



North Lindsey 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: | North Lindsey College |
| Type of college: | General Further Education |
| Principal: | Dr Roger Bennett |
| Address of college: | Kingsway North Lindsey Scunthorpe DN17 1AJ |
| Telephone number: | 01724 281111 |
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| Chair of governors: | Nigel Dransfield |
| Unique reference number: | 130587 |
| Name of lead inspector: | Vincent Ashworth, HMI |
| Dates of inspection: | 5 – 9 March 2007 |

Background of the organisation

1. Established in 1953 as a technical college, North Lindsey College was originally closely linked to the steel industry. It has since developed and expanded to offer provision in 12 curriculum areas. The college works very closely with John Leggott College which specialises in academic sixth form provision, whilst North Lindsey College focuses on the development of vocational provision and the needs of local industries. The college's main campus is in Scunthorpe with outreach centres in the surrounding smaller towns of Barton and Crowle. Additionally, there are five outreach centres based in local manufacturing companies.
2. The North Lincolnshire population is 153,000. The local black and minority ethnic population represents some 2.5% of the population as a whole. The proportion of the population qualified at level 2 or above, is lower than both local and national averages. Around 22% of local employers report skills gaps, particularly in managerial and professional jobs. Motorway connections are good. However, public transport by bus and train is poor and the college runs daily coach facilities, in conjunction with John Leggott College, to bring learners in from some surrounding towns and villages.
3. The majority of the college's full-time further education provision is at level 2 or below. In 2005/06, the college enrolled 1,766 full-time learners. In addition, the college enrolled 473 work-based learners on apprenticeship programmes and 2,778 adult learners on part-time courses. There were 527 learners on higher education courses, which continue to grow. In 2006, around 27% of the college's learners came from areas of social and economic deprivation. The college has a large and growing 14-16 provision. A skills centre for 14-16 year olds, opened in 2004, provides for around 500 young people from local schools. Some 62% of learners enrolled on full-time courses are male. Some 3% of 16-18 year olds and 8% of adult learners are from minority ethnic groups; the latter figure reflecting a growth in the migrant worker population locally. The college participates in two Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE); as lead partner in a motor vehicle and automotive technologies CoVE and a partner in a food manufacturing technology CoVE.
4. The College was re-accredited with Charter Mark status and Investors in People in November 2005 and Matrix Standards in 2004. The college company (Kingsway Consulting Ltd) also has Investors in People and the Customer First Award. The college's mission is "Your future, our business, opportunities for all".

Scope of the inspection

5. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the

local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; and data on enrolments and learners' achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:

- overall effectiveness of the college and its capacity to improve further
- achievements and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management.

Summary of grades awarded

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Effectiveness of provision | Good: grade 2 |
| Capacity to improve | Good: grade 2 |
| Achievements and standards | Satisfactory: grade 3 |
| 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

Contributory grades:

Learners aged 14-16

Outstanding: grade 1

6. This is a good and improving college. The overall success rate for long courses has improved by 13% over the last two years and is now similar to the national average. Achievements and standards of learners are satisfactory. Success rates in key skills qualifications have doubled and in some cases tripled. Recent action to improve retention rates for adult learners has had a significant impact, particularly on Skills for Life courses. Most learners achieve in line with expectations, based on prior attainment.
7. Teaching and learning are good. The college has a clear view of its strengths and areas for improvement and takes effective action to help teachers improve. The process is very well managed and the principal plays a valuable and valued part as a team member in observing staff. Teachers make good use of information and learning technology (ILT) to engage and enthuse their learners. Assessment is good and additional learning needs are well provided for.
8. The college is extremely responsive to local conditions and to regional and national priorities. Provision for 14–16 year olds is exemplary. The college has been particularly successful in transforming the lives and prospects of many young people through its innovative and highly successful work with local schools. The college has established outstanding partnerships and is highly responsive to employers' needs. Educational and social inclusion are good.
9. Learners receive good guidance and support. Support and care for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are outstanding. Personal support for learners is very effective. Academic support for adult learners is not consistent across the college. The college provides a safe and harmonious working environment. Learners' physical and emotional health are well catered for.
10. Good governance, determined leadership, strong senior management and committed staff, all ensure the college is well placed for further sustained improvement. Self-assessment is very accurate and management decisions are founded on unambiguous and well presented management information. Managers are aware of the need to continue to improve success rates and to ensure learners' literacy and/or numeracy needs are systematically addressed. College buildings and specialist learning resources are maintained to a high

standard and reflect the sense of pride that staff and learners have in the college. The college provides good value for money.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

11. The college demonstrates good capacity to improve the quality of its provision. Leadership is strong and financial management is good. Performance monitoring and self-assessment are thorough and have resulted in a re-structured curriculum that is better suited to learners' needs and interests. Management information is accurate and is used well to plan for improvement. A new management structure is focused on improving the quality of teaching and staff development is highly effective. There has been significant capital investment in the buildings and the quality of accommodation is now good. Success rates for learners aged 16-18 and apprentices have improved.

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

12. The college has made good progress in addressing areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. Teachers pay good attention to learners' individual needs in lessons; they use a range of teaching methods to motivate and engage their learners. Nearly half of classrooms now have interactive whiteboards and ILT is used very well in lessons to support learning. The proportion of learners who take up the offer of additional learning support is high. Retention rates have risen overall. However, retention rates for adults on level 1 courses remain an area for improvement.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- much improved success rates on level 3 provision and some apprenticeship programmes
- exemplary provision for 14-16 year olds
- high levels of learner aspiration and motivation
- good teaching and learning
- outstanding work with partners and employers
- outstanding support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- very good pastoral care for learners
- rigorous self-assessment and quality improvement processes
- energetic leadership with a strong focus on improvement
- high quality specialist learning resources
- good financial management
- high impact of staff development and teacher training.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- retention rates on level 1 courses for adult learners
- success rates on some courses
- the formality and consistency of academic support for adult learners
- the need to embed the Skills for Life strategy consistently across all areas.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

Contributory grades:

Learners aged 14 to 16

Outstanding: grade 1

13. Achievement and standards are satisfactory and some aspects are good. Success rates for learners aged 16-18 on long courses reflect the national averages. Outcomes for these learners show sustained improvement, especially at level 3, where the improvement is significant. Pass rates on level 3 courses are higher than average. Achievements for 14-16 year olds are outstanding; in 2005/06, nearly all learners achieved a qualification. The college has been very successful in improving learners' achievements in key skills qualifications. Success rates for key skills qualifications are much higher than those seen nationally, particularly in application of number and ICT at level 1.
14. At level 1, success rates for adults have not improved for the last three years and remain very low. Success rates have improved at level 2 but remain lower than average. At level 3, success rates have improved significantly and are higher than average. Following a restructuring of the ICT and basic skills curriculum, inspectors were able to identify significant improvement in retention of adult learners currently studying level 1 courses.
15. Overall success rates for apprentices are satisfactory and improving. In 2005/06, success rates for motor vehicle advanced apprenticeships were good at 82%. In hairdressing, success rates for apprentices have been consistently good since 2005. Timely success rates are also improving year-on-year and in most cases exceed the national averages. The majority of learners on Entry to Employment programmes progress to further training or employment. The overall success rate for learners on Train to Gain programmes is good.
16. Learners enjoy college life; as a result they are motivated and aspirational. For example, there is an increasing trend in the number of learners applying to university. Similarly, the number of learners who stay on at college to study higher level courses is very impressive. Attendance rates are high, although there is some variation between curriculum areas. Overall, learners achieve as well as expected; full-time learners on ICT courses make excellent progress. The number of 14-16 year olds who progress onto college courses and succeed, is very high.
17. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as other learners. Overall, there is no significant difference in the achievements of different groups of learners. Nevertheless, a small, but significant group of learners of Bangladeshi origin do not achieve as well as they should. Learners

develop good vocational and personal skills; they leave college equipped with the skills and confidence to succeed in their careers and future life. Provision for learners' safety and well-being, both at college and in work placement, is excellent. The college has received national recognition for its good practice in health and safety.

Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

Contributory grades:

Learners aged 14-16

Outstanding: grade 1

18. Inspectors agreed with the college's own judgement that teaching and learning are good. The self-assessment report cites the effective management of teaching and learning, good staff development, excellent resources and effective peer observation, all of which inspectors confirmed as accurate. The college has been successful in increasing the proportion of good or better lessons and reducing instances of inadequate teaching. Most teachers are confident in using ILT to make lessons interesting and stimulating. The college's very good specialist learning resources are used well to support learning.
19. The management of teaching and learning is exemplary. Quality assurance is particularly effective and lesson observers successfully identify teachers with good practice to share and teachers with development needs. The process is effectively supported by the principal who observes teaching and learning as a team member. Good practice is shared through excellent staff development. All teachers awarded inadequate grades are given good support to improve.
20. In the better lessons, learners are encouraged to critically evaluate their own performance. They are confident when working independently or in groups and often contribute to the development of others. Learners agree and achieve demanding targets that are suited to their own stage of development and pace of learning. Teachers in these lessons have a good knowledge of their learners. They use a variety of methods to ensure that all learners contribute and are given an appropriate level of challenge. Teachers ask well directed questions that are mainly supportive to help learning, often inquisitive to check understanding and sometimes challenging to extend and develop learners to their maximum potential. In the poorer lessons, learning takes place at a slow, uniform pace. Learners are often passive recipients of knowledge and information disseminated by teachers. Teachers make too little use of information on individual learners and ask poorly directed questions.
21. The management and teaching of key skills has improved since the last inspection. Recent changes to the management structure have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and the standard of learners' portfolio work. The college has recently produced a well considered strategy covering Skills for Life, additional learning support and key skills. Arrangements for providing

additional learning support have improved and are now good. The success rates for those learners receiving support is higher than the rate for those not receiving support. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are good. Written work is carefully assessed and many learners are given good feedback which helps them improve. Internal verification arrangements are in line with awarding body requirements.

22. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is good. Strategies to increase participation and raise young people's aspirations have been successful. Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent in raising expectations, instilling confidence and empowering them to make their own choices. Young white males achieve as well as females, contrary to national trends. Provision for 14-16 years olds transforms the lives and prospects of many young people. Bangladeshi learners underachieve in comparison with other groups of learners. Due to funding constraints, provision to meet the specific needs of adult learners with learning difficulties has been withdrawn.
23. Provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The ease with which learners can transfer between levels and through to higher education is raising aspirations and progression rates are high. The college has excellent specialist provision for young people with moderate and severe learning difficulties. Learners' high levels of participation in the wide range of enrichment activities, contributes significantly to their health and wellbeing.
24. Employer engagement and partnership working are outstanding. The college contributes significantly to meeting local and national priorities for regeneration and skills development. Training is tailored well to the specific business needs of the 1,600 employers involved with the college. The college is highly valued by employers, community and voluntary partners, for its flexible approach and adaptability to business needs. Provision for 14-16 year-olds is exemplary. School pupils attend the college's specialist purpose built skills centre for vocational courses in any area of learning. Many pupils achieve awards up to level 2. The programme inspires some of the most disengaged and disenfranchised young people to re-engage with learning and eases their transition to higher levels of post-16 training. The specially designed system for monitoring and recording pupils' progress integrates seamlessly with the school's own systems.
25. Guidance and support are good. Initial advice and guidance are effective in enabling learners to make well informed choices. Careers guidance is good and learners benefit from the close links with the local Connexions service. Induction is comprehensive and prepares learners well for their course. Within the college there are no staff qualified to assess the needs of learners with dyslexia or dyscalculia. As a result, there are sometimes delays in providing timely support.

26. Support services are widely promoted across sites. There are good links with specialist external agencies and college counselling services are well used. Retention officers are used effectively to support learners at risk of failing and enable them to complete their programme. In a few areas, poor punctuality and attendance are hindering learning. Tutorials are well planned, but opportunities are sometimes lost to challenge learners' attitudes or to expand on wider issues, such as equality and diversity. Arrangements for academic support on part-time courses of adult learners are not clearly defined and lack consistency across the college.
27. Support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are outstanding. Learners are encouraged and empowered to learn independently, to negotiate their curriculum and to develop independent living skills. The college's excellent 90-place on-site nursery is used well to remove barriers to learning for people with childcare responsibilities.

Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

Contributory grades:

Learners aged 14-16

Outstanding: grade 1

28. Leadership and management are good. Governors, the principal and the senior management team have a strong focus on improving learners' achievements and have a clear vision for the college. There is a clear emphasis on teaching and learning and management accountability. Most areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been addressed.
29. The college has well established and extensive links with employers, schools, the community and the local authority. Excellent partnership with the local authority has helped the college establish, in collaboration with local schools, a well used unit to develop school pupils' vocational skills. The management and quality of this provision are exemplary. The college is highly successful in engaging with employers to support local economic and social regeneration.
30. Curriculum management, including work-based learning, is good. There are processes in place for monitoring performance regularly, resulting in prompt action being taken where necessary. However, success rates remain low on some courses. The curriculum and its delivery are also regularly scrutinised by panels comprised of the senior management team and chaired by the principal. These processes are well understood and appreciated by teaching staff. A strategy to improve the teaching of literacy and numeracy has yet to be fully implemented.
31. Quality assurance procedures are thorough and well documented. The self-assessment report is very accurate. The organisation and quality of management information is very good and contributes significantly to the quality of management decisions. Staff shortages are being imaginatively

addressed by offering a "Taste of Teaching" course to enhance staff recruitment in shortage areas, such as engineering and construction. A range of extensive, high quality professional development programmes are offered to meet the needs of different categories of staff. Teaching staff are well qualified both in their subject areas and as teachers.

32. Arrangements for child protection are thorough. The college complies with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2002). Access to premises for staff and learners with restricted mobility is good. Equal opportunities data are thoroughly analysed, widely discussed and understood by managers. Some actions have resulted from an analysis showing lower rates of success for one minority ethnic group, but this has not resulted in a more strategic engagement between the college and that particular community.
33. Governance is good. Governors are well trained and play a key role in monitoring college performance. Accommodation is good, and a carefully considered programme of improvements has resulted in increased accessibility and some high quality specialist learning environments. The college company provides full cost training and this has resulted in significant investment in resources which benefit all learners. Financial management is good. Success rates are improving. Overall, the college provides good value for money.

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 | 711 | 56 | 60 | -4 | 909 | 48 | 59 | -11 |
| | 04/05 | 828 | 62 | 64 | -2 | 928 | 46 | 62 | -16 |
| | 05/06 | 962 | 68 | * | * | 674 | 48 | * | * |
| GNVQs and precursors | 03/04 | 30 | 67 | 65 | 2 | 2 | 100 | 52 | 48 |
| | 04/05 | 38 | 61 | 68 | -7 | 1 | 100 | 58 | 42 |
| | 05/06 | 11 | 100 | * | * | - | - | * | * |
| NVQs | 03/04 | 234 | 55 | 61 | -6 | 48 | 44 | 62 | -18 |
| | 04/05 | 167 | 67 | 67 | 0 | 45 | 38 | 67 | -29 |
| | 05/06 | 205 | 83 | * | * | 28 | 79 | * | * |
| Other | 03/04 | 447 | 56 | 60 | -4 | 859 | 48 | 59 | -11 |
| | 04/05 | 623 | 60 | 64 | -4 | 882 | 46 | 61 | -15 |
| | 05/06 | 746 | 63 | * | * | 646 | 47 | * | * |

* National averages for 2005/06 not available at the time of inspection

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 | 1,070 | 52 | 56 | -4 | 936 | 43 | 54 | -11 |
| | 04/05 | 940 | 60 | 61 | -1 | 882 | 50 | 60 | -10 |
| | 05/06 | 1,017 | 64 | * | * | 1,072 | 61 | * | * |
| GCSEs | 03/04 | 209 | 57 | 61 | -4 | 50 | 54 | 59 | -5 |
| | 04/05 | 171 | 60 | 64 | -4 | 49 | 63 | 62 | 1 |
| | 05/06 | 136 | 72 | * | * | 24 | 67 | * | * |
| GNVQs and precursors | 03/04 | 62 | 66 | 63 | 3 | - | - | - | - |
| | 04/05 | 73 | 70 | 67 | 3 | 13 | 54 | 70 | -16 |
| | 05/06 | 29 | 83 | * | * | 8 | 50 | * | * |
| NVQs | 03/04 | 191 | 58 | 52 | 6 | 390 | 42 | 54 | -12 |
| | 04/05 | 264 | 66 | 57 | 9 | 425 | 45 | 60 | -15 |
| | 05/06 | 205 | 74 | * | * | 548 | 74 | * | * |
| Other | 03/04 | 608 | 46 | 54 | -8 | 496 | 42 | 53 | -11 |
| | 04/05 | 432 | 54 | 60 | -6 | 395 | 54 | 59 | -5 |
| | 05/06 | 647 | 58 | * | * | 492 | 47 | * | * |

* National averages for 2005/06 not available at the time of inspection

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 | Diff | Starts – Transfers | College Rate | National Rate | Diff |
| 3 Long | 03/04 | 637 | 46 | 64 | -18 | 671 | 52 | 53 | -1 |
| | 04/05 | 555 | 52 | 67 | -15 | 582 | 48 | 57 | -9 |
| | 05/06 | 458 | 68 | * | * | 440 | 62 | * | * |
| A/A2 Levels | 03/04 | 17 | 41 | 84 | -43 | 3 | 33 | 65 | -32 |
| | 04/05 | 12 | 25 | 86 | -61 | 2 | 0 | 69 | -69 |
| | 05/06 | - | - | * | * | - | - | * | * |
| AS Levels | 03/04 | 44 | 9 | 63 | -54 | 13 | 39 | 50 | -11 |
| | 04/05 | 44 | 9 | 65 | -56 | 1 | 0 | 52 | -52 |
| | 05/06 | - | - | * | * | - | - | * | * |
| GNVQs and precursors | 03/04 | 89 | 42 | 52 | -10 | 27 | 44 | 43 | 1 |
| | 04/05 | 13 | 62 | 60 | 2 | 2 | 50 | 53 | -3 |
| | 05/06 | 28 | 46 | * | * | 4 | 75 | * | * |
| NVQs | 03/04 | 21 | 57 | 54 | 3 | 130 | 39 | 47 | -8 |
| | 04/05 | 43 | 74 | 62 | 12 | 186 | 38 | 54 | -16 |
| | 05/06 | 35 | 77 | * | * | 168 | 61 | * | * |
| Other | 03/04 | 466 | 49 | 56 | -7 | 498 | 57 | 56 | 1 |
| | 04/05 | 443 | 55 | 60 | -5 | 391 | 53 | 58 | -5 |
| | 05/06 | 395 | 69 | * | * | 268 | 63 | * | * |

* National averages for 2005/06 not available at the time of inspection

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2005 to 2006.

a) Overall success rate

| End Year | Apprenticeship Programme | Number of Learners * | College Framework rate ** | National rate ** | College NVQ rate ** | National rate ** |
|----------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 2004/05 | Apprenticeship | 114 | 42 | 38 | 50 | 50 |
| | Advanced | 38 | 29 | 34 | 42 | 48 |
| 2005/06 | Apprenticeship | 115 | 58 | 53 | 68 | 58 |
| | Advanced | 66 | 55 | 44 | 64 | 54 |

* 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 ** |
|----------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 2004/05 | Apprenticeship | 124 | 31 | 22 | 35 | 29 |
| | Advanced | 38 | 26 | 21 | 37 | 31 |
| 2005/06 | Apprenticeship | 125 | 38 | 33 | 46 | 38 |
| | Advanced | 97 | 37 | 27 | 45 | 34 |

* 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'

Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the college 2003 to 2005.

| Year | Number of starts in year | Achieved Objectives * | Progression ** | Still in learning |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 2003/04 | 74 | 11 | 16 | 36 |
| 2004/05 | 76 | 45 | 40 | 45 |
| 2005/06 | 92 | 51 | 57 | 26 |

* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme
 ** Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period