

# Kingston Maurward College

## Inspection Report 4 – 8 June 2007

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## Background information

## Inspection judgements

### Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 – outstanding*
- *grade 2 – good*
- *grade 3 – satisfactory*
- *grade 4 – inadequate*

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

### Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body; and where appropriate the previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits or quality monitoring inspection; and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:

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

## Description of the provider

1. Kingston Maurward College is a specialist land-based college, set in 750 acres of farmland, parkland, gardens and conservation areas and located two miles from Dorchester, Dorset. The local area is largely rural, with the highest concentration of population in the south-east of the county. The area is characterised by a relatively low-wage economy, and the proportion of the population of retirement age is noticeably higher than the average for England. The college works closely with its local community to provide opportunities in businesses which will help to sustain the rural economy.
2. The college is the only land-based college in Dorset and offers courses in 6 of the 15 sector subject areas. There is a diverse curriculum of vocational education and training in land-based subjects including agriculture, countryside and food, animal care and veterinary nursing, equine, horticulture, arboriculture and floristry, outdoor education and sports leadership as well as provision in business administration, information and communication technology (ICT), and education and training. It offers work-based learning in agriculture, horticulture and animal care, engineering and manufacturing technologies, leisure, travel and tourism and business and administration.
3. The curriculum extends from foundation level to higher education for full-time and part-time students. The majority of enrolments in 2005/06 were for adult learners. Just over 40% of all enrolments were on entry and level 1 courses, one-third on level 2 and 11% on level 3 courses. The remainder were on other provision or higher education programmes. While the number of enrolments is higher for students aged over 19, full-time equivalent numbers are broadly balanced between adults and students aged 16 to 18. The college works with schools across the county to provide an increasing range of vocational options for pupils aged 14 to 16. The great majority of students are white British, reflecting the local population.
4. The college's mission is 'as Dorset's College of the Countryside, to provide inspiring and challenging education and training opportunities to equip our learners with the knowledge and skills to succeed in life and work'.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: grade 2
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Good: contributory grade 2</i>

## Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: grade 2

5. The quality of provision is good overall, with some outstanding features. Strong leadership and management have brought about significant improvements since the last inspection. Achievement and standards are good, and very good for students aged 16 to 18. Success rates for long and short courses have improved year on year and are above the average for similar colleges. Success rates for adult students are high at level 1, but achievement rates on level 2 and 3 courses are below average. The management of work-based learning is much improved and success rates are above average. Whilst learners on Entry to Employment (E2E) courses achieve course objectives, progression rates to employment are low. Provision for students aged 14 to 16 is excellent with very high rates of achievement and progression.
6. Teaching and learning are good. The college is successful in providing students with the practical skills, knowledge and qualifications required by employers. Practical teaching is very good and teachers support individuals well in lessons. However, in theory lessons, or where there are larger groups, teaching does not always meet the different needs and abilities of all students.
7. The approach to social and educational inclusion is good. The college successfully includes under-represented groups. The college's approach to meeting the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The curriculum offer is comprehensive with clear progression routes from level 1 to level 4 and is characterised by highly effective partnerships with local schools, employers and community groups. The diverse curriculum enables students to develop good skills and acquire specialist qualifications, closely matched to industry requirements.
8. Students receive good support and guidance and pastoral care is very good. Progress is closely monitored although targets set for students are not always sufficiently precise to help them to improve.
9. Leadership and management are good. Senior managers and governors have a very clear vision for the college, and governors are highly effective in monitoring college performance. While self-assessment processes are generally effective in monitoring performance and helping to bring further improvements, findings from lesson observations are not used sufficiently to inform judgements. The promotion of equality of opportunity is good but

the college acknowledges that there is more to do on promoting race equality throughout the provision.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

10. The college regularly reviews its performance and is relentless in seeking improvements. Governors and managers are focused on making the college outstanding. They have clear, realistic objectives for improvement and can explain clearly how these objectives will be achieved. Self-assessment reports in previous years have been thorough and comprehensive. The action plans to implement improvements were rigorous and very detailed. Progress towards achievement of objectives is regularly checked. Success rates have risen steadily and are good. The self-assessment report this year was produced in a different format and was not sufficiently detailed.

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

11. The college has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The achievements and management of work-based learning have improved significantly. The college has constructed an impressive new learning resource centre and improved temporary classroom accommodation. Pass rates on short courses are now above average. The availability, quality and use of management information have improved. There are now formal opportunities to share good practice. The college has yet to address fully weaknesses identified in target setting.

Key strengths

- high success rates for students aged 14 to 16 and 16 to 18
- much improved and good success rates in work-based learning
- very good practical teaching, which develops good skills for employment
- highly effective partnerships with schools, employers and community groups
- outstanding curriculum which is very responsive to local needs
- excellent use of commercial activities to enrich the curriculum and develop work-related skills
- very good pastoral support and additional learning support
- strong leadership and management which has brought about many improvements
- some very good specialist facilities and resources
- highly effective governors who provide appropriate support and challenge to secure further improvements.

## Areas for improvement

*The college should address:*

- the achievement rates for adults on level 2 and 3 courses and progression rates for E2E learners
- the meeting of students' individual needs in some lessons
- the consistency and focus of lesson observation records and the use of findings in self-assessment
- extending the promotion of race equality across the college.



## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

Good: grade 2

12. Achievement and standards are good, and very good for students aged 16 to 18. Success rates for long courses have been above the average for similar colleges for each of the last three years. They are above average for students aged 16 to 18 at all levels. There has been considerable improvement at level 3 where success rates have improved from below average in 2004/05 to above average in 2005/06.
13. Success rates for adult learners are high on level 1 courses. Whilst success rates were above average at level 2 and around the average for level 3, achievement rates on level 2 and 3 courses were below average in 2005/06. Achievement and progression rates for students aged 14 to 16 are excellent. Students in receipt of additional learning support achieve very well.
14. The college has made significant improvements in work-based learning. Whilst success rates for full frameworks declined a little in 2005/06, they remained above average. College data for 2006/07 show considerable further improvement and early indications are that success rates will be well above average.
15. Learners on E2E courses achieve many of their objectives and gain useful qualifications but, as acknowledged in the self-assessment report, progression to employment is still too low. Managers are developing a good range of strategies to improve this and learners are receiving good support to help them move into employment.
16. Most students make good progress at college and clearly enjoy their work. The college makes very good use of its commercial work and links with employers to develop students' practical skills and prepare them for employment. A wide range of short courses in areas such as operating farm equipment and use of pesticides successfully equips students with specific skills and qualifications relevant to land-based industries.
17. Key skills success rates are well above average. Many students develop good team-working skills and benefit from well planned work experience opportunities. Many written assignments, for example, in equine and animal care, are of a high standard, thoroughly researched and well presented. Students are articulate and confident, and parents commented that the college is very effective in helping to raise their self-esteem.

## Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

18. Teaching and learning are good. Students learn in a mutually respectful environment and enjoy their lessons. Lesson plans are detailed and the best plans include clear strategies for meeting the individual learning needs of students.
19. Good and outstanding lessons fully involve students in all activities. Imaginative ways are used to stimulate students' thinking, understanding of topics and development of skills. Practice and theory are effectively interwoven and there is good checking of learning throughout lessons. In a practical equine lesson, students were divided into groups of judges and competitors of dressage. Their learning was effectively reinforced by students identifying strengths and weaknesses and grading each performance. The quality and range of learning resources are good and very good use is made of countryside resources in practical teaching. In weaker lessons, students' individual learning is not checked frequently enough and their individual learning needs are not met.
20. All key skills teaching is appropriately related to students' vocational learning. Students take on-line tests by using portable technology flexibly at a variety of locations, including outdoor areas. Assessment planning and internal verification are clear. Mobile telephones are sometimes used to record video or photographic evidence conveniently in outdoor locations.
21. Vocational assignments have been redesigned to capture all common evidence in different units. Assessment is now more efficient and the number of assignments has reduced. Most written feedback provided by teachers is evaluative and helps students to improve their performance well but some is too brief or unspecific to be useful. The tracking of students' progress towards achieving their qualifications is good and records are updated promptly.
22. The identification of additional learning needs for full-time students takes place at a very early stage of their course. Appropriate support is provided quickly and almost all students identified as needing support take it up. Communication between learning support staff, students and teachers about the nature and level of support is usually good. Additional learning support is also appropriately available to part-time adult students upon request or through referral by their teachers.
23. The college communicates effectively with parents, through providing relevant advice and guidance at local schools during options evenings in

Year 9 and inviting them to attend parents' evenings and other events at college. Parents of students aged 14 to 19 receive an annual report about their children's progress.

24. The college's approach to meeting the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The curriculum offer is comprehensive with clear progression routes from levels 1 to 4. Very productive partnerships with many schools have developed very good provision for 14 to 16 year olds. Flexible delivery of many qualifications allows adults and business owners to access courses easily.
25. Many students participate in good enrichment activities. They are regularly involved in organising charity events and working with local community groups. For example, students participated in a beach clean-up after a ship ran aground near the Dorset coast. The student council is effective in leading appropriate changes to college life.
26. Employer advisory groups provide relevant curriculum advice. Very effective links with community organisations ensure the college responds quickly by developing training to support local land-based industries and the local business sector. The college acknowledges that it could make better use of market data and employer reviews of qualifications to influence future developments. The college is particularly good at making very effective use of its commercial activities to support and enhance the curriculum. This provides excellent work experience for students and enables them to experience real working environments.
27. The approach to social and educational inclusion is good. The college successfully includes under-represented groups, for example, by offering courses for gypsies and travellers. Close collaboration with the Total Access Council has improved college signage and information for students with disabilities.
28. Care, guidance and support for students are good. A strong focus on meeting the needs of individuals is reflected in the high quality personal and academic support provided. Support is provided promptly and is highly valued by students. The college works well with external agencies to arrange specialist support when needed.
29. Information, newsletters and open days about courses are provided frequently. School pupils have many taster sessions. Advice and guidance are impartial and help students make appropriate decisions about which course best meet their needs. Good advice on careers and higher education is provided through tutorials, the careers library, and the Connexions

service. A recent careers fair held at college involved 80 employers. Induction enables students to quickly settle well into their courses.

30. Students have frequent tutorials where academic progress and personal development such as being healthy and work experience are discussed. Target setting during progress reviews is systematic but of variable quality. Many targets are too vague to be sufficiently helpful.
31. Good health and safety practices feature prominently at college. Students are expected to strictly adhere to health and safety requirements but animal care students do not always wear appropriate protective clothing.

Leadership and management Good: grade 2

*Contributory grades:*

*Equality of opportunity* *Good: grade 2*

32. Leadership and management are good. Success rates have steadily improved and are good. The principal provides open, consultative leadership and is ably supported by senior and middle managers. Lines of responsibility and accountability are clear. Communication within the college is very good.
33. The college evaluates all aspects of its work. Curriculum reviews are thorough. Judgements are mostly based on sound evidence. Plans in curriculum areas to address weaknesses are well structured, with clear responsibilities, timescales, resource implications and arrangements for monitoring and review. In a minority of cases, it is not clear how objectives will be achieved and desired outcomes are insufficiently precise.
34. The college self-assessment report for 2005/06 is not sufficiently detailed. It does not systematically address the key questions in the inspection framework. Whilst areas for improvement are identified, the means of implementing these improvements are not specified.
35. There are appropriate arrangements for observing lessons and to moderate judgements. The outcomes of observations are used in appraisals and to plan staff development. The college also identifies common issues in teaching and highlights examples of best practice. Self-assessment reports do not sufficiently analyse teaching and learning. Lesson observation records vary in quality and often lack sufficient focus on how well teaching meets students' needs and how teachers check on learning.

36. The college systematically uses the views of learners, employers and staff to identify areas for improvement. There are few complaints and these are dealt with appropriately.
37. Arrangements for child protection and for the protection of vulnerable adults are appropriate. The college's response to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 has been satisfactory. They have worked innovatively to integrate local gypsy and traveller communities into the college. Excellent partnerships with local groups help the college improve access to its site and courses. There is further scope to promote racial equality through the curriculum.
38. Managers and governors share a clear vision for the development of the college. Business plans are good and financial plans support college priorities. The college makes very good use of its assets and estate. A wide range of commercial activities fully enrich the curriculum. For example, students developed their business skills by rearing turkeys for Christmas.
39. Specialist facilities and accommodation are good. Very good use is made of the natural resources of the campus, and there are some very good specialist facilities, for example, the equine arena and the newly built learning resource centre. Staff are well qualified and have appropriate experience and good staff development opportunities. Partnerships with employers, schools and community groups are very wide ranging and effective.
40. Governors are highly effective in their support and monitoring of the work of the college. They understand fully its context, challenges and achievements. They work very well with senior managers, but do not shy away from challenging them where needed. The college had a significant deficit for two successive years, but last year made a small surplus. With high success rates, the college provides good value for money.

## Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age 2004 to 2006, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	03/04	237	64.6	61.8	2.8	219	58.9	49.3	9.6
	04/05	394	66.2	65	1.2	313	73.8	61.9	11.9
	05/06	558	74			235	75		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04								
	04/05	11	100						
	05/06								
NVQs	03/04	44	68.2	71	-2.8	11	54.5	59.4	-4.9
	04/05	59	74.6	60.3	14.3	14	64.3	70.9	-6.6
	05/06	79	77			6	83		
Other	03/04	182	61.5	60.9	0.6	208	59.1	48.6	10.5
	04/05	335	64.8	65.7	-0.9	299	74.2	61.4	12.8
	05/06	479	74			229	75		

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	348	66.4	61.9	4.5	300	56.3	54.8	1.5
	04/05	349	70.2	67.7	2.5	424	66	61.2	4.9
	05/06	302	81			419	65		
GCSEs	03/04								
	04/05								
	05/06								
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	18	83.3	71.1	12.2	2	100		
	04/05	17	64.7	72.8	-8.1	2	100		
	05/06	25	80						
NVQs	03/04	19	52.6	41.3	11.3	36	22.2	43.2	-21
	04/05	29	62.1			23	82.6	54.2	28.4
	05/06					30	83		
Other	03/04	311	66.2	63.3	2.9	262	60.7	56.8	3.9
	04/05	303	71.3	69	2.3	399	64.9	62.1	2.8
	05/06	277	81			389	63		

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	164	61	65	-4	199	53.3	49.3	4.0
	04/05	194	59.3	68.8	-9.5	174	54	56.1	-2.1
	05/06	192	76			141	57		
A/A2 Levels	03/04								
	04/05								
	05/06								
AS Levels	03/04								
	04/05								
	05/06								
GNVQs and precursors	03/04					2	50		
	04/05					3	0		
	05/06								
NVQs	03/04					9	11.1	40.7	-29.6
	04/05	4	0			14	21.4	45.6	-24.2
	05/06					10	30		
Other	03/04	164	61	66.5	-5.5	188	55.3	51.6	3.7
	04/05	190	60.5	67.7	-7.2	157	58	57.8	0.2
	05/06	192	76			141	57		

Data for 2005/06 is based on college's internal data, which was not validated at the time of the inspection.

Table 4

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

Programme	End Year	Success Rate	No, of learners *	College NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate **	College framework rate **	National framework rate **
Advanced Apprenticeships	03/04	overall	35	51	48	29	31
		timely	26	19	30	12	19
	04/05	overall	30	63	48	53	34
		timely	23	22	31	22	21
	05/06	overall	32	75	54	59	44
		timely	33	52	34	36	27
Apprenticeships	03/04	overall	53	62	47	58	32
		timely	47	32	24	30	16
	04/05	overall	66	70	50	67	38
		timely	68	62	29	57	22
	05/06	overall	121	68	58	60	53
		timely	125	50	38	47	33

- \* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned
- \*\* College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'
- \*\*\* Adult training (long courses) includes 'Train to Gain' provision, but not 'Skills for Life'

Table 5

Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the college 2004 to 2006.

Year	Number of starts in year	Achieved Objectives *	Progression **	Still in learning
03/04	116	30	45	51
04/05	64	35	25	35
05/06	68	39	21	28

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