors: Dr John Farmer

Unique reference number: 130448

Name of lead inspector: Russell Jordan, HMI

Dates of inspection: 5 - 9 February 2007

Background of the organisation

1. Kingston College is situated in Kingston town centre, in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. The college's mission is '...to provide high quality and best value education and training, post-16'. The college runs substantial provision in 12 of the 15 subject sector areas (SSAs) defined by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC); the largest of these for learners aged 16-18 is arts, media and design, and for adult learners it is preparation for life and work. Just under half of adult learners and just over half of learners aged 16-18 (full-time equivalents) study at level 3. Just over half of learners at level 3 study BTEC national diplomas rather than general certificate of education (GCE) AS or A level courses. This proportion has grown steadily over the past three years.
2. In 2005/06, there were 7,556 learners on roll in further education programmes of whom just over 40% were aged 16-18. The majority of the college's learners live outside the borough. The college attracts learners from a very wide area of south west London.
3. The college has a growing work-based learning contract of around 250 apprentices. Forty percent of these are in hairdressing apprenticeships and 30% in advanced apprenticeships in electrotechnical services. The college has four Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) in management and professional studies; coaching, leisure and fitness; enterprise; and automotive engineering. The college runs the adult and community learning provision at Chessington Community College and provides school link provision for learners aged 14-16 in hairdressing, engineering, and information and communication technology (ICT) for around 100 learners. The college leads two substantial consortia contracts for 'Train to Gain', incorporating initially modest learner number targets specific to the college; in this the main areas are health and social care, ICT, and customer service. The college works in partnership with five universities, running jointly a range of higher education (HE) courses.
4. Around 60% of learners aged 16-18 and 40% of adult learners are from minority ethnic groups, substantially higher than in the population of Kingston.

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: science and mathematics; engineering and motor vehicle; hairdressing and beauty therapy; visual and performing arts, and media; preparation for life and work; and business, administration and professional studies.

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

Science and mathematics	Satisfactory: grade 3
Engineering and motor vehicle	Satisfactory: grade 3
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Satisfactory: grade 3
Visual and performing arts, and media	Good: grade 2
Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: grade 3
Business, administration and professional studies	Satisfactory: grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

6. Learners' achievements are satisfactory. Long course success rates have risen over the past three years, except at level 1 for adult learners. The standard of learners' practical work is high. Success rates and high grade achievement in general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) are strong. At AS and A level, learners do not generally make more than satisfactory progress from their previous results. Key skills success rates are very low. Framework achievement in some apprenticeships is low. Success rates for learners from minority ethnic groups have improved. Learners' attendance and punctuality remain poor.
7. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but a significant proportion of teaching fails to meet the needs of individual learners. The promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum is under developed. The effectiveness of individual learning plans is variable.
8. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is good. There is a wider range of courses with good progression opportunities. The curriculum is responsive to the needs of learners, employers and the community, but work experience opportunities are limited.
9. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support. Learners identified with additional learning support needs receive prompt and appropriate support.
10. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Self-assessment is accurate. There has been some progress since the last inspection, but many of the processes for improvement have been recently introduced and are not yet fully effective. There is insufficient sharing of good practice.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: grade 3

11. The college has satisfactory capacity to improve. In the past year, success rates have significantly improved. A new senior management team and quality arrangements ensure a clearer focus on continuous improvement. Management data are now accurate and reliable and regularly used by senior managers. Clear leadership, developing quality improvement and a good financial position are a sound basis for continued improvement.
12. The college correctly identified many of its strengths and areas for improvement in the self-assessment report. There is now a stronger focus on monitoring the performance of poorly performing courses. However, some aspects of quality improvement need to be applied with greater rigour. The college recognises the need to further improve attendance and punctuality and

the quality of teaching and learning, along with continuing to focus on improving success rates.

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

13. The college has made satisfactory progress in addressing the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. However, progress was slow until 2005 when the new management team took up post. Overall, success rates at the last inspection were low. They are now, except for level 1, at or above the national average. Management information has improved significantly and is now used well by senior managers. Self-assessment is accurate. However, strategies to improve attendance and punctuality, and teaching and learning have not had sufficient impact. There is little change to the grades awarded at the last inspection except for the arts provision, which is now good.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- strong success rates and high grade achievement at GCSE
- high standards of practical work
- good provision in visual and performing arts, and media
- strong progression for learners aged 14-16
- good resources for practical training in many areas
- responsive curriculum
- accuracy of self-assessment
- effective action to raise success rates in many areas
- clear strategic direction.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- the continued improvement needed in success rates, particularly at level 1 for adult learners
- low framework achievement in apprenticeships in sport and advanced apprenticeships in electrotechnical services
- learners' poor attendance and punctuality
- poor key skills success rates
- inconsistent approaches to target setting and review
- the continued improvement needed in learners' progress on AS and A2 courses from their starting points on entry
- the significant proportion of teaching that fails to meet the needs of individual learners
- limited work experience opportunities
- insufficient promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity
- insufficient sharing of good practice across the college

- the slow progress in addressing areas for improvement from the last inspection.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

14. The college accurately evaluates learners' achievements as satisfactory. There is a rising trend in long course success rates over the past three years, except at level 1 for adult learners. Performance here remains well below average. There has been a sharp rise in success rates for learners aged 16-18 at level 1 but performance remained just below average in 2005/06.
15. Success rates are above average at level 2 compared to similar colleges. Success rates and high grade achievement are strong in GCSE qualifications for learners aged 16-18. Success rates are around the national average at level 3, but were previously very low for learners aged 16-18.
16. In national diploma courses, high grade achievement is above average for similar providers. Significantly fewer learners achieve a high grade at A or AS level than in other similar colleges, although there is a rising trend. At AS level, learners make the progress that would be expected from their GCSE results, but at A level they do not achieve as well as they should. However, there is considerable variability across subjects. There is improved target setting and progress tracking for learners at AS and A level but this is not yet fully embedded and its impact is not yet fully evident.
17. Learners' achievements are good in visual and performing arts, and media, and satisfactory in the other curriculum areas inspected. The standard of learners' work is generally good and the standard of practical work is high. Learners' development of workplace skills is satisfactory overall and good in hairdressing and beauty therapy.
18. Key skills success rates in 2005/06 are very low. The college is aware of this issue and is taking steps to address it.
19. There has been a very small improvement in overall framework achievement for apprentices over the past three years. In 2005/06, rates are below a much improved national average. Most learners that achieve their frameworks do so by the expected end date. Framework achievement for advanced apprentices is well below average. Hairdressing and engineering apprentices' achievement is satisfactory; however, in electrotechnical services and sport it is inadequate.
20. Success rates are broadly average for learners aged 14-16 but their progression onto higher level courses is strong.
21. Overall success rates for learners from minority ethnic groups between 2004/05 and 2005/06 have increased and in some cases substantially. Success rates for

adult black Caribbean learners are lower than for other minority ethnic groups in 2005/06. Overall success rates for men and women are comparable.

22. The college recognises that attendance and punctuality are still key weaknesses since the last inspection and that the implementation of strategies to improve these has been inconsistent.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

23. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The college has focused on improving teaching and learning for the past two years, and has developed comprehensive guidance and support mechanisms, which include subject learning coaches. There are signs of improvement in some areas. However, it is too early for these to have an impact across all of the provision, and the college recognises in the self-assessment that too little teaching and learning is good or better, and not all is satisfactory. College lesson observation evaluates strengths and areas for improvement well. However, the grading of lessons is sometimes too generous.
24. In the better lessons, such as in arts, media and design, teaching and learning were planned to meet individual needs. In engineering, learners were energised by the stimulating emphasis on active learning. In business and mathematics a few lessons were uplifted by the very effective use of case studies, information learning technology (ILT), or blended learning approaches.
25. Weaker teaching is either too challenging or insufficiently stimulating for many learners. In too many lessons, the dominant mode of teaching is whole group question and answer. Too often, the most vocal learners dominate the responses and there is insufficient checking of learning. Too much teaching is characterised by this approach.
26. The promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum needs further development. Opportunities to foster harmony and improve understanding were rarely taken in lessons and were not visible in schemes of work and lesson plans. Analysis of data to identify any underachievement has not taken place at course team level, so effective equalities monitoring has not been possible.
27. The arrangements for internal verification are thorough, and external verifier reports are positive. The use and effectiveness of individual learning plans (ILPs) to assess and monitor progress are variable, as the system is still developing. In the best practice, ILPs are used very effectively to improve performance, and are completed electronically. Elsewhere, targets are too often vague and the completion of paperwork perfunctory.
28. Arrangements for the initial assessment of learners, to identify those with additional needs, are well established and effective, although there are isolated examples of learners who have not been assessed. Support is prompt and

appropriate to the needs of learners. However, teachers are not fully exploiting the information from initial assessment in planning and delivering lessons.

29. Resources for learning are satisfactory in most areas, and good in visual and performing arts and media, and in engineering and motor vehicle. In a minority of subjects, the quality of learning is adversely affected by lack of specialist teaching resources and ICT resources. In music technology, there is insufficient ICT equipment, and in preparation for life and work, resources are not always appropriate for the learners' level of ability. Classrooms are sometimes too cramped for the group size.
30. The college's response to social and educational inclusion is good. Around half of learners in 2005/06 were from minority ethnic heritage, substantially higher than in the population of Kingston. The college attracts learners from a very wide area of south west London.
31. The college makes good provision to meet the needs and interests of learners and employers. It offers a broad range of programmes, with the opportunity to progress from level 1 to level 3 in eight curriculum areas. The innovative arrangement of mathematics provision enables many learners to progress from levels 1 and 2. The range and volume of community provision is growing to meet the needs of the local community.
32. Employer engagement is increasing significantly. The college takes the lead in a number of 'Train to Gain' programmes, including a pan-London level 3 programme for women. Productive contacts are being forged with many employers, including national organisations, which assist with the professional development of staff.
33. The enrichment programme offers learners a very wide range of opportunities, particularly sporting activities, which are well used. The range of additional qualifications available in the school of art, design and media is particularly good, although fewer such opportunities are available in other faculties.
34. The provision for work experience has recently been changed to improve the previously limited number of placements. However, work experience is not offered in engineering, and the college acknowledges that further development is required.
35. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support. The college has adopted a more coherent and central approach since the last inspection, which is increasingly effective. Managers and staff work well together to develop, implement and evaluate systems.
36. Learners receive sound initial advice and guidance. Learners are well inducted. The college has continued to work on improving the scope and consistency of induction, especially with the development of new materials. College welfare services are comprehensive with a wide range of staff and expertise.

37. Tutorial provision is satisfactory overall. Tutorials are at the centre of the college's arrangements to monitor and review learners' progress, but there are inconsistencies in the rigour and effectiveness of tutorials, target setting and progress review.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: grade 3

38. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors and senior managers set a clear strategic direction. In the last two years, the college has undergone significant change. From a low starting point, significant progress has been made in improving performance. Success rates have improved across the college and are now at or above the national average, except at level 1.
39. Some of the weaknesses from the last inspection have been addressed. Data analysis is now used extensively throughout the college. Quality improvement is making an impact on raising standards, but it is too early to judge its sustainability. However, a few significant weaknesses remain. Attendance and punctuality are still poor. Implementation of staff appraisal has been very slow.
40. Curriculum management is satisfactory overall and good in visual and performing arts, and media, and in science and mathematics. Communications in the college are now good and improving. The college plays an active part in the local community and is involved in many partnership groups.
41. Governors provide strong support to the college which makes good use of their skills, expertise and connections. Governors now have a much clearer understanding of the college's strengths and weaknesses and have accurate data for decision-making.
42. Quality assurance has improved since the last inspection and it is now satisfactory. There is a clear cycle of internal quality reviews but elements of this are not yet of consistently good quality. Termly course reviews are not always evaluative. Action plans are not always specific and target setting is often incomplete and imprecise.
43. Teachers are well qualified and supported. The college actively encourages all staff to undertake professional development. The quality of accommodation is good, particularly in sport, engineering, and hairdressing and beauty therapy. The main college is generally well maintained but some buildings at its other centres are poorly maintained. Learners generally feel safe in the college, and highly visible posters emphasise the requirement to respect others. In most areas of the curriculum, health and safety, including risk assessments, are effective.
44. The college meets its statutory requirements for the Disability Discrimination Act. Not all staff have yet received training on the safeguarding of young people. However, the college checks its entire staff and prioritises checks for

those staff engaged with very young people. The college is committed to equal opportunities and senior managers pay close attention to the success rates of different ethnic groups. However, the college has not yet produced an annual report of these outcomes and does not sufficiently promote or monitor equality and diversity in the curriculum.

45. The college offers satisfactory value for money and its financial position is sound.

Curriculum area inspections

Science and mathematics

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

46. Around 75% of learners are aged 16-18. In mathematics, there are 123 learners on foundation programmes, 200 on GCSE, 200 on other intermediate courses, and 211 on advanced courses. In science, there are 144 learners taking GCSE, 234 learners are enrolled on AS/A2 science courses and 49 learners on BTEC national diploma and certificate programmes. There are 50 adults studying evening courses in GCSE or AS-level mathematics.

Strengths

- high success rates on level 1 and level 2 courses
- flexible and responsive curriculum in mathematics
- effective sharing of good practice to enhance learning
- good academic support for learners
- effective leadership and management in raising standards.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates in A-level sciences
- poor attendance and punctuality
- ineffective use of questioning to check learners' understanding
- inadequate promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity.

Achievements and standards

47. Learners' achievements are satisfactory. Success rates are improving and are generally above national averages but they remain low in A-level sciences, as they were at the time of the last inspection. In advanced mathematics courses, students achieved better than average grades in 2006 relative to their prior attainment. Attendance and punctuality have not improved since the last inspection and remain poor.

48. Learners complete coursework to a good standard. They use ICT well to analyse data, carry out mathematical modelling and present reports. In mathematics, learners apply their knowledge well to real-world problems. Learners demonstrate sound practical skills and show good attention to health and safety procedures in science. Learners aged 16-18 on foundation and intermediate courses show poor mental numeracy skills, whilst adults have low confidence in abstract areas of mathematics such as algebra. Science students can analyse and present their findings but their ability to express themselves at length is limited by some weak communication skills.

Quality of provision

49. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers plan a variety of tasks and activities to engage learners. These include innovative card-based games to make learning memorable and fun. Teachers use ICT well to enhance teaching and learning. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers' questioning techniques are poor, showing inadequate assessment of learning and attention to individual needs.
50. Assessment and the monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. Coursework assignments are appropriate and marking is accurate, providing helpful indications on how to improve. Some comments are not sufficiently detailed. Homework tasks lack variety and, in some classes, are insufficiently frequent. Targets in learning plans on academic courses are too general to be useful to learners, and they are not always reviewed.
51. The mathematics curriculum has a wide range of options at all levels, and there are good progression routes. Free-standing mathematics qualifications provide a useful bridge to GCSE and to A level, and they are used innovatively to support the mathematical needs of learners on vocational programmes.
52. Guidance and support for learners are good. Workshops and coursework clinics are well used and valued by learners, who are enabled to achieve their potential in coursework. Tutorial programmes on BTEC courses are very effective in supporting learners on their core programme but also in enabling the development of wider key skills.

Leadership and management

53. Leadership and management are good. Self-assessment is accurate and has led to steady improvements in learners' achievements. Strategies to share good practice have successfully raised standards of teaching, but some poor teaching practices remain. Value-added data are not yet fully used to effect improvement in the provision. There is no monitoring of learners' performance by gender or ethnicity to identify relative underachievement. At course level, the provision does not reflect or celebrate the diversity of learners.

Engineering and motor vehicle

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

54. There are broadly equal numbers on full-time courses in engineering and motor vehicle. Around 75% of learners are full-time. One third of learners are adults, and they generally attend courses alongside younger learners. There is a range of full-time and part-time courses from levels 1 to 3 in manufacturing, production, operations and maintenance and motor vehicle engineering. The college offers level 1 motor vehicle qualifications for 46 school link pupils aged 14-16. There are 33 apprentices and 16 advanced apprentices on engineering and motor vehicle work-based learning programmes. Full-cost short courses are offered to meet local industry needs.

Strengths

- high success rates on most engineering courses
- high standards of learners' practical work
- well managed accommodation and resources for practical training
- some lively and engaging teaching in engineering
- productive links with industry.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on many motor vehicle courses
- poor punctuality and attendance
- insufficient planning for individual learners' needs in most lessons
- weak target setting and review of learners' progress
- lack of work experience opportunities for full-time learners
- the failure to address weaknesses in motor vehicle identified at the last inspection
- inadequate promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity.

Achievements and standards

55. Learners' achievements are satisfactory. Success rates in most engineering disciplines are significantly above the sector average and have steadily improved since the last inspection. However, success rates are low in many motor vehicle courses. Apprentice framework achievement for engineering, and light vehicle maintenance, service and repair is broadly average. Learners enjoy practical lessons and many produce work of a high standard.

Quality of provision

56. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have good occupational skills which they use well to enthuse learners, illustrate theory and develop practical skills. However, much of the teaching in motor vehicle is dull and unimaginative. Lesson plans fail to take individual learners' needs into account.

Some teachers do not use questions effectively or frequently enough to check learners' understanding. Some learners lose interest and concentration. There are no opportunities for full-time learners to experience current work practices and technology through work experience.

57. Assessment is satisfactory and its quality assurance is rigorous. However, target grade setting is under developed and is used poorly in reviews and tutorials. Targets are imprecise and progress is not monitored and reviewed effectively. The college offers a wide range of courses with good progression opportunities.
58. There are high quality training resources in the college and the workplace. Productive links with industry have provided the department with vehicles, rigs, test and diagnostic equipment. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are appropriately qualified and update their technical expertise with manufacturers' courses and by exploiting productive links with industry. Classrooms have sufficient ILT but some are cramped. There are few examples of learners' work exhibited. Poor attendance and punctuality often disrupt learning. A minority of teachers make unauthorised changes to the timetable or close classes early. Support for learners is satisfactory. Initial assessment is rigorous and identifies individuals' needs reliably. Support is quickly in place and learners are appreciative of the help from tutors and teachers.

Leadership and management

59. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Although self-assessment accurately identifies key areas for improvement, action planning is weak, and too many weaknesses from the last inspection remain within motor vehicle. Teachers have not yet received formal training on child protection legislation. The promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity, and of 'every child matters' themes in teaching and work-based learning reviews are inadequate.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

60. Approximately 600 learners are enrolled in the area. In work-based learning, there are 94 hairdressing apprentices and in beauty therapy, 18 advanced apprentices. There are around 30 learners aged 14-16 from three partner schools. The college offers NVQ courses at levels 1-3 in hairdressing and in beauty therapy at levels 2 and 3. There is a national diploma in beauty therapy and a wide range of related courses, including studies in cosmetic make-up, manicure and pedicure.

Strengths

- high pass rates on national diploma beauty and NVQ 1 hairdressing
- good standard of practical work
- realistic working environment for assessment
- rigorous tracking of learners' progress in tutorials.

Areas for improvement

- low retention and success rates on hairdressing NVQ 2 and 3
- insufficient challenge in many lessons
- slow unit achievement in work-based learning
- attention to health and safety in practical lessons
- insufficiently rigorous review process in work-based learning.

Achievements and standards

61. Learners' achievements are satisfactory overall and in work-based learning. Pass rates on the national diploma in beauty and NVQ level 1 in hairdressing are consistently high. However, learners' achievements on hairdressing NVQ 2 and 3 are inadequate. Retention and success rates on hairdressing NVQ level 2 are significantly below the national average and on NVQ level 3 have declined and are well below average.
62. The completion of units within work-based learning is slow. Learners in their second year of training have units outstanding that are normally completed in the first months of the programme.
63. The standard of learners' practical work is good. Employment skills are high in cutting and colouring, and in long hair techniques. Written work is satisfactory and there is some outstanding coursework in the national diploma.

Quality of provision

64. Teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory. Many lessons provide insufficient challenge and checks on learning. There is too much copying of

information in lessons. In national diploma lessons, teachers explain complex scientific principles well and encourage learner participation effectively.

65. In practical lessons, both teachers and learners pay insufficient attention to health and safety. Assessments are well managed in a realistic working environment. Key skills are effectively embedded into the programme, but the key skills level does not always allow progress from learners' prior achievements.
66. The college offers a wide range of courses with good progression opportunities. Guidance and support are good. Tutors track learners' progress well with the support of an electronic tracking system. There is effective discussion of individual learning plans and review of targets. However, in work-based learning, progress reviews are insufficiently rigorous. Progress review fails to focus on previously set targets and actions linked to these. Individual learning plans are not used to set long-term targets. Reviews do not check sufficiently learners' understanding of health and safety or equality and diversity issues.

Leadership and management

67. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Teachers share good practice. However, lesson observations have not highlighted some of the issues in teaching and learning. Accommodation and course management have significantly improved since the last inspection. Staff have worked with good effect to raise the attendance figures to above the college average. This has resulted in improved retention in the current year. However, pass rates on NVQ level 2 remain low since the last inspection. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory but is insufficiently monitored in work-based learning. The self-assessment report is comprehensive and highlights some of the areas for improvement. The monitoring of quality improvement plans is insufficiently challenging.

Visual and performing arts, and media

Good: grade 2

Context

68. There are around 460 learners. Approximately 250 study on full-time vocational courses at levels 1 to 3. Around 380 learners study GCSE or AS or A2 courses in art, design and media. Courses include art and design, graphic design, fashion and clothing, photography and three-dimensional design. In the school of performing arts, there are 380 learners in total. Courses include first diplomas in performing arts and music and a variety of national diplomas in acting, dance, musical theatre, production, and music technology.

Strengths

- high success rates on courses in art, design and media
- high standard of work in art and design, media, dance and drama
- good lesson planning to support learners with diverse needs
- wide range of levels and courses in art, design and media
- good leadership and management
- effective sharing of good practice.

Areas for improvement

- poor punctuality and low attendance in media, music technology, technical theatre and drama.
- ineffective lesson planning in music technology
- insufficient ICT resources in music technology
- cramped conditions in some studios and performance rooms.

Achievements and standards

69. Achievements and standards are good in art, design and media. Overall, success rates are high. There are improving success rates on most courses in performing arts but they remain just below national averages. There are good standards of learners' work in art, design, fashion, media, photography, dance and drama. The majority of learners completing the first diplomas progress to national diplomas and there is strong progression to higher education. Poor punctuality and low attendance were evident in a number of lessons in performing arts. Most learners are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy their studies.

Quality of provision

70. Teaching and learning in art, design and media are generally good and satisfactory in performing arts. The best lessons are well planned and support learners with diverse needs and abilities. They include activities which maintain learners' interest and motivation. However, in some music technology lessons, there is ineffective planning and resources are inadequate. In some music lessons and tutorials, insufficient ICT equipment impairs learning. Learners on

drama and dance courses have access to some excellent resources. There is a satisfactory range of accommodation and specialist resources at Richmond Road. However, a few studios are cramped and poorly maintained. Assessment and the marking of learners' work have improved since the last inspection.

71. The range of provision is good with a well established first diploma in art and design, a variety of national diplomas and GCE AS and A level courses. A good variety of additional activities enables learners to enrich their learning experience. Guidance and support for learners are generally satisfactory.

Leadership and management

72. Leadership and management are good. There is a clear strategy for the development of courses and operational management is good. Overall monitoring of learner performance is thorough and managers make good use of accurate and timely management information. Responsibilities are clear and communication is good. There is some effective sharing of good practice across the area. The self-assessment report is generally accurate. However, the evaluation of achievement, and teaching and learning lacks rigour.
73. Links with cultural industries are productive with learners benefiting from work-related activities. There is no formal staff appraisal system. However, teachers speak positively about opportunities to discuss their work and their staff development needs with managers. The range of provision and the diversity of the student population demonstrate a commitment to equality of opportunity.

Preparation for life and work

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

74. The college offers English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses from pre-entry to level 2, including a pre-access course. There are around 60 learners aged 16-18 enrolled on full-time ESOL courses. A further 145 adult learners are enrolled on long ESOL courses, including vocational tasters. Most courses lead to new national qualifications.
75. Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) includes courses from pre-entry to entry level 3. There are around 60 learners enrolled, of whom the majority are aged 16-18. There are 587 enrolments on key skills programmes. The management of provision is undertaken by three different schools within the college.

Strengths

- high success rates in programmes for learners aged 16-18
- good progression and retention from ESOL to higher level programmes
- effective use of vocational pathways to teach ESOL
- strong community engagement to support learning.

Areas for improvement

- very low success rates for key skills
- poor attendance at ESOL lessons
- some poor accommodation and resources
- insufficient sharing of good practice.

Achievements and standards

76. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Success rates were high for learners aged 16-18 on ESOL courses in 2005/06 but low for adults. Key skills success rates are very low. Progression to higher level programmes for learners on ESOL courses is strong. Learners develop useful oral skills to enable them to debate on topics of interest. Attendance is poor.

Quality of provision

77. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Many lessons are well planned with varied, motivating activities. Group discussions are well managed. However, not all teaching takes sufficient account of learners' individual needs and some teachers do not use support assistants effectively. Teachers provide useful written assessment feedback.

78. Some initial assessment materials are outdated and inappropriate. Course handbooks and some teaching materials presented to learners are inappropriate for their reading ability. Learning support needs are quickly identified and appropriate arrangements made.
79. Learners have a good range of vocational pathways through which they can develop their language skills. They are able to progress from entry level 1 through to level 2 with a comprehensive range of vocational options.
80. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners have regular individual progress reviews but the rigour of these is variable. A work experience co-ordinator supports learners with LDD effectively in arranging work experience opportunities within the college and local community. Course teams' frequent and evaluative discussion of individual learners' progress leads to prompt and appropriate support.

Leadership and management

81. Leadership and management are satisfactory. However, there is insufficient sharing of good practice in ESOL. Some resources are poor. Accommodation at one site is poorly maintained. There is no formal staff appraisal process as yet. The college supports staff in professional development, but not all staff are aware of or are able to access this.
82. The college has recently appointed a key skills co-ordinator to address a number of issues in this area. These include the lack of clarity among teachers concerning appropriate levels and qualifications for learners, teachers' lack of confidence in developing learners' key skills and guidance needed for teachers in embedding key skills into learners' main programmes.
83. Self-assessment is broadly accurate but does not identify some weaknesses related to quality of provision. College lesson observations in this area are graded over generously. A number of areas for improvement remain from the last inspection.

Business, administration and professional studies Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

84. There are 462 full-time learners aged 16-18. There are around 500 part-time adult learners following courses in business, law, marketing and management. Around 100 learners are on various accounting and book-keeping courses.

Strengths

- high and improving success rates at GCSE
- consistently high success rates in management programmes
- rigorous recording and monitoring of learners' progress
- robust management action to improve success rates in many programmes.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates in accounting
- inadequate planning to meet individual learning needs
- some poor resources.

Achievements and standards

85. Learners' achievements are broadly average. Success rates on GCSE business are high and improving. Success rates are consistently good in management programmes. In accounting courses, success rates are below average but show an improving trend. The overall standard of learners' work is satisfactory and learners are gaining the skills needed to gain entry to, or promotion within, the workplace. Several learners have achieved national awards. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

86. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, planning is good, the pace brisk and delivery lively and motivating. Learners respond well, and these classes are well managed, progressive and fun. However, much lesson planning is poor with little recorded recognition of learners' individual learning needs. In many cases, there is little variation in teaching methods and this fails to engage learners.

87. The identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs is satisfactory. The assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are rigorous. Learners know what progress they are making towards their target grades. However, some targets are not sufficiently measurable. The college has recognised this issue and is working with teachers to correct it.

88. In some professional courses, learners are able to attend every two to three weeks, submit work and receive feedback electronically during the interval. This

enables learners to plan their study, work and domestic arrangements to good effect. The programmes and activities satisfactorily meet the needs of learners, many of whom have chosen courses that meet their current or proposed career needs. Information, guidance and support for learners are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

89. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management have focussed on the analysis of success rate data and set robust performance targets to effect quality improvement. Many of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been improved. Subject learning coaches have started to disseminate good practice in teaching and learning, and tutorial work. Most learning programmes are now showing upward trends in success, retention and pass rates. Staff have applied much effort to improve attendance. This shows an improvement since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. The self-assessment process is inclusive and broadly accurate. Many resources are poor with some classes overcrowded and many classrooms are drab and uninviting. Many classrooms lack information learning technology equipment. There is a shortage of computers. This has been recognised by the college in equipment budgeting.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, 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	03/04	968	43.7	60.3	-16.6	193	40.9	59.1	-18.2
	04/05	1,191	48.4	64.2	-15.8	467	45.2	61.6	-16.4
	05/06	929	60			430	40		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04								
	04/05								
	05/06								
NVQs	03/04	74	83.8	61	22.8				
	04/05	78	76.9	67.2	9.7				
	05/06	87	82						
Other	03/04	893	40.3	60	-19.7	191	41.4	59	-17.6
	04/05	1,106	46.7	63.6	-16.9	455	45.1	61.4	-16.3
	05/06	842	58			429	40		

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, 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	03/04	1,715	57.1	56.3	0.8	705	55	53.6	1.4
	04/05	1,859	63.3	60.9	2.4	735	52.4	59.5	-7.1
	05/06	1,774	68			720	65		
GCSEs	03/04	767	67.9	61.3	6.6	152	59.9	58.8	1.1
	04/05	735	75.9	64.1	11.8	141	53.9	62.3	-8.4
	05/06	726	80			128	71		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	148	66.9	63	3.9				
	04/05	126	56.3	66.8	-10.5				
	05/06	114	54						
NVQs	03/04	95	30.5	51.9	-21.4	115	31.3	48.2	-16.9
	04/05	121	53.7	57	-3.3	92	37	53.5	-16.5
	05/06	100	65			109	49		
Other	03/04	705	46.8	54.1	-7.3	461	57	52.7	4.3
	04/05	877	55.1	60.1	-5	446	57.8	58.8	-1.0
	05/06	833	60			469	67		

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, 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	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
3 Long	03/04	3,707	50.3	64.1	-13.8	1,690	53.3	53.5	-0.2
	04/05	3,750	60.4	67.5	-7.1	1,747	52.7	57.3	-4.6
	05/06	3,422	68			1,605	60		
A/A2 Levels	03/04	687	72.1	83.8	-11.7	318	54.1	65.5	-11.4
	04/05	718	76.5	85.6	-9.1	327	52.3	69.1	-16.8
	05/06	737	85			217	63		
AS Levels	03/04	1,973	42.5	62.9	-20.4	360	47.8	49.6	-1.8
	04/05	1,783	54.5	65.5	-11	409	45.5	52.2	-6.7
	05/06	1,534	63			269	55		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	247	34.8	52.4	-17.6				
	04/05	190	46.8	60.2	-13.4				
	05/06	150	51						
NVQs	03/04	31	22.6	53.7	-31.1	163	22.7	47	-24.3
	04/05	44	54.5	62.4	-7.9	178	34.3	53.9	-19.6
	05/06	20	30			145	49		
Other	03/04	769	56.8	56.3	0.5	827	62.2	55.7	6.5
	04/05	1,015	62.3	60	2.3	821	60.5	58.3	2.2
	05/06	978	68			955	63		

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2004 to 2006

Programme	End Year	Success Rate	No, of learners *	College NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate **	College framework rate **	National framework rate **
Advanced Apprenticeships	03/04	overall	6	83	48	83	31
		timely	6	83	30	83	19
	04/05	overall	25	16	48	12	34
		timely	25	16	31	12	21
	05/06+	overall	56	29	54	9	44
		timely	56	29	34	9	27
Apprenticeships	03/04	overall	66	48	47	42	32
		timely	66	44	24	38	16
	04/05	overall	124	51	50	44	38
		timely	124	51	29	44	22
	05/06+	overall	108	56	58	44	53
		timely	108	56	38	44	33

* 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'

+ PPR January 2007