

# Tyne Metropolitan College

Inspection report

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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 achievement 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
- specialist provision in: health, care and public services; science and mathematics; engineering; arts, media and publishing; literacy and numeracy; foundation studies.

## Description of the provider

1. Tyne Metropolitan College is the only general further education (GFE) college in North Tyneside. It was established in March 2005 as the result of an amalgamation between Tynemouth Sixth Form College and North Tyneside GFE College. The college operates from two main sites; the coast road campus in Wallsend and the sixth form academy campus in North Shields. The coast road campus is situated between Newcastle and the coast, approximately five miles from the city centre. The college has Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status for mechatronics and, in partnership with two other colleges, for early years and play-work.
2. North Tyneside is one of the five metropolitan districts which make up the Tyne and Wear conurbation. Of the 12 secondary schools in the district, one is independent and nine have sixth forms. There are also five special schools. North Tyneside is a district of considerable contrasts from the relatively affluent areas in the north-east coastal area to urban areas of social deprivation. The pattern of employment has changed in recent years with the decline of older industries, diversification into modern light industry and the service sector and an increase in part-time temporary work. The proportion of school leavers in North Tyneside who gained five A\* to C grades in their GCSEs, including English and mathematics, was 48% in 2006, slightly above the national average.
3. The college offers provision in all 15 sector subject areas. In 2006/07, about 9,200 learners were enrolled on LSC funded programmes. Just over 2,000 were aged 16 to 18, 85% of whom were studying full-time. Nearly 7,200 were adult learners, with 90% studying part-time. About 3,500 learners were enrolled on courses funded by others. About 6% of the learners are from minority ethnic groups; twice the proportion in the local population.
4. Shortly before the inspection the college management structure had been substantially realigned. There are now two learning centres, "Academies@TyneMet" focused primarily on the needs of school leavers, and "Career development@TyneMet" focused on the needs of adults and employers. A matrix management structure separates, for example, line management and the management of teaching from curriculum development. The college's mission statement is 'to instil and nurture a passion for learning in our college community, to respond to the needs of our local economy and to grow by excelling in all we do'.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Inadequate : Grade 4
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory : Grade 3
Quality of provision	Satisfactory : Grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory : Grade 3
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Satisfactory: Contributory Grade 3</i>

### Sector subject areas

Health, care and public services	Inadequate: Grade 4
Science and mathematics	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Engineering	Good: Grade 2
Arts, media and publishing	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Literacy and numeracy	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Foundation studies	Outstanding: Grade 1

## Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. The effectiveness of provision is satisfactory as are achievement and standards. Long course success rates are close to the national average overall but are not improving. At level 3 for adults and at level 2 for learners aged 16 to 18 they are below average. GCE A level success rates are high. Pass rates are below average. Curriculum provision is largely satisfactory. The provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is consistently outstanding, but inadequate in health, care and public services.
6. The proportion of teaching which is inadequate has been reduced but too little teaching is good or outstanding and this proportion is increasing too slowly. The professional development programme is not sufficiently focused on improving teaching. The rigour of the monitoring of learners' progress is inconsistent, as is the quality of feedback on students' work.
7. The college's approach to social inclusion is satisfactory. The wide range of courses provides good opportunities for progression. Many school pupils aged 14 to 16 benefit from good quality courses at the college. Support for students is satisfactory overall and support for disability and personal issues is outstanding. Support for literacy and numeracy is inconsistently applied. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Provision for employers is under developed but improving.
8. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. They have not succeeded in improving the many aspects of provision which are only satisfactory and some policies and procedures are inconsistently applied. Links with external partners are productive in furthering the college's strategic aims. New management structures are designed to improve response to key client groups. Restructuring has enabled a significant reduction in the staffing budget. The structures are largely understood but there is some uncertainty about where responsibility lies. Middle managers, who are new to their posts, are highly motivated. Recruitment targets have not been met and the college is financially weak.

Capacity to improve

Inadequate: Grade 4

9. The college demonstrates an inadequate capacity to improve. Much of the provision is only satisfactory and improvements in key areas of college performance have been slow. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. It involves all staff and is based on a wide range of evidence. The quality of the curriculum self-assessment reports is variable. The self-assessment report for the whole college is largely accurate but does not identify some of the inconsistencies in curriculum delivery and support identified by inspectors. Quality improvement plans have too little impact. Management information is much improved. Performance management of staff does not

draw consistently on key performance measures and does not identify the support needs required to deliver improvement.

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

10. The college, since the merger two years ago, has made satisfactory progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspections of the two previous colleges. Success rates have improved but remain close to the national average. Students' achievement of key skills has improved and is now above the national average. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced but there is still too much teaching which is only satisfactory. Three curriculum areas identified as unsatisfactory at the last inspections of the former colleges are now satisfactory in two instances and good in the third. However there are still unsatisfactory curriculum areas and too many that are only satisfactory. Management information is much improved. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities remains outstanding.

### Key strengths

- the consistently outstanding provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the good provision in engineering
- high GCE A level success rates
- the broad curriculum range
- outstanding support for learners' physical, personal, social and emotional needs
- strategic partnerships which further the college's overall objectives
- well motivated middle managers.

### Areas for improvement

*The college should address:*

- the inadequate provision in health, care and public services and the satisfactory provision in other curriculum areas
- below average success rates at level 3 for adults and at level 2 for learners aged 16 to 18
- the below average pass rates
- teaching and learning, too little of which is good
- the monitoring of learners' progress
- the inconsistent provision of additional learning support for literacy and numeracy
- the limited promotion of equality of opportunity
- leadership, which has not ensured consistent quality improvement in key areas of provision which are only satisfactory
- the failure to meet recruitment targets and the weak financial position.

## Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

*Contributory grades:*

*Learners aged 14 to 16*

*Good: Grade 2*

11. The college view that achievement and standards are satisfactory was confirmed by inspection. Student success rates overall are satisfactory. The success rate on long courses for students aged 16 to 18 has been consistently close to the national average in the three years to 2007 but is losing ground slightly. The success rates at levels 1 and 3 were close to the average in 2007; at level 2 the rate was close to the bottom quartile of similar colleges. Retention rates in 2007 showed a similar picture to success rates when compared with the national average. Pass rates were below average at all three levels and had lost ground to the national average in the three years to 2007. The success rate in GCE A level subjects was well above the average for similar colleges in 2007; the GCE AS success rate was close to the average. Key skills success rates improved markedly in 2007, having dipped in 2006, and were above the average.
12. The success rate on long courses for adult learners is similar to the national average. In 2005 and 2007 it was slightly below average, in 2006 it was well above. At levels 1 and 2 the success rates were similar to the national average in 2007; at level 3 the rate was below average, but above the bottom quartile. Retention rates at levels 1 and 2 are consistently well above average. At level 3 the rate fluctuates and in 2007 was well below average. Pass rates were below average in 2007. They had lost ground to the national average at levels 1 and 3 in the three years to 2007 and tracked the national average at level 2. The small number of learndirect and Train to Gain (T2G) learners achieve high success rates.
13. The standard of learners' work and their acquisition of work place skills are generally satisfactory. Learners aged 14 to 16 produce good work and their success rates are high. In foundation studies, learners' progress relative to their prior attainment is outstanding. Students studying GCE A level subjects make the progress expected of them, but on many GCE AS subjects they make less progress than expected. Photography students produce work of a very high standard. The progress of some individual learners is remarkable. For example, one student who receives support for a learning disability was on a level 4 course in computing three years after commencing a level 1 course.



Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

*Contributory grade:*

*Learners aged 14 to 16*

*Good: Grade 2*

14. As the self-assessment report notes, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Too little of the teaching is good or better. A key college priority is to improve teaching and learning. Observation of lessons is frequent and rigorous. In spite of much staff development, the sharing of good practice and the work of advanced practitioners, there has been insufficient improvement. The proportion of unsatisfactory lessons has reduced to less than 5% of those observed but the proportion of good or better lessons is still too small. The college does not analyse in sufficient detail which aspects of its teaching are not good enough so that staff development can be focused on improving the satisfactory teaching.
15. Most teachers plan lessons well and check learning appropriately, but there is insufficient variety and pace in some lessons. Teaching meets the needs of learners of average attainment, but sometimes not that of other learners. Staff development aimed at improving the use of information and learning technology (ILT) has been successful in some areas but the use of the virtual learning environment is undeveloped and there is no action plan to further its development. Curriculum policies are not consistently implemented and quality assurance procedures to check on their implementation are under developed. Guidance for new managers to help them implement policy is under developed.
16. GCE A level students' progress towards meeting their target grades is monitored effectively. On some other courses, however, learning targets are not sufficiently focused or challenging and tutors do not monitor learners' progress sufficiently closely. Assessment overall is satisfactory. In some areas, it is well planned and managed. The internal verification process for vocational courses is generally good. The quality of teachers' feedback on marked work varies too much. The college communicates learners' progress to parents and employers appropriately.
17. The provision meets the needs and interests of learners well. The range of college-based provision is broad. The range of provision to meet employers' needs is underdeveloped overall but good in some areas such as engineering. The college plans to introduce an apprenticeship programme shortly. The Train to Gain provision is small but increasing. The new organisational structure provides a greater focus on employer engagement and developments in the work targeted at the needs of employers are already evident.
18. The college teaches over 250 school pupils aged 14 to 16. This provision is good. Almost half the learners progress to the college after leaving school. The college's partnership working benefits learners. University partnerships provide learners with good progression into higher education. The college's CoVEs provide good links with employers and local industries. Franchise

- arrangements are used to benefit learners who may not otherwise attend education or training. The college has good representation on local, regional and national strategic groups.
19. The enrichment programme for learners aged 16 to 19 is satisfactory. A good range of activities is offered. Sporting activities are popular but students are often unwilling to travel between campuses even though transport is provided. Promotion of the programme to adults is insufficient and their participation low.
  20. Support for students is satisfactory overall. Arrangements are in place to identify support needs for literacy and numeracy early in a student's course. Some learners diagnosed as needing support have to wait too long before receiving it. Support for learners' physical, personal, social or emotional issues is outstanding. A team of learning support workers provide individual and in-class support. Counselling and educational psychologist support is readily available. Many learners benefit from mentor support in, for example, time management and study techniques and speak highly of the support they receive. Access to assistive technology is good. Analysis of the impact of additional support on learners' achievement is under developed.
  21. Potential learners receive appropriate information advice and guidance, the provision of which is matrix accredited. In the new organisational structure these services have been devolved to the two centres to enable a sharper focus on the individual needs of the different client groups. It is too early to judge the impact of these arrangements. Until recently the tutorial programme was managed centrally and had a core pastoral curriculum supported by centrally produced materials. Responsibility for tutorials has been devolved to the two centres. Some staff are currently uncertain about how the pastoral programme is to be delivered and the delivery of the core curriculum is currently variable.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

*Contributory grades:*

*Equality of opportunity*

*Satisfactory: Grade 3*

22. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Key areas of the students' experience are only satisfactory and leadership is not effecting sufficient improvement. For example, success rates have remained broadly in line with the national average and too much teaching is only satisfactory. Curriculum grades in the self-assessment report and from inspection show that provision is largely satisfactory and not improving.
23. The college's strategic aims are appropriate and seek to meet national and local LSC priorities by, for example, providing good progression routes into higher education, improving employer engagement and developing the 14 to 19 curriculum. Staff understand and support these aims. Learner number targets, established at the time of the merger of the two previous colleges

- were set too high. Failure to meet them has impacted on the college's financial position, which is weak. Recent management changes have more clearly aligned structures to the strategic aims and have significantly reduced staffing costs. The college provides satisfactory value for money.
24. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a wide range of appropriate experience and contribute well to strategic thinking. They are committed to their work and pro-active within the college. They receive a wide range of reports. They recognise that some reports are insufficiently well focused. They have been insufficiently rigorous in monitoring the college's financial performance.
  25. The college's external partnerships help achieve the college's strategic aims. Senior staff are well represented on key strategic groups and have effective working arrangements with local schools, universities and employers. These help the college in its work developing the new diplomas, reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training, increasing higher education provision and improving engagement with employers.
  26. At a senior management level the monitoring of attendance, retention and learner satisfaction has improved and is satisfactory. However, as the college recognises, performance monitoring at curriculum level is inconsistent. Management information is much improved and its provision is now satisfactory. Some staff use it well, others too little.
  27. Accommodation is fully accessible to wheelchair users and is satisfactory overall. There are sufficient computers for staff and students. Classrooms are appropriately equipped and technical support is good. Learning centres are adequately resourced, although financial restrictions have curtailed expenditure recently. The new management structure is complex, but largely understood. Middle managers in the new structure are well motivated. Staff appraisal gives appropriate attention to furthering strategic priorities but pays insufficient attention to performance targets and the support needs of staff.
  28. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The college meets the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002. However, implementation of actions contained in the equality schemes and policies has been slow. Equality of opportunity is not promoted sufficiently well. Lesson observation does not systematically check for its promotion within teaching and there is too much variability in the quality of different curriculum areas. The college has appropriate arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults. Child protection officers receive appropriate training. A nominated senior manager leads on safeguarding.
  29. The impact of quality assurance arrangements is unsatisfactory. Policies and procedures are inconsistently applied and too many aspects of provision are inconsistently delivered. Quality improvement plans and their

implementation have not improved key aspects of the students' experience. The quality of the curriculum self-assessment reports is variable, some are accurate, and others lack sufficient rigour. The self-assessment process involves all staff. The overall college self-assessment report is broadly accurate in its judgements but does not recognise some areas for improvement, such as the promotion of equality of opportunity and the level of inconsistency in aspects of the provision.

## Sector subject areas

Health, care and public services

Inadequate: Grade 4

### Context:

30. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in health and social care, childcare, and full-time uniformed services courses at levels 1, 2 and 3. About 300 learners study full-time, 88% of whom are aged 16 to 18. About 260 learners study part-time on courses from levels 1 to 4. These include NVQs, short courses and foundation degrees. Most learners studying part-time are adult females. GCSE health and social care is provided to 14 to 16 year olds.

### Strengths

- good results on NVQ courses
- good classroom accommodation and facilities.

### Areas for improvement

- low success rates on full-time courses in childcare at levels 2 and 3
- consistently low results on the counselling skills and theory courses
- poor assessment practice
- ineffective management of quality improvement
- shortcomings in course management.

### Achievement and standards

31. Achievement and standards are inadequate. The college self-assessment report acknowledges the low retention rates on long courses at levels 2 and 3 but does not mention, for example, the persistently low success rates on the childcare courses at levels 2 and 3 and on some part-time courses. Results on the level 2 counselling course are consistently poor. Results on most NVQ courses improved to be well above the national average in 2006/07. Retention on two year courses has improved this year. Attendance in the lessons observed was below the college target.

### Quality of provision

32. The quality of teaching and learning is good on part-time courses for adults. It is of mixed quality on full-time courses for learners aged 16 to 18. On the part-time provision learners focus well and are attentive. They work well in groups, make good progress and gain a good range of work skills. In the poorer teaching there is little effective checking of learning and learners do not respond satisfactorily to questioning. Small group work is not always well managed. When not tied to deadlines for completion, learners take a too leisurely approach to completing their work and there is much time wasting. Attainment in lessons is often too low. Learners studying at level 3

are often not challenged sufficiently by their assignment work and they do not develop higher level skills.

33. Some assessment practice is poor. Some teachers do not insist on high enough standards of work when the work is first submitted, resulting in too much work being re-submitted. Teachers' feedback on marked work is sometimes over-written so that a full record of assessment cannot be tracked. The college is correct in recognising that full-time learners are not challenged sufficiently to produce high enough standards.
34. The range of provision is satisfactory and links with employers are effective. Support for students is satisfactory. The provision of additional learning support is inconsistently managed and in some cases the support provided commences very late.

### Leadership and management

35. Leadership and management are inadequate. Progress has been made on establishing team work and communications across the curriculum area. Some courses are poorly organised. Timetabling arrangements are lax. The self-assessment report is insufficiently rigorous. Quality improvement plans do not have sufficient impact. Many action plans are insufficiently focused, responsibility is not clearly allocated and progress not formally recorded. Accommodation and facilities are good. There is insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity in the teaching. The sharing of good practice between teachers is under developed.

## Science and mathematics

Satisfactory: Grade 3

## Context

36. Most science and mathematics teaching takes place in the sixth form academy. Most courses are at advanced level. The International Baccalaureate has been recently introduced. GCSEs in mathematics and science are also offered. About 40 full-time learners aged 16 to 18 and 30 adults are enrolled on programmes at levels 2 and 3. Over 100 students attend science or mathematics as part of an access to higher education programme.

## Key strengths:

- high success rates in GCE A-level science subjects
- high success rates in mathematics
- good teaching and learning in mathematics
- a broad curriculum that meets the needs of learners.

## Areas for improvement:

- low pass rates in GCE AS science subjects
- inadequate links between assessment and learning in some science lessons
- insufficient monitoring of course performance.

## Achievement and standards

37. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The overall success rate of the area is in line with the national average. There are high success rates in mathematics and high success rates on GCE A levels in science. Success rates at AS level in science are low. Learners' work in mathematics lessons indicates that they make good progress and develop a clear understanding of complex theory. In science lessons learners' work is of a good standard at A level but in AS subjects there is considerable variation in the rates of progress made and some students, particularly the more able, are not making the progress they should.

## Quality of provision

38. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although there is considerable variation between courses. There is some outstanding learning in mathematics where students' work is closely monitored and linked to the outcomes of assessment. In science, teaching has improved but in some lessons there is insufficient emphasis placed on linking work to assessment. There is inconsistent monitoring of students' progress. The marking of homework varies in quality and sometimes students are not given sufficient guidance on how they can improve their performance. Lesson planning varies in quality and sometimes there is an over emphasis on teaching rather than learning.

39. The curriculum is broad and well matched to the needs of learners. There is a broad range of A level subjects and a successful access to further education programme. Recent work to encourage pupils from local schools to enter science and mathematics programmes is proving successful.
40. Support overall is satisfactory, however, there is considerable variation in the way it is applied. Learning mentors work with some students to improve the students' academic ability. In mathematics direct support from teachers is very effective. The tutorial programme meets learners' pastoral needs satisfactorily.

### Leadership and management

41. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers are recently appointed and are working hard to bring about improvement. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate and there is a strong focus on the eradication of inadequate performance. Students and teachers recognise there have been improvements. However, there are still important gaps in the way course performance is measured and action for improvement introduced. Key areas such as marking of homework, attendance, punctuality and the impact of support are not evaluated consistently. Although challenging new targets have been set they are not always sufficiently quantified, or monitored.



## Engineering

Good: Grade 2

### Context

42. Provision is available in electrical, electronic, mechanical and manufacturing engineering at levels 1 to 4. It includes craft and technician qualifications and a foundation degree. At the time of the inspection 90 full-time and 17 part-time students aged 16 to 18 and 23 full-time and 161 part-time adult students were enrolled on LSC provision. The curriculum area is a Centre of Vocational Excellence in mechatronics. It provides work directly for employers and for a local university, and also works with local schools to enhance their 14 to 16 curriculum.

### Strengths

- high pass rates
- the good work produced by learners
- good teaching and learning
- the broad range of provision which is responsive to employers.

### Areas for improvement

- failure to ensure that students needing literacy support receive it
- the insufficiently rigorous progress review process.

### Achievement and standards

43. Achievement and standards are good. Overall success rates at levels 2 and 3 are well above average and at level 1 are close to the national average. Pass rates are high. In 2006/7, for example, the pass rates on the national certificate programmes and on the national award were over 90%, and on the NVQ level 2 in performing engineering operations the success rate was over 90%. These rates compare well with national average.
44. Students produce work of a good standard. They are diligent and contribute well in lessons and their written and practical work are good.

### Quality of provision

45. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and include a suitable variety of activity. Practical work and group discussion are used well to illuminate the theory. In one lesson students predicted the operation of a pneumatic circuit from circuit drawings and then built it. Teachers give appropriate support in lessons and allow the students freedom to experiment. The students respond well to this approach.
46. Assignment work is scheduled appropriately and marked and returned promptly. Students' progress is carefully monitored through tracking documents on the intranet and during team meetings. The formal progress

review meetings between students and their tutors do not cover all aspects of the curriculum and action points for future work are insufficiently focused.

47. The provision meets the needs of school pupils, students and employers well and provides good opportunities for progression. A large number of employers use the college for their apprenticeship technical training and modes of attendance meet the needs of employers.
48. Support for students is satisfactory. An additional lesson in mathematics helps improve numeracy skills. Students' levels of attainment in numeracy and literacy are assessed, but follow up support arrangements are too slow, particularly in literacy. The weekly pastoral tutorial is currently being used to support learners' progression but there is uncertainty about who is responsible for ensuring the full pastoral curriculum is delivered or what should be taught next.

### Leadership and management

49. Leadership and management are good. Course teams meet regularly, their discussions are minuted clearly and actions expedited. Assessment and its verification are managed appropriately. Staff are appropriately qualified, teaching rooms are well equipped and engineering equipment is of a good standard, particularly to support the Centre of Vocational Excellence. The self-assessment report is accurate but gives too little attention to the quality of the teaching.

## Arts, media and publishing

Satisfactory: Grade 3

50. Full-time provision includes GCE AS and A2 subjects and BTEC national diploma courses in media, film and visual arts. Progression routes are available from level 2 to foundation degree. In the week of the inspection there were nearly 270 learners, 75% of whom studied full-time and were aged 16 to 18. GCSE art, dance and performing arts subjects are offered to school pupils aged 14 to 16.

## Strengths

- high success rates on level 2 courses and in GCE AS art and design
- the high standard of work in photography
- good collaborative provision with local schools.

## Areas for improvement

- low pass rates on some level 3 courses
- not enough good teaching.

## Achievement and standards

51. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates are good on level 2 courses and in GCE AS art and design. GCSE art double award, for example, has had a 100% success rate in the three years to 2007. Some level 3 courses have low success rates, for example, on the national diploma in graphic design the rate has been around 55% in the three years to 2007.
52. The standard of students' work in photography is high. Students produce challenging and experimental work which is displayed professionally. In textile lessons, students produce innovative accessories using recycled materials. Students are confident and contribute well to class discussions.

## Quality of provision

53. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but not enough teaching is good. Some lessons are uninspiring and dull and include insufficient variety to enthuse the students. The better lessons are well planned and include a suitable variety of activities and teaching methods. Teachers set meaningful goals for students, who are highly motivated. Formative comments are provided on students' work to enable them to achieve higher grades. Marked work is returned to students promptly. Key skills are integrated well into assignments.
54. The range of courses meets the needs of learners well. It provides suitable progression routes. Numerous enrichment activities are available. For example, students take part in educational trips which extend their studies, and there is an annual fashion show. Collaborative provision with local schools is good. Success rates are high in, for example, GCSE dance and on the BTEC first diploma.

55. Support for students is good. The tutorial system and mentor provision give effective and encouraging pastoral support and help raise students' aspirations.

#### Leadership and management

56. Curriculum management is satisfactory. There is a commitment for improvement and staff feel well supported. The impact of professional development on learning is not monitored and records of staff development in course files are out of date. The use of data varies between courses. Much communication is informal and not recorded, and action points arising from meetings are not always clear. Grades for observation of teaching and learning have shown a recent improvement. However, action planning following observations is not always well focused. The self-assessment report broadly matches inspection findings. Resources are good.

## Literacy and numeracy

Satisfactory: Grade 3

### Context

57. The provision includes literacy and numeracy for adults and a preparation for employment course for students aged 16 to 18. Also inspected was the key skills provision for students aged 16 to 18. Adult provision takes place in the college and in two outreach centres. At the time of the inspection there were 1,700 enrolments. About 160 full-time and 20 part-time learners aged 16 to 18, and 150 full-time and 200 part-time adults enrolled on the non key skills provision.

### Strengths

- significant improvement in key skills success rates which were above average in 2007
- provision on the bridging course which is responsive and of good quality.

### Areas for improvement

- low adult success rates
- insufficient use of individual target setting
- limited provision for adults.

### Achievement and standards

58. Success rates in key skills are satisfactory and improving but low on the adult provision. Key skills success rates are now above the national average, having improved significantly in 2007. Success rates for adult literacy and numeracy are below national average and, other than in level 2 numeracy, have declined. There are clear signs of improvement this term. Students make steady progress in lessons. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory for full-time learners but poor for part-time learners. The success rate on learndirect provision is satisfactory.

### Quality of provision

59. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There is much good teaching but some is inadequate. In the best lessons, activities are varied, stimulating, and well differentiated. In art and design, key skills lessons are linked well to vocational contexts. Some teachers make effective use of information and learning technology, but it is under used in adult provision. Less effective lessons lack variety and pace and do not challenge all learners sufficiently. Individual learning targets are too general to be useful and action plans to develop learners' skills and knowledge are not matched well enough to individual needs. The self-assessment report recognises these areas for improvement.
60. The provision meets the needs of learners aged 16 to 18 satisfactorily. The range of key skills provision is satisfactory. There is responsive bridging

provision for a group of learners with mental health problems and for school leavers with limited literacy and numeracy skills. The college is increasing the work done in the work place, for example, through learndirect, but opportunities for employer-based provision and for adult community work are limited.

61. Support for learners is satisfactory. Full-time, but not all part-time, students are aware of the support for careers advice and personal counselling. In learndirect provision, support for learners is good.

#### Leadership and management

62. Curriculum management is satisfactory. Following new appointments, learndirect provision is well managed. The new curriculum management has a clear strategic direction though it is too early to see the impact. Most staff understand the new operational arrangements but some are uncertain. Important information about students is not always passed on to key skills tutors. For adult provision the monitoring of quality and the consistency of documentation and delivery are under developed. The self-assessment report identifies areas for improvement in the key skills provision but does not evaluate the adult work rigorously enough. Equality and diversity are not promoted well enough in lessons.

## Foundation studies

Outstanding: Grade 1

### Context

63. The college offers part-time and full-time accredited courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The main focus of the learning experience is on the acquisition of skills that will allow learners to lead a more independent life style. Most lessons are held on the main site. Half of the 358 learners attend full-time. About a third of full-time learners are aged 16 to 18.

### Strengths

- very good development of learners' confidence and self-esteem
- outstanding teaching
- the clear rationale for the provision which is linked to local and national priorities
- highly responsive work experience provision
- outstanding support for learners.

### Areas for improvement

- inconsistent recording of baseline assessment.

### Achievement and standards

64. The standard of learners' work in the majority of lessons is high. Learners are aware of their individual learning targets, proud of their personal, social and behavioural skills developments and describe these with confidence. They value being treated as adults and respond positively to the challenges provided by teachers. In the few less challenging lessons learners are not sufficiently engaged in the lesson activities. Attendance and punctuality at lessons are good. Learners enjoy attending college. Learners make effective transition to other courses within the department of foundation studies, other college courses, external training providers or supported or voluntary employment.

### Quality of provision

65. Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers identify each learner's needs through a comprehensive initial assessment. Teachers know their learners well and regularly share information of individual learners' achievement informally with each other. However, the formal baseline against which all further achievement can be measured is insufficiently well recorded. Lesson planning for teaching is comprehensive. It is clearly sequenced with varied and imaginative teaching activities. Innovative teaching engages learners and supports the development and understanding of complex concepts, for example, rights and responsibilities in relation to social justice. Teachers encourage learners to reflect on their learning and achievement in lessons. In a minority of lessons teachers focus

inappropriately on whole group activities to meet the needs of external accreditation.

66. Programmes effectively meet the needs and interests of learners. They build on learners' prior experience at school or as adults in the local community. Work experience is well planned and learners are carefully placed in settings appropriate to their skills and abilities. The rationale for the programmes meets local and national policies and priorities.
67. Support for learning is outstanding. A wide range of therapy services is available in college, such as speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, psychology services and assistive technology. These services are in addition to a team of learning support assistants who work productively in supporting teachers to deliver high quality education and training.

### Leadership and management

68. Leadership and management are outstanding. Team working is very good and includes sharing resources and team teaching. Self-assessment is ongoing and sufficiently critical and accurately identifies the strengths of the provision. It did not identify the one area for improvement. Self-assessment leads to appropriate changes in the operation of the department. Staff appraisal is well established. The new performance review system is in the early stages of implementation. All staff value the staff development opportunities open to them.



## Learners' achievement

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, 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	04/05	1126	65	65	0	1695	65	62	3
	05/06	869	79	69	10	1009	72	65	7
	06/07	1211	71			1277	70		
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	-				-			
	05/06	-				-			
	06/07	-				-			
NVQs	04/05	126	63	68	-5	198	51	66	-15
	05/06	118	72	72	0	66	65	74	-9
	06/07	148	80			55	73		
Other	04/05	976	65	64	1	1493	67	62	5
	05/06	733	80	69	11	941	72	65	7
	06/07	1048	70			1218	69		

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, 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	04/05	1550	69	61	8	2479	61	60	1
	05/06	1129	62	66	-4	2108	79	66	13
	06/07	1316	64			1986	73		
GCSEs	04/05	549	68	64	4	138	57	63	-6
	05/06	310	51	68	-17	67	66	67	-1
	06/07	272	63			-			
GNVQs And precursors	04/05	70	70	67	3	-			
	05/06	-				-			
	06/07	-				-			
NVQs	04/05	122	86	57	29	723	61	60	1
	05/06	171	71	65	6	812	84	67	17
	06/07	144	76			619	70		
Other	04/05	809	67	61	6	1588	62	59	3
	05/06	629	66	66	0	1209	77	65	12
	06/07	881	63			1342	74		

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, 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	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
3 Long	04/05	2315	67	68	-1	1691	53	58	-5
	05/06	2112	65	70	-5	1445	64	63	1
	06/07	1925	70			1045	62		
A/A2 Levels	04/05	536	87	86	1	43	72	69	3
	05/06	476	85	87	-2	50	72	72	0
	06/07	418	92			24	83		
AS Levels	04/05	1243	61	66	-5	124	43	52	-9
	05/06	1038	62	67	-5	30	60	55	5
	06/07	980	65			13	62		
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	160	61	61	0	-			
	05/06	80	43	66	-23	-			
	06/07	-				-			
NVQs	04/05	-		63		364	43	56	-13
	05/06	-		71		204	52	63	-11
	06/07	-				357	51		
Other	04/05	365	60	60	0	1136	57	59	-2
	05/06	490	58	65	-7	1157	66	64	2
	06/07	501	63			630	68		

- learner numbers too small to warrant inclusion  
All data provided by the college