



College of North West London



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published March 2007	Provider reference 130429
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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	College of North West London
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Vicki Fagg
Address of college:	Willesden Centre, Dudden Hill Lane, London NW10 2XD
Telephone number:	0208 208 5000
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Chair of governors:	Gerry Davis
Unique reference number:	130429
Name of lead inspector:	Margaret Swift, ALI
Dates of inspection:	29 January - 2 February 2007

Background of the organisation

1. The College of North West London is a large general further education (FE) college situated in the London borough of Brent. The college has three main centres. These are at Willesden, Kilburn and Wembley. The largest centre is at Willesden, with around half the college learners. All Brent secondary schools have sixth forms and there is a high participation rate post-16. The college mission is to lead in the provision of knowledge and skills for work, in support of London's economic success.
2. The college offers training in all subject sector categories identified by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), apart from land-based provision. The areas of learning with the largest number of learners are foundation studies, construction, engineering and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). The college offers courses from entry level to level 4 and there is a small provision for GCE A level delivered through a direct partnership with the Islamic College of Advanced Studies. The college provides learning in the community and a significant number of work-based learning programmes.
3. The college enrolls over 13,000 learners each year. In 2004/05, there were 7,201 full-time equivalent (FTE) learners. Those aged 16-18 numbered 1,718 (FTE) and those aged over 19 numbered 5,483 (FTE). In 2005/06, 57% of learners were from ethnic minority groups, which is close to the profile in Brent of 54.7%. Eighty percent of economic activity in Brent is in the service sector with around one third being distribution, hotels and restaurants. The remainder is in manufacturing and construction. Unemployment in Brent in November 2006 was high at 4.3% compared to 3.2% in the rest of London and 2.5% nationally. The borough of Brent is listed as having one of the highest levels of deprivation in England.
4. The college has three Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) in construction and engineering and one in retail. Two of the CoVEs are in collaboration with other colleges and providers. The college is a partner with schools and work-based learning providers as part of the Brent 14-19 Forum.

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 and social care; construction, planning and built environment; information and communication technology; hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism; art, media and publishing; English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).

Summary of grades awarded

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

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

Curriculum areas

Health and social care	Good: grade 2
Construction, planning and built environment	Good: grade 2
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Satisfactory: grade 3
Hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism	Good: grade 2
Art, media and publishing	Good: grade 2
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	Good: grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: grade 2

6. The overall effectiveness of the college is good. The proportion of learners who successfully complete their courses has risen significantly, particularly over the last year. Success rates are now good at levels 1 and 3. Most learners who seek to improve their language, literacy or numeracy skills are successful. In vocational areas, most learners develop good practical skills that prepare them effectively for the world of work. The proportion of apprentices who complete all aspects of their training has risen and is now satisfactory.
7. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The college has made good progress in reducing the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, and is taking appropriate steps to raise the proportion of lessons that are good or better. The best lessons are characterised by careful planning, activities that interest and engage learners, and careful attention to individual needs. In the weaker lessons, many of these attributes are absent.
8. The college's record on social and educational inclusion is outstanding. Much emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of the community and employers in and around Brent, and the college's responsiveness to the needs of schools, employers and individuals, through its provision of a wide and flexible range of courses, is excellent. The diversity of the learners and staff at the college is celebrated, and the college provides a safe and harmonious atmosphere in which to learn.
9. Guidance and support for learners are good. Great care is taken to ensure that learners choose the right course at the right level. Once at college, learners receive very effective pastoral support from both their personal tutors and teachers. Learners appreciate the time taken to support them in their studies, and the range of welfare and advice services available. Learners' progress is carefully monitored in most curriculum areas.
10. Leadership and management are good. A determined strategy to raise standards throughout the college has begun to pay dividends, with a significant improvement in the college's performance being evident. Quality assurance is good, and the rigour with which policies to improve performance further are being implemented demonstrate that the upward trend in learners' success rates is sustainable.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

11. The college demonstrates good capacity to improve. Leaders' actions to change some aspects of the culture of the college have resulted in a much clearer focus on the importance of ensuring that learners achieve their qualifications.

Learners' achievements have improved significantly. Managers use information well to assess the performance of courses and bring about improvements where necessary. Quality assurance procedures are increasingly effective. The quality of teaching and learning is improving. Procedures to ensure that learners are on the right course and receive good support are effective. Improvements in managers' skills have led to improved accountability for performance without sacrificing autonomy and innovation. The college recognises that its financial situation presents a potential risk to its improvement strategy.

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 key weaknesses identified at the last inspection in 2004. Provision in three curriculum areas, and in work-based learning, has improved. Success rates for learners aged 16-18 at level 3 have risen to the national average. The quality of teaching and learning is improving. The property strategy will result in improved accommodation for some learners. Although there are signs that punctuality to lessons is improving, overall attendance remains low. The use of management information to inform decision making is increasingly effective. Strategies to improve learners' achievements are having an impact, and include the development of a coherent Skills for Life policy to improve learners' basic skills.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- the vocational skills of the learners
- the contribution of non-teaching staff to the success of the college
- outstanding responsiveness to employers and the community
- outstanding social and educational inclusion
- the good support for learners
- the quality of leadership and management at all levels
- the consultative ethos of the college and the safe and welcoming environment
- the specialist resources.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- level 2 success rates for all age groups
- learners' attendance at lessons
- the quality of teaching and learning in those areas where it is satisfactory
- target setting and the use of individual learning plans
- meeting the individual needs of learners in lessons
- some poor accommodation
- improving opportunities for learners to eat healthily whilst at college.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Good: grade 2

13. Achievements and standards are good for adult learners and satisfactory for learners aged 16-18. Inspection judgements were based on official data for the years 2003/04 and 2004/05 and interim data for 2005/06. Success rates for long courses have improved at most levels across both age groups in 2005/06. The success rates for adult learners at levels 1 and 3 are significantly above the national average. Success rates at level 2 have steadily improved over the last three years and are now around the national average. Success rates for short courses for adults have improved but remain below the national average. For 16-18 year olds, success rates at levels 1 and 3 are above the national average. However, the success rate at level 2 is still 6% below the national average. The success rates for learners aged 14-16 is high and progression into training, education or employment is excellent.
14. Overall success rates in work-based learning have steadily improved. Advanced apprenticeships remain low at 26% but apprenticeships have improved to 54% compared to a national average of 53%. European Social Fund (ESF) programmes perform extremely well with high success rates.
15. Achievement rates for long courses for all age groups are at or above the national average. There has been significant improvement in the retention rates for adult learners on long courses. Retention rates present a mixed picture for learners aged 16-18. At levels 1 and 3, the rates are above the national average but have declined at level 3. At level 2, the retention rate is 6% below the national average.
16. Value added (VA) and distance travelled data is not routinely used across all areas of the college; this was a weakness at the last inspection. There is a very small cohort of learners on AS and A2 programmes and VA data up to 2004/05 show they perform at the expected level.
17. Most learners enjoy their lessons and the standard of their work is good in the majority of areas. In English as a second language (ESOL) programmes, the language, vocational and study skills of learners aged 16-18 are developed well in accountancy, carpentry and hairdressing. Learners on construction courses develop good practical skills and complete complex practical tasks to a very high standard. The achievement of key skills has improved but still remains low. While college data indicates improvement in attendance, during the inspection it was below average.

Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

18. The college self-assessment report judges the overall quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory, and inspectors agree. Progress has been made in

addressing some of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection but some remain, including health and safety issues in ILT and insufficient target setting to inform learning.

19. There has been an improvement in the good grades for lesson observations completed by the college in 2006/07. However, joint observations carried out by inspectors with college observers revealed differences in the quality of lesson observation judgements. The college's lesson observation records do not clearly identify the extent to which over or under grading has occurred.
20. The college effectively analyses its lesson observations to identify staff development needs. The focus of staff development and training has been to improve active learning in the classroom and to help teachers better meet the individual needs of learners. This has been successful in some but not all areas.
21. The information from initial assessment and target setting is not always used effectively in lessons to meet learners' individual needs. In the best lessons, new initial assessment tools have identified the level at which individual learners are performing and they are then provided with learning activities that are appropriate to their individual needs. In the weaker lessons, teachers are failing to recognise learners' individual needs and often plan and provide inappropriate learning experiences and activities. Good teaching and learning in many vocational courses help learners acquire skills that will be of significant benefit to them in the work place.
22. Assessment of learners' work is completed quickly and grading is in line with awarding body standards. However, teachers' written feedback does not always show learners how to improve. Internal verification is satisfactory.
23. Overall, the college provides an outstanding response to the needs of learners, employers and the local community. Its curriculum is closely aligned with its mission to provide learners with employment skills and opportunities. Curriculum breadth has been improved, particularly at level 1. There is excellent progression from level 1 to level 4 in most curriculum areas and progression to higher education is good.
24. There are outstanding links with a wide range of local, regional and national employers. An excellent range of training and assessment is undertaken on employers' premises, including Skills for Life programmes, at times to suit employees' shift patterns. There are close links across surrounding boroughs, and outstanding links with Brent schools and with Brent Adult and Community Education Service.
25. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is outstanding. Many learners have been successfully recruited from disadvantaged and non-traditional learner groups. The college has very good links with black and minority ethnic groups from business and the local community, including a very successful partnership with a local Islamic college. There is excellent provision

- for the needs of visually impaired learners. Learning programmes are flexible, responsive and accessible for all learners.
26. The enrichment programme has been enlarged significantly since the last inspection, and offers a good range of activities. Enrichment programmes are well managed, well publicised and popular. Work experience opportunities have been increased at the college, especially for 16-18 year-old learners.
 27. Advice, guidance and support for learners are good. Staff in the area are well qualified. At initial interviews, learners get clear guidance to help them choose the most appropriate course. All learners take an initial assessment test and receive clear information about their support needs. In keeping with its mission, the college has a strong focus on learners' employability, and works with Connexions and other relevant bodies to identify potential jobs.
 28. Learners receive good support. Learners with disabilities and learning difficulties are particularly well supported. Support for part-time learners has significantly improved, and support staff are now available from 7am to 9pm, providing a flexible service to match learners' attendance hours. Success rates for learners who receive additional learning support are high.
 29. Induction arrangements are satisfactory for full- and part-time learners. Tutorial arrangements have been improved and existing best practice shared across curriculum areas. Group tutorials are based around a range of themes, with clear guidance for tutors on ways to approach discussions and develop learners' understandings of topics.
 30. Individual learners' progress, including progress of work-based learners, is reviewed regularly in most areas. Targets are established early and monitored during tutorials and learner reviews. However, individual learning plans (ILPs) are not yet used consistently across the college. In some cases, ILPs and progress reviews are not sufficiently precise and the actions needed to achieve targets are not clear.

Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

31. Leadership and management are good. The college has a clear strategy, shared by all staff, to meet the needs of local employers and the community, with a particular focus on those who are socially or educationally disadvantaged. In recent times, this strategy has been supplemented by a concerted drive, led by the principal and senior leaders, to raise standards. The significant rise in learners' success rates over the last year is grounded in secure improvements both to the quality of leadership and management at all levels, and to the quality of provision.
32. Quality assurance procedures are rigorous, and are used effectively to closely monitor and improve key aspects of the college's provision. The comprehensive scheme to judge the quality of teaching and learning is increasingly being used

to improve classroom practice. Management information systems provide much valuable data both on individual learners' progress and on the performance of courses and curriculum areas. This information is increasingly being used to good effect to analyse the causes of underperformance and identify solutions. Self-assessment reports, both of the college's performance as a whole and of the contribution made by different areas, are evaluative and broadly accurate, although some aspects of the reports are overly descriptive. Curriculum management is good in most areas, and teachers are increasingly accountable for the performance of their learners. Management training has been particularly successful in developing leaders' skills.

33. Staff are both well qualified and well supported. They enjoy working at the college. Communications are good, and senior leaders have fostered a strong and consultative ethos with both staff and learners. The college invests heavily in staff development, which is clearly linked to strategic priorities and to the findings of lesson observations. However, the outcomes of staff appraisals are not always recorded and used to shape development opportunities.
34. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Some accommodation is very good; some is poor. The college's ambitious property strategy is intended to lead to significant improvements, and there are longer terms plans to build a flagship site next to the Wembley stadium. Learning resources are good, with significant investment in information technology that is increasingly being used to good effect.
35. The college's approach to equal opportunities is very good. It fulfils all its legal obligations in respect of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2002, and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Much good work has been done in promoting equality and diversity through college-wide events that celebrate the diversity of learners and staff. Policies and procedures for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults are in place, but most staff have yet to receive appropriate training in the child protection arrangements. Arrangements for ensuring staff are suitable to work with young people and vulnerable adults are secure.
36. Governors have relevant expertise, are supportive of the college's mission, and are increasingly diligent in supporting senior leaders in their desire to improve learners' outcomes further. Financial management and control are good. However, the college's long-running campaign to be funded at the same level as inner London colleges has so far been unsuccessful and this, combined with changes to funding arrangements, has left the college in a difficult financial position. Managers recognise that serious action may be needed to reduce expenditure. Currently, the college offers good value for money.

Curriculum area inspections

Health and social care

Good: grade 2

Context

37. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in health and social care and early years at levels 1, 2 and 3 for learners aged 16-18 and adults. Courses at level 1 include the option to combine study in care with basic skills or English as a second language. There are part-time courses in counselling and art therapy and there are eight learners on an NVQ programme. The majority of learners are adults. At the time of the inspection there were 684 learners. Seventy percent of learners are adults and 30% are aged 16-18.

STRENGTHS

- good progress made by learners
- well planned and enthusiastic teaching
- wide variety of up-to-date resources for learning
- good progression into employment and further education and training
- effective management and development of the curriculum.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low retention rates on two-year courses
- insufficient employer involvement in the development of the curriculum.

Achievements and standards

38. Achievements and standards are good. Standards are rising and they are generally above those attained in similar colleges. Learners participate enthusiastically in lessons and their behaviour is very good. Learners enjoy being at college. They produce oral and written work which shows good progress. Learners are proud to show what they have learned. Learners in a key skills numeracy class were delighted to grasp the importance of the value of the number being more significant than the size in a lesson on decimals. Retention on two year programmes for learners aged 16-18 is low. There have been poor success rates on one NVQ programme but this has now been closed.

Quality of provision

39. Teaching and learning are good. Well planned lessons ensure there is productive use of learners' time. Good links are made to work experience and learners' home backgrounds; for example, a lesson on making play dough referred to kneading bread, dumplings and chapattis. Classrooms are very well equipped but teachers do not use the interactive whiteboards effectively. Both the book stock and the resources on the virtual learning environment are up-to-

date and extensive. They are well used by learners. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are good.

40. There is a wide range of courses in health, care and early years for learners aged 16-18 and adults. Many learners progress from one course to the next as their skills and confidence develop. Progression into employment and higher education is also good. There is insufficient influence on the design and delivery of the curriculum from employers.
41. Guidance and support for learners are good. Learners are well supported by their teachers and tutors. They work closely with advice and guidance staff at the college and with outside agencies. Learners are well informed about the support available to them. They appreciate the emphasis the college places on working with learners to overcome barriers to learning. Support in lessons for learners with additional needs is effective.

Leadership and management

42. Leadership and management are good. The curriculum has been carefully developed to attract learners and encourage their success. Self-assessment is thorough and improvement planning is successful. Actions to improve attendance, punctuality and retention are beginning to be effective. Teamwork is strong and learners are the central focus of meetings and review. Staff and senior managers have a clear focus on learners' achievements. All staff value the staff development system which allows them to practice and improve their skills with support from peers and expert colleagues. Equality and diversity is promoted and supported throughout the curriculum area.

Construction, planning and built environment

Good: grade 2

Context

43. The college offers courses ranging from entry to degree level in craft, technical and professional occupations in construction and building services engineering. Attendance is by full-time, part-time day, part-time evening or block release study. At the time of inspection, there were 2,547 learners, of whom 76 were aged 14-16, 453 were aged 16-18 and 2,018 were aged over 19. There are 161 apprentices and 51 advanced apprentices. There are 227 learners on the On-Site Training and Assessment programme (OSAT), which is a European Social Fund (ESF) programme. Approximately 70% of learners are on building services engineering courses.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates for building services engineering courses
- very high success rates on the OSAT programme
- good teaching and learning
- good specialist resources in building engineering services
- wide range of provision that effectively meets employer needs
- good support for learners
- effective leadership and management.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low success rates on intermediate construction courses
- low framework achievement rates on advanced apprenticeships
- ineffective target setting in work-based learner reviews.

Achievements and standards

44. Achievements and standards are good. Success rates for building services engineering courses are high. The success rate on the OSAT programme is very high at 89%. Success rates are low for advanced apprentices at 28% and for the intermediate construction awards. Learners develop good practical skills that are valued by employers and meet the needs of industry. The overall standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Some learners were observed undertaking complex practical tasks to a very high standard.

Quality of provision

45. Teaching and learning are good. In practical lessons, teachers provide clear demonstrations that are effective in guiding learners in the successful development of craft skills. In some theory lessons, teachers present their subject in a clear and concise manner using a range of teaching styles appropriate to learners' needs. Specialist resources in building services engineering are good and elsewhere in construction crafts they are satisfactory.

The three CoVEs have made a significant contribution to improving specialist equipment designed to industry standards. This has enabled the college to offer courses in highly specialised subjects in building services.

46. A wide and comprehensive range of courses is offered which effectively meets the skills needs of employers and learners in the sector. Courses allow learners to progress from entry to degree level and progression between levels is good. In 2005/06, 57% of level 2 learners progressed to level 3 courses.
47. Support for learners is good. Tutors provide good support for learners through planned tutorials and assessment feedback. Additional learning support is effectively identified through the initial assessment process and ranges from additional basic skills lessons to dedicated classroom support and ESOL support. Target-setting in work-based learner reviews is ineffective. Learner reviews include effective monitoring of progress but targets set for learners are insufficiently detailed and do not help learners to progress effectively.

Leadership and management

48. Leadership and management of the curriculum area, the CoVEs and work-based learning are good. Through a process of action planning and target setting, managers and staff are clear about their roles and what needs to be done to bring about improvements, for example, a level 1 course was introduced this year to help improve retention rates. Managers and course teams regularly review progress and monitor targets to ensure they are met. The self-assessment process is robust.

Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

49. The college offers full-time courses including BTEC first and national diplomas for information technology (IT) practitioners, BTEC introductory diploma for IT at work and A-level computing. Part-time courses include information and communication technology (ICT) units, with options leading to full qualifications. There are 1,580 learners, of whom 260 are full-time and 86% are aged over 19.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates for adult learners in 2006
- good teaching and learning strategies to engage and motivate learners
- broad range of courses.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- poor achievement of high grades on full-time vocational courses
- cramped workshops and some noisy classrooms
- insufficient feedback on assessed work
- weak monitoring of learners' progress.

Achievements and standards

50. Achievements and standards are satisfactory overall. Success rates on level 1 short unitised IT courses and on level 2 and 3 courses for adult learners were high in 2005/06. Achievement of higher grades for learners on long vocational courses has been significantly below the national average for the past three years. The success rate on BTEC National Certificate was below the national average in 2005/06 and progress is still slow on this course. There is poor progression from Year 1 to Year 2 on level 3 full-time courses.
51. Learners make good progress in their practical assignments. They are able to explain confidently the meaning of terms such as 'hyperlink' and 'story boards' in web site design. Level 3 learners are able to identify three levels of normalisation in relational databases and provide reasons for their choices. Large monitors and audio technologies are used by visually impaired learners to enable them to access ICT courses and achieve very good test results.

Quality of provision

52. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use a good range of active learning strategies to engage and motivate learners. Learners work with interest and enthusiasm on practical activities designed to develop critical thinking. Teachers provide a high level of support during practical activities, make timely interventions and use questions well to check understanding. In one good

lesson, learners built web design diagrams using a wireless mouse and interactive whiteboard.

53. Some practical workshop accommodation is cramped and noisy, with computers too close together, affecting learners' ability to make notes. Partitions between computer rooms create noise, reducing learners' concentration. On a significant proportion of assessed work, teachers provide insufficient guidance for learners on how they can improve their work.
54. A good range of programmes offers progression from entry level through to foundation degree. Courses include professional qualifications, programmes for pupils aged 14-16 new to this country, and dedicated ICT provision for women, learners with learning difficulties, unemployed adults, ESOL learners and the visually impaired.
55. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Initial assessment results are not routinely used to inform individual learning plans (ILPs). Many are not updated with review dates and do not inform learners of their current progress. Targets set in tutorials are insufficiently detailed or measurable and do not challenge learners or help them to achieve their potential.

Leadership and management

56. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Strategies to address retention and achievement have had a positive impact on success rates in 2005/06. Regular staff meetings focus on retention, progress and attendance. Improved induction and team-building events have significantly improved retention and attendance for level 3 learners. The quality of a significant number of course files is poor and course reviews are insufficiently evaluative. Monitoring of learners' progress is weak. Documents maintained by the course leader are not readily available to other teaching staff or the curriculum manager and most do not record the grades achieved by the learners. Tutorial records contain little information.

Hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism

Good: grade 2

Context

57. The college offers a range of courses in leisure, travel, tourism and hospitality at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. There are 203 learners in this area; 79 aged 16-18 and 124 aged over 19. There are 73 learners at level 1, 105 at level 2 and 23 at level 3. The college also attracts learners aged 14-16 in partnership with local schools on a hospitality programme and work placements are provided in the college Tower Restaurant and travel agency.

STRENGTHS

- good development of learners' practical skills
- high success rates on most courses
- good partnerships with schools, employers and community groups
- good curriculum management in hospitality.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- insufficient attention to individual learning needs in lessons
- insufficient use of target grades and value added data.

Achievements and standards

58. Achievements and standards are good. Success rates are high on most courses and the success rates at levels 1 and 2 on leisure and hospitality courses have improved to a satisfactory level. Learners' practical skills are good and well developed. Learners on hospitality courses run the successful college restaurant and the college travel agency is staffed by travel and tourism learners. The standard of learners' written work is satisfactory. Poor use of target grades and value added data do not inform the learners of their potential. Learners enjoy their lessons and attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

59. Teaching and learning are good. In the better lessons, teachers effectively link the development of practical skills to industrial standards. Teachers plan their lessons well, with frequent checks on learning. In hospitality courses, learners achieve well with high expectations set by teachers. Patisserie learners keep detailed digital photographic records of their successful practical work. In a significant minority of lessons, insufficient attention is paid to individual learning needs. Some lessons are not sufficiently challenging for learners and in some lessons, learners of different abilities are not encouraged to develop their own ideas. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are good. Feedback from staff helps learners to improve their work. Learners develop good commercial expertise in an industry standard travel agency and leisure learners complete voluntary sports coaching in local leisure centres.

60. Learners receive good support from their tutors. The literacy, numeracy and other additional needs of all learners are assessed accurately at enrolment. Learning and language support in class are very effective and course tutors contribute to learners' success by careful monitoring and assessment.
61. The range of courses offered is satisfactory. Progression rates are good in hospitality and travel. Good partnerships exist between the college, local schools, employers and community groups. Pupils from local schools successfully move onto level 1 hospitality courses at the college. All learners complete work placements with local businesses and gain valuable employability skills. Local and residential visits are used effectively to bring greater industrial relevance to courses and learners enjoy this aspect of their courses. Good on-line learning resources are benefiting learners by making learning resources more accessible.

Leadership and management

62. Leadership and management are good in hospitality and satisfactory in leisure, travel and tourism. Effective leadership has led to improvements in success rates on all courses. There is a clear focus on raising standards through comprehensive course review procedures. Quality assurance of teaching and learning is effective and self-assessment grading is accurate. Most staff have up-to-date commercial experience providing learners with current relevant industry knowledge. Mentors provide effective support for new staff.

Arts, media and publishing

Good: grade 2

Context

63. The School of the Arts has three curriculum areas: fashion and creative crafts; media, design and art; and performing arts. Full-time and part-time courses are offered from entry level to level 3 in art and design, media, performing arts, fashion, clothing crafts, home interiors, graphic design and photography. At the time of the inspection, there were 387 learners enrolled within the school. Of these, the majority were adults. There were 21 learners studying at entry level, 156 at level 1, 200 at level 2 and 171 at level 3.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on most courses
- good integration of information learning technology (ILT) into teaching and learning
- good development of independent learning skills
- excellent promotion of diversity and citizenship through the curriculum.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ineffective use of management information to promote improvements
- uninspiring and untidy facilities in Fashion.

Achievements and standards

64. Success rates are high on most courses. On many level 2 and 3 courses, the success rates are significantly above the national average. For example, learner success rates have improved consistently on access to communication and media, access to art and design, GCE photography, certificate in home interiors and BTEC first diploma in media. The standard of work produced is satisfactory. Media and performing arts learners are articulate and work effectively in groups. Visual arts learners produce lively, detailed research material using primary sources in central London.

Quality of provision

65. Teaching and learning are good. The best teaching and learning is well planned and learners make good progress. As identified in the self-assessment report, ILT is particularly well integrated into teaching and learning. Interactive whiteboards, Powerpoint and computer generated images are used routinely by teachers and learning materials are posted on the virtual learning environment. ILT resources are available in workshops and studios and are used extensively.
66. Learners develop good independent learning skills at all levels. They work independently on their individual ideas within and outside of lessons. Year 10 pupils from a local school completed a challenging project on trend prediction

which required extensive research and critical analysis skills. Pupils' sketch books included thorough primary and secondary research gathered from exhibitions, magazines, newspapers, books and the internet.

67. The range of provision is good. The courses offered enable learners, many of whom have limited previous experience, to progress to level 3 and gain access to higher education or employment. There is excellent promotion of diversity and citizenship through the curriculum. Project work provides opportunities for learners to explore their own and other cultures. Contextual studies are used very effectively to explore cultural history. The British element of this is used to provide the political and social background of the UK and give a context to citizenship. Learners produce a college magazine with contributions covering cultural and religious issues. The personal experiences of immigrants and asylum seekers are regularly featured, highlighting the very poignant stories of learners and their responses to living and studying at the college.
68. The support for learners is good. Tutors have detailed knowledge of their interests, abilities, aspirations and achievements. Comprehensive reports on learners' progress are regularly produced.

Leadership and management

69. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The curriculum is well organised and courses are well managed. However, management information is not used to promote quality improvements and prioritise actions. The studios and workshops used for visual arts programmes have limited visual reference material and very little of the learners' work is displayed. The facilities in Fashion are uninspiring and untidy. The environment does not reflect the industry to which learners hope to progress and fails to establish good working practice. The self-assessment report was largely accurate.

English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

Good: grade 2

Context

70. There are 2,794 learners on English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programmes. Courses are delivered at three college sites and three community centres. Courses range from pre-entry to level 2 and are taught throughout the day and evening. In addition, there are nine full-time courses which combine ESOL with subjects such as IT, science and construction. The college also supports learners with language needs on vocational courses, such as care and engineering. In 2005/06, 17% of the learners were aged under 19.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on one-year courses
- good development of language skills in vocational contexts
- very good range of learning opportunities
- good progression between courses and levels
- good leadership and management.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- insufficient use of assessment to inform target setting and planning for learning.

Achievements and standards

71. In 2005/06, success rates on entry 2, entry 3 and full-time courses for learners aged 16-18 were good. Learners who have a disability or learning difficulty and received support had better success rates than those of their peers. In many lessons, learners develop good language and communication skills that are relevant to their needs. For example, in one lesson, learners practised how to describe their health and make an appointment with the doctor. Learners enjoy and value their learning.

Quality of provision

72. The quality of provision is good overall and teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers use the learners' own experiences well, for example, to learn vocabulary for cooking. However, in too many lessons, diagnostic and on-going assessment is not used consistently to inform target setting and to monitor progress of individual learners over time. Few language targets are measurable. This has an impact on lesson planning and classroom delivery, particularly in the weaker lessons, as teachers do not anticipate language needs as they arise during the lessons. There is also insufficient feedback on spoken English in many lessons.

73. Learners develop good language skills in the vocational context. For example, in construction lessons, they learn the names for tools and how they are used. Learners also develop good study and numeracy skills. Learners on full-time courses are well prepared for their work placement. They enjoy learning new skills and several have been offered part-time jobs.
74. The college offers a very good range of learning opportunities. There are classes in the community with crèche facilities. Learners are able to progress from ESOL classes to courses which combine English language learning with vocational subjects. Progression between courses and levels is good. At the end of 2005/06, nearly half of learners on ESOL programmes stayed at the college to study at a higher level. Many learners progress to classes that combine English with other subjects or to vocational courses with language support.
75. Personal support and guidance for learners are good. Tutors give advice on topics such as progression, health and safety, education and citizenship to enable learners to participate fully in society.

Leadership and management

76. Leadership and management are good. The Skills for Life policy is implemented effectively. Support for teachers is provided through a teachers' club where advanced practitioners lead workshops to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The impact of these initiatives on provision has been positive. All but one weakness from the last inspection has been rectified. The self-assessment report is accurate.

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	1357	50	59	-9	2682	56	59	-3
	04/05	1463	48	64	-16	2726	63	62	1
	05/06	943	71			2781	77		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	67	42	63	-21	10	50	54	-4
	04/05	72	61	64	-3	24	58		
	05/06	31	42			3	33		
NVQs	03/04	40	70	61	9	81	69	66	3
	04/05	62	57	65	-8	91	62	71	-9
	05/06	53	72			67	60		
Other	03/04	1250	50	59	-9	2591	56	58	-2
	04/05	1329	47	61	-14	2611	63	61	2
	05/06	859	72			2711	77		

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	1093	42	56	-14	2333	45	54	-9
	04/05	1071	45	61	-16	2146	53	60	-7
	05/06	942	55			2215	58		
GCSEs	03/04	155	70	64	6	152	70	57	13
	04/05	117	77	65	12	151	67	63	4
	05/06	145	70			176	86		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	83	61	60	1	19	63	56	7
	04/05	80	51	66	-15	17	71	62	9
	05/06	34	65			17	82		
NVQs	03/04	170	35	51	-16	660	42	54	-12
	04/05	134	45	56	-11	495	54	62	-8
	05/06	117	52			592	49		
Other	03/04	685	36	53	-17	1502	44	53	-9
	04/05	740	40	58	-18	1483	52	57	-5
	05/06	646	52			1430	58		

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	650	53	61	-8	1343	52	53	-1
	04/05	484	70	67	3	1195	55	57	-2
	05/06	513	70			1211	68		
A/A2 Levels	03/04	101	74	84	-10	8	88	69	19
	04/05	107	85	85	0	21	71	73	-2
	05/06	101	96			17	88		
AS Levels	03/04	314	50	60	-10	42	33	50	-17
	04/05	197	71	64	7	31	55	53	2
	05/06	179	78			33	91		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	125	54	50	4	72	44	43	1
	04/05	32	56	59	-3	40	60	51	9
	05/06	25	56			14	50		
NVQs	03/04	21	71	51	20	261	49	48	1
	04/05	17	71	53	18	240	45	54	-9
	05/06	16	69			268	63		
Other	03/04	89	33	51	-18	960	54	54	0
	04/05	131	58	56	2	863	57	56	1
	05/06	192	52			749	67		

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2004/05 to 2005/06

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2004/05	Apprenticeship	30	27	38	50	50
	Advanced	22	23	34	41	48
2005/06	Apprenticeship	123	54	53	63	58
	Advanced	19	26	44	47	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	36	6	22	25	29
	Advanced	22	18	21	36	31
2005/06	Apprenticeship	140	26	33	37	38
	Advanced	24	17	27	33	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'