

## ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Christ the King Sixth Form College  
Date of visit: 23 February 2007

This feedback contains brief findings from the annual assessment visit. It focuses on the themes explored during the visit and does not attempt to give a comprehensive overview of the college's performance.

### Achievement and standards

Has the college maintained the previously high students' success rates?

Overall success rates continue to be outstanding. They are significantly above the national averages for sixth form colleges at levels 1, 2 and 3. In 2005/06, the headline success rate for all courses was 87%, an increase of twelve percentage points since 2004.

Value added performance measures for level 3 provision are good and show a trend of improvement. These value added performance indicators are used effectively to set targets with individual students which are monitored rigorously. Progression to higher education continues to be a strong feature with over 500 students leaving to take up university or art foundation courses in 2005/06.

The success rates of a small number of subjects are below national averages and the college is taking vigorous action to improve the quality of this provision. A relatively small number of students are entered for key skills accreditation. This is partly a response by staff to the lack of status accorded to key skills qualifications by many university admissions tutors. Pass rates in those key skills taken are increasing.

The college's self assessment report (SAR) indicates that a lack of punctuality by some learners remains a persistent issue. What actions are being taken to improve punctuality and attendance rates?

Students' attendance is good. The overall students' attendance rate for 2005/06 was 87% and in the current academic year it has increased to 89%. Staff fully acknowledge the difficulties arising from the poor punctuality of a small minority of students and a group of staff is developing a strategy to improve it. Electronic registration of students was introduced last year and this has improved the accuracy of attendance information and enabled better tracking of individuals.

## Quality of education and training

The SAR judges teaching and learning to be good. How is the quality of teaching and learning monitored and what actions are being taken to further improve the quality of provision?

Lesson observations are carried out annually for all teaching staff. The proportion of observed lessons judged to be good or better was 87% in 2005/06. Lesson observations carried out this year indicate that a similar proportion of good or better lessons will be seen. A college validation panel ensures that the written comments on lesson observation forms match the grades awarded. A number of lesson observations are carried out jointly by two members of staff to ensure grading is consistent. Managers are also collaborating with staff from another London Catholic sixth form college to ensure that judgements on the quality of teaching and learning are accurate. They are considering further ways of extending these arrangements to ensure external benchmarking of their judgements.

What progress has been made to improve the quality of group tutorial provision?

The quality of group tutorials was raised as an issue at the previous inspection. All tutors are now observed delivering a group tutorial over a two-year cycle. Current findings show that around one-half of group tutorials are judged to be good or better which is lower than the quality of subject-specific lesson observations. Individual tutorials are not part of this observation scheme. The college has improved the coordination of tutorials and learning materials have been developed covering a broad range of personal development and other issues. Students speak very highly of the support that they receive from tutors and other staff.

## Leadership and management

What action is being taken to further improve the quality of provision?

The self-assessment process is rigorous and the college has a clear idea of its own strengths and areas for development. Challenging achievement targets are set for subjects. Regular meetings between senior and curriculum managers monitor the progress towards these targets, based upon the current performance of students. Where a subject is under-performing, strong action is taken to improve the quality of provision, including staff development and training.

How effectively does the college capture the views of students and has this led to improvements in provision?

The college has an active student council whose members are elected by their peers. The council has set up a site on the college's Intranet to promote better communication between staff and students. This enables all students to e-mail comments which are passed directly to senior managers. Students receive feedback from managers on these comments and students feel that their views are treated seriously by staff.

How is the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda being taken forward within the college?

The college is very focussed on the ECM agenda which underpins many aspects of college life. The Catholic ethos of the college provides a caring and supportive atmosphere. The chaplaincy team extends opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of learners. Religious education sessions are well attended and enjoyed by learners. A new initiative termed "Room 4 U" has provided targeted support to develop the emotional and personal development of around 60 students. Students feel safe in the college and no exclusions have taken place for poor behaviour in the current academic year. An extensive work shadowing scheme provides placements for students that are relevant to their future career plans, including professions such as medicine and law. A comprehensive careers conference is held annually that is well attended by representatives from a wide range of employers and higher education institutions.

### **What activities to develop 14 to 19 provision are currently taking place?**

The college plays an active role in developing provision for young people aged 14 to 19 in the borough and is well placed to respond to local, regional and national priorities. It has a strong commitment to developing a coherent 14 to 19 curriculum in the local area. Close links are in place with its seven partner schools and pupils from these institutions receive good advice and guidance about the college when preparing to leave school and participate in further education and training. Working in collaboration with partner schools, the college has made an application to run a specialised diploma in creative and media at levels 1, 2 and 3. College and school staff have worked together to develop school-based courses at levels 1 and 2 that provide the opportunity for pupils to progress to relevant level 3 provision at the college.