



Harlow College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published March 2007	Provider reference 130676
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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Harlow College
Type of college:	Tertiary
Principal:	Colin Hindmarch
Address of college:	Velizy Avenue Town Centre Harlow Essex CM20 3LH
Telephone number:	01279 868 000
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Chair of governors:	Martin Coleman
Unique reference number:	130676
Name of lead inspector:	Shaun Dillon, HMI
Dates of inspection:	29 January – 2 February 2007

Background of the organisation

1. Harlow was a new town, designed in 1947 for 60,000 people. It now has a population of 80,000 and is due for major growth. It is in North West Essex, on the edge of Greater London and links to London, Stansted airport and Cambridge by the M11 and rail. Harlow has low unemployment and major employers, but it also contains some areas of deprivation, a history of low aspirations and participation in learning, a poor health record and a low skills base.
2. Harlow College is a medium-sized tertiary college, which has three main divisions – corporate services, student-focused provision and employer-focused provision. The student-focused provision consists of:
 - the sixth form centre
 - the skills academy
 - community and higher education.
3. The college is on a single site. It does not have a centre of vocational excellence (CoVE). In 2005/06, the college enrolled about 2,070 learners aged 16-18. They provided about 6,230 enrolments and 1,700 full-time equivalents (FTEs). Adult learners totalled about 4,750 and provided about 7,000 enrolments and 1,000 FTEs. The overall number of enrolments declined from 21,300 in 2002/03 to 13,230 in 2004/05, but the FTEs remained about the same. About 52% of learners aged 16-18 and 61% of adult learners are female. Nearly 90% of all learners are of white ethnic origin. Most learners are from Essex and Hertfordshire. Most learners aged 16-18 study at level 3 and fewest at level 1, whereas adult learners are evenly split between levels 1 and 3 with fewest at level 2. The college offers courses in most sector subject areas over a wide range of levels.
4. The college's mission states: "Harlow College (working with its partners) intends to achieve excellence. It intends to achieve excellence not in isolated pockets but across the full range of its work".

The college's new teaching and learning strategy is the means by which it aims to achieve this vision.

The core values are:

- meeting the learning and skills needs of the local economy and community
- raising standards
- running efficiently and effectively.

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: health, social care and childcare; construction; information and communication technology; hairdressing and beauty therapy; and art, design, performing arts and media.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Capacity to improve	Good: grade 2
Achievements and standards	Satisfactory: grade 3
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: grade 3

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

Curriculum areas

Health, social care and childcare	Good: grade 2
Construction	Satisfactory: grade 3
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory: grade 3
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Satisfactory: grade 3
Art, design, performing arts and media	Satisfactory: grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

6. Learners' achievements and standards are satisfactory. Most success rates, especially those for adults, have improved in the last three years. Success rates on level 1 courses are high. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and learners from black and minority ethnic backgrounds have high success rates. However, level 3 learners aged 16-18 have low success rates. Such learners on the General Certificate in Education (GCE) provision obtain few high grades and make insufficient progress compared with their prior attainment. The standard of most learners' work is good.
7. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The recent teaching and learning strategy is the main instrument for raising standards. The proportion of good or better teaching and learning is low. The best lessons are at level 1 and the least effective at level 3, especially for learners aged 16-18. Assessment and the identification of additional learning needs are satisfactory.
8. The approach to educational and social inclusion is good. The match between the wide range of provision and learners' and employers' needs is good. The college has strong and effective collaborative relationships with many external agencies.
9. The college provides good guidance and support, especially for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pastoral and tutorial support are very effective. However, the integration of the Every Child Matters themes into tutorials is insufficient. Learners feel safe and secure.
10. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership is strong. Recent restructuring focuses on learners and learning and encourages energetic and open management. The access to and the use of credible data have improved. Value for money is satisfactory. Staff have not yet received sufficient training on safeguarding issues. The planning for and the promotion of equality and diversity are insufficient. Curriculum management is inconsistent.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

11. The college demonstrates a good capacity to improve its provision. It has identified the need to improve achievement significantly in at least a third of its provision and has a clear strategy to achieve this. Whilst the impact of several recent initiatives is evident already, it is too early to judge the effectiveness of others. Procedures for reviewing course performance and management are insufficient.

12. The self-assessment report is clear, concise and accurate. Managers develop the report, but do not involve staff sufficiently in the process. However, senior and middle managers and governors demonstrate strong commitment to, and enthusiasm for, the new strategy. The college has developed rapidly improving and very effective quality assurance systems to monitor progress and managers use them well.

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

13. The college has made satisfactory progress to improve provision since the last inspection. It has replaced most of its unsatisfactory accommodation and has improved access to information communication and learning technology. However, too much teaching and learning remain dull and uninspiring. The college now has a thorough and supportive system for lesson observations, which links closely to staff development, but not appraisal. Managers have improved the dissemination of exemplary work through the 'showcasing of good practice' sessions. Improvements in key skills success rates are significant and the achievement of apprenticeship frameworks in work-based learning has improved.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- improving and high success rates for adult learners
- high level 1 success rates
- high success rates for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for learners from black and minority ethnic backgrounds
- good responsiveness to employers' needs
- highly effective pastoral and tutorial support
- good teaching and learning strategy to raise standards
- much good resource management.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- low success rates on level 3 courses for learners aged 16-18
- low and declining progress made by learners aged 16-18 on GCE provision, compared with their prior attainment
- low proportion of high grades achieved by learners on GCE provision
- low proportion of good or better teaching and learning
- insufficient integration of the Every Child Matters themes
- insufficient planning to promote equality and diversity
- insufficient training on child protection issues
- inconsistent curriculum management.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

14. Achievements and standards are satisfactory and this agrees with the college's self-assessment. Most success, retention and pass rates have improved in the last three years to be at or above national averages. Success rates are high on level 1 provision. In particular, success rates of adult learners have improved significantly to be high, except for those on courses lasting 5 to 24 weeks. The success rate for learners aged 16-18 on level 3 courses is low. The success rates of learners from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are high and above the college average; no group of minority ethnic learners underperforms consistently. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also succeed well.
15. The progress made by GCE learners aged 16-18 compared with their prior attainment is insufficient. It has declined over four years and is significantly negative. This is particularly so in business studies, media, film and TV studies and physical education. However, history learners make significantly good progress compared with their prior attainment. The proportion of high grades achieved by most learners is below the national averages. In particular, GCE A level learners achieve few high grades, whereas BTEC National Diploma learners achieve satisfactorily.
16. Framework success rates for all apprenticeship provision increased significantly between 2003/04 and 2004/05, but declined slightly in 2005/06 to just below national averages. Timely success rates have risen and fallen similarly. The success rates of advanced apprenticeship learners have declined in the last three years and are below national averages. Success rates of apprenticeship learners increased significantly in 2004/05 and are at similar levels in 2005/06 but are below national averages. Most sector subject areas display similar trends. Success rates for national vocational qualifications (NVOs) have been consistently above the national averages for the last three years.
17. The standard of most learners' work is good. Many learners develop independent learning skills which equip them well for progression to higher education or employment. Key skills success rates, except for application of number, have risen over the last three years and are above the national averages.
18. Most learners enjoy their courses and being at college. They behave well and respect each other and staff. Attendance rates and punctuality are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

19. The quality of provision is satisfactory and this agrees with the college's self-assessment. Inspectors also agree with the college that teaching and learning are satisfactory. A new teaching and learning strategy is at the heart of the college's mission to drive forward improvement in the quality of provision. A new lesson observation system places considerable emphasis on learning and the learner. Observation outcomes are realistic, accurate and well moderated. They result in appropriate action plans, staff development and the sharing of good practice. However, they do not link systematically with performance management reviews.
20. The quality of teaching and learning varies considerably across the college. Marked inconsistencies occur, such as the detail of lesson plans and the appropriate use of information and learning technology (ILT). Teachers also differ in their responses to the need for varying activities to meet learners' needs. Classroom management is also very inconsistent. The proportion of good or better teaching and learning in the college is insufficient. The best teaching and learning are on level 1 provision. The least effective are on level 3 provision, particularly in courses for learners aged 16-18. The best lessons stimulate learners through the effective use of questioning. Teachers set a challenging pace for learners and manage behaviour well. Learners enjoy lessons and engage in varying activities. In the least effective lessons, teachers do not take full account of learners' differing abilities, have unclear aims and objectives and do not check learning sufficiently.
21. The assessment of learners' work varies considerably. The best assignments have detailed feedback and guidance for improvement. The worst have few or no helpful comments. The monitoring and tracking of learners' progress are good. Course teams are developing new systems to improve short-term target setting. Internal verification processes are satisfactory.
22. All full-time learners undergo an initial assessment. Nearly all of those identified with additional learning needs take up support. A quarter of full-time learners undertakes some form of additional learning support. The provision for entry level and level 1 learners is good. Provision for levels 2, 3 and part-time learners is satisfactory. The college does not monitor or analyse the impact of additional learning support.
23. The college's response to the needs of learners and employers is good. It offers a wide range of courses at all levels. However, there is no full-time provision available in health and social care. Many learners progress to higher levels and to new areas of study.
24. The collaborative partnerships with local schools, community groups and employers are strong and the college is responsive to their needs. Employers speak highly of the college and its ability to support their business

requirements. The college provides good advice and guidance to pupils from Year 9 onwards. Vocational courses for school pupils aged 14-16 are well established and successful.

25. The range of enrichment opportunities is wide. However, not all learners participate due to restrictive timetabling arrangements. Learners undertake work experience where it is an integral part of their programme, but elsewhere the opportunities are underdeveloped. Learners make a good contribution to college and community life.
26. The approach to educational and social inclusion is good. Managers have widened participation very successfully at lower levels. The proportion of learners from black and minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than in the catchment area.
27. Guidance and support for learners are good. The college gives impartial initial advice and guidance and encourages learners sensitively to disclose their personal support requirements. Initial screening takes place during induction and is effective in determining needs. Induction is also effective.
28. Staff provide highly effective pastoral and academic support. Care and support for learners with learning disabilities and difficulties are also very good. Additional learning support helps learners gain the most from their courses.
29. A clear tutorial scheme of work benefits learners. Opportunities to explore issues related to the Every Child Matters outcomes exist through tutorials. However, their integration with the curriculum and the learners' experience is insufficient. Tutors assess and monitor the progress of full-time learners and set expectations using individual learning plans. Individual target setting takes place but is inconsistent. For many full-time learners, the process is clear and well monitored, leading to improved performance. However, it is often imprecise for adult learners.
30. The information on a range of careers, social, health and financial matters is good and staff have very productive links with local agencies. The college promotes healthy eating, drinking and lifestyles. However, it does not discourage smoking actively. Advice and guidance for learners applying for employment and higher education are good. The promotion of economic wellbeing is satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: grade 3

31. Leadership and management are satisfactory and this agrees with the college's judgement. The leadership of the principal is strong. The senior management team has developed a good and demanding teaching and learning strategy to raise standards. Recent restructuring enables staff to support the implementation of this strategy and enables teaching teams to develop a curriculum which meets learners' needs.

32. Governors are well informed. They challenge and support college managers in the implementation of college strategies. Teaching teams have demanding targets for learners' achievements. Staff at all levels appreciate the energetic and open management style, which supports them fully in improving provision. The quality and timeliness of data have improved and teams have access to an increasingly wide range of information for planning and quality improvement.
33. Learning resources are satisfactory. About one half of the classrooms has an interactive whiteboard. However, relatively few teachers exploit its potential fully. Managers have not yet developed a virtual learning environment to support the teaching and learning strategy. The college has a comprehensive staff development plan. This links to lesson observation outcomes which give realistic feedback to staff. Much resource management is good. The college has an effective accommodation strategy. Financial management is good. The college uses support staff very effectively to work with and train teams. Value for money is satisfactory.
34. The college does not meet fully its responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 (SENDA) and the Children Act (safeguarding children) 2002. Appropriate policies are in place. With the exception of one building, all accommodation is accessible to learners with restricted mobility. However, the college is only now developing action plans to deal with the requirements of SENDA and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. The planning for and the promotion of equality and diversity are insufficient. Managers have made appropriate arrangements in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, but they have not yet trained staff fully in child protection issues. Learners feel safe and secure in the college.
35. Curriculum management is inconsistent. The best teams use innovative and learner-centred approaches. A few programme reviews are satisfactory but many contain insufficient data analysis and insufficient strengths or areas for improvement. Managers have discussed the new teaching and learning strategy with staff but not all staff understand it or show commitment to its vision.

Curriculum area inspections

Health, social care and childcare

Good: grade 2

Context

36. About 200 learners enrol on courses in this area. About one half is on full-time courses and one half studies on a part-time basis. There are 11 apprentices. Most of the full-time learners are aged 16-18 and most of the part-time learners are adults. Full-time courses in childcare include the BTEC National Diploma in early years at level 3, the BTEC First Diploma in children's care, learning and development at level 2 and the certificate in caring for children at level 1. Part-time courses include the national vocational qualification (NVQ) programmes at levels 2 and 3 in care and in children's care, learning and development.

STRENGTHS

- very high success rates on full-time courses
- good teaching and learning
- very good tutorial support on full-time courses
- particularly effective and well managed work placement experience.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- slow progress in achieving NVQ qualifications
- narrow range of provision.

Achievements and standards

37. Achievements and standards are good. Success rates on full-time courses are very high. The success rates on the level 3 programmes have been considerably above the national average for the past three years. However, progress in achieving NVQ qualifications for recent groups of learners has been slow. Although the success rate for the apprenticeship framework is above the national average, it is low. Learners arrange their portfolios of assessed work very well and their standard is above average.

Quality of provision

38. Teaching and learning are good. Learners make good links between theory and vocational practice. They draw on work placement experience in early years and care settings to illustrate theoretical points. Teachers plan interactive learning activities which engage learners well. Staff assess and internally verify NVQ portfolios very carefully. Teachers provide detailed and encouraging feedback to learners on their assignments and give clear guidance for improvement. Learners use information and communication technology (ICT) well in their research and presentation of assignments. However, teachers

make insufficient use of ICT in lessons. Learners receive comprehensive initial basic skills assessments and timely additional support.

39. The range of provision is satisfactory. However, provision of full-time courses in health and social care and for learners aged 14-16 does not exist, even though there is an identified national skill shortage in the health and care sectors.
40. Guidance and support are good. Tutorial support for full-time learners is very good. Tutors plan the tutorial programme very well and address learners' vocational and pastoral needs effectively. They agree clear individual targets and monitor them well. Records of tutorial support for part-time learners, however, are insufficiently detailed. Work placement experience is central to the curriculum delivery and teachers manage it very well, with due regard to learners' vocational needs and safety. The links with employers and placement providers are very productive.

Leadership and management

41. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers coordinate timetables well to allow flexibility in the delivery of the programme. Informal communication within staff teams is good and productive but staff have recorded few team meetings in the past year. The self-assessment report for the full-time and NVQ courses is robust, but the work-based learning report lacks rigour and the action plan gives insufficient attention to the timely completion of tasks.

Construction

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

42. Courses run at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels in brickwork, plumbing, carpentry and joinery, painting and decorating and electrical installation. A level 1 multi-skill programme is available. About 400 learners are aged 16-18 and around 220 learners are adults. Most learners are on full-time programmes. About 115 work-based learners are on apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship provision. Nearly 30 pupils from five local schools are on courses designed to give them an insight into construction crafts.

STRENGTHS

- good progress to improve framework success rates
- good development of practical skills
- particularly effective delivery of key skills
- highly effective monitoring of learners' progress.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low success rates on the carpentry and joinery intermediate certificate course
- ineffective communication between teams
- insufficient practical plumbing resources.

Achievements and standards

43. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Overall and timely framework success rates have improved over the last three years. Success rates for all programmes are satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Learners develop their practical skills well, both in the workplace and at college. Success rates on the intermediate construction programme have been low for the last two years.

Quality of provision

44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors use ILT effectively to aid learning. Learners enjoy their college work and develop their learning and skills well. The delivery of key skills is particularly effective, since dedicated staff use specifically designed assignments related to the vocational area. Learners achieve well in key skills, often within the first twelve months of their apprenticeship. Assessment in the workplace is satisfactory. It takes place on demand and when appropriate. Work-based learning reviews are satisfactory. Staff set challenging targets and review them with employers. However, ineffective communication exists between teams. In electrical installation, staff carried over a progress review target three times in six months. In carpentry and joinery, the tutor did not receive the support needs of half the group sufficiently promptly.

45. The range of provision is satisfactory. Only craft courses are available, but they cover the main areas of employers' needs. They enable good progression from levels 1 to 3.
46. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support. The monitoring of learners' progress is highly effective for all aspects of the programme. Learners in the practical brickwork area agree targets for completion at the end of the session. Staff then evaluate, support and action plan for the next session. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Staff identify learners' needs promptly and arrange appropriate support.

Leadership and management

47. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff are appropriately qualified. Experienced workshop supervisors support teachers and learners well in practical workshops. Continuous professional development aligns with the college business needs. Internal verification is satisfactory. Regular standardisation meetings take place across all vocational areas. The self-assessment process includes all staff and broadly reflects the area. Effective systems are in place to improve success rates. Practical workshop areas contain industry-standard equipment. However, the new plumbing workshops are too small for the number of learners and this restricts the availability of practical time in the workshop. The newly converted carpentry and joinery workshop is very noisy.

Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

48. Full and part-time courses are available from entry level to level 3. They include GCE AS and A level, computer literacy and information technology, European Computer Driving Licence and BTEC First and National Diplomas. Short, part-time programmes are available to adults. About 600 learners study ICT, of whom about 300 are adults. Approximately 50 learners are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and about 80 have learning, sensory or mobility difficulties.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on AVCE, AS VCE and BTEC First Diploma in IT
- high standard of learners' work on GCE AS and A level and introductory diploma courses
- comprehensive and effective systems to track and monitor learners' progress
- highly effective additional support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low success rates for adult learners on part-time courses
- unimaginative teaching to stimulate learners' aspirations
- unsuitable learning environments
- insufficient rigour of quality improvement.

Achievements and standards

49. Achievements and standards are good. Success rates on AVCE, AS VCE and BTEC First Diploma in IT courses are high. Success rates on GCE AS and Advanced VCE have improved over the last three years. The standard of learners' work on the GCE AS and A level and introductory diploma courses is high. All learners work diligently in lessons. Full-time learners on entry level courses produce high quality work and have advanced verbal and practical skills. Success rates are low for large numbers of adult learners on part-time courses.

Quality of provision

50. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers challenge learners appropriately and they produce work of a high standard. Learners show good practical skills and apply them well. In the less effective lessons, teachers do not use imaginative methods to involve learners or to raise their aspirations. The emphasis is on teaching rather than learning. The systems to track and monitor learners' progress are comprehensive and effective. Teachers write assignment briefs well to promote higher grade achievement. They give

detailed feedback. Part-time learners' individual learning plans are ineffective. Teachers give insufficient attention to action plans and individual target setting. Learners develop their key skills well in workshops and teachers integrate key skills effectively into assignments.

51. The range of provision is satisfactory. Courses provide progression from entry level to level 3. They include learners from different backgrounds and with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, learners on the BTEC First and National Diplomas do not have work experience.
52. Guidance and support are satisfactory. The additional support for learners with learning and other difficulties is highly effective. Staff identify support needs early in the programme and provide dedicated support. Tutors plan the tutorial programme for full-time learners well. However, they have not received training in how to approach sensitive topics.

Leadership and management

53. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers and teachers enable learners to achieve well. The team ethos is strong. Internal verification and quality assurance of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The self-assessment report involves all staff and is honest and self-critical. The learning environments are unsuitable for purpose. The availability and use of interactive technology to support learning is insufficient. Quality improvement planning is not rigorous enough, due to insufficient use of evaluation and feedback. Programme teams meet regularly and discuss current issues but the review of progress across teams is not systematic.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

54. About 470 learners study hairdressing, beauty and work-based learning courses at levels 1, 2 and 3. Of these about 250 are full-time, 110 are aged over 19, 35 are aged 14-16 and 50 are on hairdressing work-based learning courses. Approximately 20 learners are male and 14 are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

STRENGTHS

- very high success rates on level 3 beauty and holistic therapy courses
- good monitoring and tracking of full-time learners' progress
- good emphasis on developing independent learning
- good hairdressing accommodation.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- insufficient development of full-time learners' commercial skills
- inadequate resources for beauty therapy
- insufficient focus on equality and diversity
- ineffective management of work-based learning.

Achievements and standards

55. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Success rates improved significantly in 2005/06. Success rates on level 3 full-time and part-time beauty therapy course are very high. However, success rates on level 1 hairdressing courses and on apprenticeship frameworks remain low. Learners organise and present their portfolios well. However, many learners make slow progress towards achieving full units of the qualification. They do not develop effective client care, promotions and sales skills and do not work towards acceptable commercial timings. Work-based learners make insufficient progress towards achieving the full framework qualification.

Quality of provision

56. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners work very well independently and eagerly take responsibility for their own progress. They set targets towards completing vocational units and regularly review and record their achievements. They find this motivating. However, target setting to improve the quality of learners' work or to develop acceptable industry standards is inadequate. Teachers regularly assess learners and monitor and track their progress well. Both teachers and learners keep useful and detailed records of learners' achievements. Teachers use assessment records well during regular individual tutorials and workplace reviews to produce action plans.

57. The range of courses to suit the needs of learners and employers is satisfactory and appropriate. The college offers part-time provision to meet the needs of parents with school-aged children and learners in employment. Work-based learning course design fails to provide sufficient flexibility to meet employers' needs. Full-time learners have good opportunities to enhance their understanding of the hair and beauty industry through visits to trade shows, guest speakers and product training.
58. Learners receive satisfactory support. All full-time learners also receive regular well planned group tutorials, which include support in developing job search skills and sexual health awareness. These integrate the Every Child Matters themes well. Work-based learners receive regular and useful progress reviews.

Leadership and management

59. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers organise curriculum teams well and communication is effective. Management of work-based learning is ineffective. The coordination of key skills and the NVQ to enable full framework achievement is insufficient. However, communication between the vocational area and work-based assessors has recently improved. The focus on and promotion of equality and diversity are insufficient. Hairdressing salons and reception area are spacious and reflect industry standards. However, beauty salons have insufficient and inappropriate couches.

Art, design, performing arts and media

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

60. Most of the entry level to level 3 courses in visual, performing arts and media are full-time. Courses include the introductory and first diplomas in art and design, performing arts and media, the BTEC National Diplomas in popular music, performing arts and media, the foundation diploma in art and design and GCE courses in art, film, music, media, drama and photography. About 700 learners study these courses, of whom about one half is on vocational level 3 provision. Most of the full-time learners are aged 16-18.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on vocational courses
- good development of learners' research skills
- good teaching and learning in performing arts
- wide range of courses with good progression
- good accommodation and resources for visual arts, media, and music.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low success and pass rates on GCE courses
- low key skills success rates
- underdeveloped observational drawing skills
- insufficient promotion of equality and diversity
- unsuitable accommodation for performing arts.

Achievements and standards

61. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Success rates on vocational courses are high and have improved over the last three years. Success rates on GCE courses are consistently low. Pass rates for learners on vocational programmes are high. Pass rates on GCE courses, which were low at the last inspection, remain low. Key skills success rates are low. Learners develop good personal and social skills and work effectively both independently and in groups.

Quality of provision

62. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good in performing arts, where teachers use a wide range of learning strategies effectively to raise learners' standards. In the best lessons, teachers prepare interesting and challenging work that stimulates learning. However, drawing from observation is underdeveloped with over reliance on secondary sources and copying from books. Media and visual arts learners have well developed research skills and are independent learners. Teachers organise media

assessment well and use it effectively to develop individual progress and learning. Teachers in performing arts do not manage assessment scheduling well.

63. The wide range of specialist courses from entry level to level 3 is good and provides good and well used progression routes. The programme of enrichment activities widens learners' experience of professional practice and standards. Involvement in collaborative projects allows learners to produce high quality work.
64. Learners receive satisfactory care and guidance, but support from teachers and tutors is good. Teachers' individual evaluative feedback in lessons enables learners to improve the standard of their work quickly. Staff address learners' personal and work-related issues sympathetically through frequent group and individual tutorials. Tutors and learners negotiate targets to improve the quality of learners' work.

Leadership and management

65. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers set a very clear strategy to raise achievement. Programme area leaders work effectively with teams to make constructive changes. Specialist resources and accommodation for media, music and visual arts are good. The dance studio ambient temperature is not conducive to safe practice. Studio spaces are too small for learners to work effectively and safely. The stock of contemporary dance videos is insufficient. Staff do not promote equality and diversity through the curriculum sufficiently. The updated self-assessment report is accurate and focuses on targeted and timely interventions to improve learners' experiences.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, compared with 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	488	71	60	11	947	66	59	7
	04/05	785	75	64	11	1174	75	62	13
	05/06	705	75	*	*	1058	81**	*	*
GNVQs and precursor	03/04	15	60	68	-8	-	-	-	-
	04/05	18	28	68	-40	-	-	-	-
	05/06	-	-	*	*	-	-	-	-
NVQ	03/04	59	61	67	-6	9	22	67	-45
	04/05	62	56	67	-11	15	87	67	20
	05/06	109	75	*	*	12	8**	*	*
Other	03/04	414	73	64	9	938	66	61	5
	04/05	705	77	64	13	1159	75	61	14
	05/06	596	75	*	*	1046	82**	*	*

* The 2005/06 national rates were not released at the time of this inspection

** figures amended by Ofsted 10/07 due to college data significantly overstating 05/06 achievements in original report

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, compared with 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	1027	63	56	7	869	55	53	2
	04/05	1060	60	61	-1	797	54	60	-6
	05/06	1035	61	*	*	576	59**	*	*
GCSEs	03/04	230	67	61	6	98	53	59	-6
	04/05	221	64	64	0	116	56	62	-6
	05/06	230	53	*	*	97	54	*	*
GNVQs and precursor	03/04	121	74	61	13	-	-	-	-
	04/05	63	78	67	11	-	-	-	-
	05/06	34	53	*	*	9	87	*	*
NVQ	03/04	170	72	52	20	307	64	53	11
	04/05	217	60	57	3	167	63	60	3
	05/06	145	66	*	*	150	68**	*	*
Other	03/04	506	56	54	2	464	49	53	-4
	04/05	559	56	60	-4	514	51	59	-8
	05/06	630	63	*	*	332	56**	*	*

* The 2005/06 national rates were not released at the time of this inspection

** figures amended by Ofsted 10/07 due to college data significantly overstating 05/06 achievements in original report

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type. N.B. success rates for learners aged 16-18 are compared with the national rates for sixth form colleges.

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	1874	71	80	-9	510	62	54	8
	04/05	1695	72	82	-10	601	55	57	-2
	05/06	1767	72	*	*	403	60**	*	*
A/A2 Levels	03/04	354	80	91	-11	17	76	66	10
	04/05	413	86	92	-6	27	63	69	-6
	05/06	345	83	*	*	24	88	*	*
AS Level	03/04	903	64	76	-12	65	40	50	-10
	04/05	789	64	77	-13	64	44	52	-8
	05/06	895	65	*	*	28	54	*	*
GNVQs and precursor	03/04	370	85	68	17	45	84	44	40
	04/05	254	81	75	6	30	70	53	17
	05/06	93	91	*	*	13	100	*	*
NVQ	03/04	42	76	54	22	125	50	47	3
	04/05	47	81	62	19	110	50	54	-4
	05/06	50	96	*	*	106	54**	*	*
Other	03/04	205	62	64	-2	237	67	56	11
	04/05	192	63	72	-9	370	57	58	-1
	05/06	384	68	*	*	230	59**	*	*

* The 2005/06 national rates were not released at the time of this inspection

** figures amended by Ofsted 10/07 due to college data significantly overstating 05/06 achievements in original report

Table 4

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

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	92	12	32	39	47
	Advanced	53	43	31	66	48
2004/05	Apprenticeship	169	49	39	63	50
	Advanced	34	38	34	62	48
2005/06	Apprenticeship	142	49	53	56	58
	Advanced	50	32	44	60	53

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

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

*** Data for 2005/06 from LSC Provider Gateway WBL success rate report period 12

b) Timely success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	113	4	16	14	24
	Advanced	51	35	19	51	30
2004/05	Apprenticeship	151	28	22	34	29
	Advanced	36	31	21	50	31
2005/06	Apprenticeship	129	22	32	30	36
	Advanced	52	25	26	52	33

* The number of learners who planned to complete their learning programme in the given year

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

*** Data for 2005/06 from LSC Provider Gateway WBL success rate report period 12