

Havering Sixth Form College

Inspection report

Provider reference 130445
Published date June 2009

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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.

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); 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: science and mathematics; arts, media and publishing; social sciences; languages, literature and culture; and business, administration and law.

Description of the provider

1. Havering Sixth Form College occupies a single site in the London Borough of Havering. It is located between Hornchurch and Upminster some five miles inside the M25 ring road. Havering is an economically prosperous borough with low unemployment. The borough has a very different economic profile to the east London area as a whole. Employment is mainly in the wholesale and retail trade, public services and business services, with health and social work and hotels and restaurants key growth sectors. Havering is the least ethnically diverse borough in London, with 6% of the population from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of adults educated to level 4 in the borough is 20%, one of the lowest in London.
2. Havering Sixth Form College acts as an open access sixth form college for its 13 partner schools and a further five schools with sixth forms. It accepts learners from these schools regardless of their level of prior attainment. The college accepts also some 200 Havering residents previously educated in schools outside the borough on the same basis.
3. The college provides programmes in 12 sector subject areas with a strong focus on level 3 courses, in particular General Certificate of Education (GCE) AS levels and A levels. Other level 3 courses include Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) national qualifications and the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The college offers a range of GCSEs as well as vocational courses at levels 1 and 2. The enrichment programme includes key skills and as well as Foreign Languages at Work (FLAW) introductory courses.
4. In 2007/08, some 75% of learners were from schools inside the borough. The college has exceeded its targets for recruitment comfortably in recent years. All but 10 of the 2,238 learners currently studying at the college are aged 16 to 18 and are studying full-time. Of these, some 70% are studying at level 3. Some 37% of learners starting AS levels do not have GCSEs above grade C. The 10 adult learners attend the college full-time. The proportion of learners with a minority ethnic heritage is some four times higher than the proportion in the local population.
5. The college's mission is to 'be an outstanding provider of full-time education for 16 to 19 year olds embracing diversity and creating excellent opportunities for all'. The mission statement emphasises the importance of staff and learners participating fully in teaching and learning to maximise their collective potential and promote individual achievement at the highest level.

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>

Sector subject areas

Science and mathematics	Good: Grade 2
Arts, media and publishing	Good: Grade 2
Social sciences	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Languages, literature and culture	Good: Grade 2
Business, administration and law	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

6. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good, as is the college's capacity to improve. Achievement and standards are good with high success rates. The college provides particularly good opportunities for many learners with low prior attainment at age 16. Value added scores show that most learners make much better progress than expected from their GCSE results. Overall success rates are good at AS level and slightly lower than the very high national average at A level. Success rates at GCSE are good and the achievement of high grades is significantly better than the national average. Success rates for the learners who study at level 1 are particularly high. Attendance rates are good and learners enjoy their studies. The standard of learners' work is good. The participation of learners with minority ethnic heritage is very good and their success rates are high.
7. Teaching and learning are good. Classroom management is very effective and in most lessons learners participate actively and work diligently. The college recognises that it has further work to do in developing strategies to fully develop learners' potential during lessons. The promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity is good overall but is less well developed through the curriculum and in lessons. Assessment is effective. The college provides good additional learning support through a variety of mechanisms that focus strongly on meeting learners' individual diverse needs successfully and sensitively.
8. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is good. Learners come from diverse backgrounds and the college's response to educational and social inclusion is good. Through a broad curriculum and a particularly flexible approach to timetabling the college has successfully widened participation. Very good enrichment opportunities include opportunities to work towards qualifications in key skills, numeracy and general studies at A level. Participation and success rates are high. Progression to higher education (HE) is good but there are insufficient work experience opportunities for those learners hoping to progress to employment.
9. Guidance and support are good. Pre-course advice and induction are highly effective. The college manages the learners' transition from school to college very well. Careers advice and guidance are good and learners receive particularly effective support when applying to institutes of HE. Tutorial support is particularly effective with good progress monitoring and a strong focus on Every Child Matters outcomes. Learners feel very safe, well cared for and encouraged to be healthy.
10. Leadership and management are good. Strategic leadership is excellent and the college engages strongly with a wide range of partners to the benefit of its learners. Governors are experienced, knowledgeable and challenging. Effective and comprehensive quality assurance procedures have led to good teaching

and learning. However, staff development and action planning following observations of the quality of teaching and learning are not fully effective. The college has yet to achieve its objective of excellence in teaching successfully. The college has very good arrangements for recognising and improving under-performing courses. The arrangements for quality improvement are wide-ranging, well established and include extensive use of data to monitor performance. The self-assessment process is integral to quality improvement and accurate when drawing together the key strengths and areas for improvement for the college as a whole. However, self-assessment is insufficiently rigorous in most curriculum areas. The college is financially strong and provides good value for money.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

11. The college's capacity to improve is good. The leadership team provides a strong and clear direction and has a good record of setting and achieving challenging targets for quality improvement. Progress since the previous inspection has been good. Success rates are high and improving. Quality assurance arrangements are thorough and generally effective. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate and the college has a very clear picture of its main strengths and areas for improvement. However, the self-assessment of curriculum areas is not validated rigorously enough. There is an extensive programme of lesson observations and the quality of teaching has improved significantly. The planning of staff development following observations of teaching is less well developed. The college has a well established and very effective system for identifying and improving any under-performing courses.
12. The college strategy is supported by, and consistent with, LSC and local community priorities. Accommodation and facilities are satisfactory overall and some specialist accommodation is good. The property strategy is well thought out and correctly identifies areas for re-development. Financial resources for further improvements are fundamentally sound and financial management is good.
13. The management information system is reliable, trusted and well used by managers to support improvement. The college makes particularly good use of data, especially that relating to learners' progress.

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

14. The college has made good progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. All staff support the strong leadership on quality by the principal and governors, which has led to significant improvements. Success rates, including those for key skills, attendance, learner satisfaction and rates of progression to HE and employment, have all improved and are now high. Success rates for learners with a minority ethnic heritage are particularly high. The proportion of good teaching has increased significantly but inspectors observed very few outstanding lessons. Learners' progress and achievement at GCE A level and GCSE mathematics are also now good.

15. The use of value added data when planning actions for improvement is now widespread. The inspection grades awarded to the college are higher than awarded at the last inspection.

Key strengths

- high success rates
- good value added scores for most AS and A levels
- high proportion of high grade achievement at GCSE
- good teaching and learning
- strong inclusive ethos with high success rates for learners from minority ethnic groups
- very good enrichment programme including key skills and languages
- very effective pastoral and academic support for learners
- highly effective information, advice and guidance
- excellent strategic leadership and partnership engagement.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- the use of strategies to fully develop learners' potential during lessons
- the insufficient opportunities for work experience
- the effectiveness of staff development to promote excellence in teaching
- the rigour of curriculum self-assessment reports.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

16. Achievement and standards are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. The large majority of learners study on GCE A level and AS level. The college is more inclusive than many sixth form colleges. Many learners enter the college with low or average prior attainment levels. Some 37% of learners starting AS levels do not have GCSEs above grade C. Learners achieve much better grades than might have been predicted from their GCSE results. Learners on advanced level vocational courses make very good progress and success rates and high grade achievement on these courses are high.
17. Overall success rates are good for GCE AS courses and around the national average for A level courses compared to similar colleges. The vast majority of learners on GCE A level courses take an A level in general studies as an enrichment qualification. Learners recognise the benefit of this qualification and it helps to prepare them for the transition to HE or employment. Success rates for general studies are above the national average but if these are excluded from the data the overall success rate for all other GCE A levels taken at the college is above the national average at 95%.
18. Success rates on level 2 courses are high and the proportion of learners who achieve high grades is some 15 percentage points higher than the national average. A small number of learners take courses at level 1 and success rates for these courses are particularly high.
19. The college enrichment programme includes key skills and other qualifications in numeracy. Participation rates on these courses are high and success rates are particularly high.
20. The participation of learners with minority ethnic heritage is very good and success rates are high. Success rates for those learners receiving additional learning support and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are in line with the college average. Male and female learners perform equally well.
21. The standard of learners' work is very good. Attendance is good and learners enjoy their studies. Learners are enthusiastic about the college and their studies, their behaviour is excellent and they make a positive contribution to the life of the college and the wider community. Progression rates between course levels and into HE are good.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

22. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that the quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. Since the last inspection the college has encouraged teachers to use methods of teaching and learning that require the active participation of learners. This initiative has been very successful. Very

good classroom management and effective use of information learning technology (ILT) are typical of the college's teaching. Despite the significant progress made in implementing these approaches to learning, the college recognises that it has further work to do in implementing strategies that encourage learners to develop their capacity for higher-level reflection, evaluation and debate and to use subject-specific technical and specialist vocabulary. Apart from those subjects where equality of opportunity is included in the syllabus, there is very little promotion of equality and diversity in lessons or schemes of work and it is notably absent from the recorded feedback following formal lesson observations. Inspectors found fewer examples of outstanding teaching than the college's own observations would suggest.

23. The checking of learning and assessment of learners' work is satisfactory or better in all areas. Work is mostly clearly marked and worksheets completed in class enable learners to receive quick feedback on their learning. The growing use of the intranet and email contact with teachers enable learners to receive speedy responses to their assignments. Accommodation is generally satisfactory, although in some areas it is unacceptably untidy, and the allocation of rooms for modern foreign languages is poorly planned.
24. Learners receive good additional support to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The college has developed its own useful initial assessment for learners and it makes good use of commercially available diagnostic tests. Early identification is encouraged and learners have a large number of options for receiving the support they need. These include subject facilitators at level 3, individual support for learners and very successful discrete numeracy courses at level 2. Considerable care has been taken to find ways of meeting the diverse needs of learners whose literacy and numeracy attainment is not at the required level for their course.
25. The extent to which the college meets the needs and interests of learners is good. The college operates an open access policy with good partnership arrangements and suitable preparation activities with 13 partner schools. These activities allow the college to identify and plan for individuals and groups with specific needs. The wide range of GCE AS/A level subjects, together with a particularly flexible timetabling approach, gives learners a wide choice of subjects. There are a small number of vocational courses at level 2 but these allow for progression onto specific vocational programmes at level 3. Success rates and progression to HE from the BTEC applied science (forensics) are particularly good.
26. The curriculum equips learners with the appropriate qualifications and skills for successful progression to HE. The college offers a wide range of activities and enrichment to learners both within the timetable and through extra-curricular activities, such as fundraising and community work. Enrichment activities give learners good opportunities to develop new skills, improve previous examination results or meet particular needs and interests. The enrichment programme makes a significant contribution to helping learners achieve economic well-being. The college is developing links with employers but there needs to be

further development of learners' employability skills, particularly through work experience.

27. Guidance and support for learners are good. The transfer programme with partner schools raises learners' aspirations very successfully. Prior to joining the college, learners can participate in taster days and there are good information sessions for parents/carers. This, combined with a good induction programme, ensures that learners make well informed choices and settle quickly into their studies.
28. The college works well with other agencies and uses accurate and timely information well to plan welfare and learning support. Support systems are comprehensive and make a positive contribution to the improving success rates of learners. Learners' support needs are carefully managed and information is shared with teachers. Good individual support from personal tutors, learning mentors and subject facilitators helps many learners achieve their potential. Attendance and punctuality are monitored rigorously. The tutorial programme includes good information on personal safety. Teachers, tutors and parents/carers value highly the prompt referral process that raises concerns in relation to learners' individual targets or performance.
29. The college embraces the principles of the Every Child Matters outcomes and promotes them well through its pastoral curriculum. The extended tutorial programme offers a varied programme of events that includes the promotion of healthy lifestyles, personal safety and personal development. Both staff and learners value the tutorial programme. Support for learners applying to HE is very good.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Contributory grade:

Equality of opportunity

Good: Grade 2

30. Leadership and management are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. The governors, principal and managers provide effective leadership and a clear strategic direction and mission for the college. School partnerships are excellent and the college has a very successful strategy for ensuring that the transition for learners leaving compulsory education is smooth and effective. Learners make a strong contribution to developing the college.
31. The quality improvement strategy is mostly effective and supported by strongly communicated college values. Key indicators of learners' success, including attendance, retention and pass rates, have improved over the last three years to high levels. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. Inspectors agreed with most of the college's grades in the self-assessment report but some curriculum area reports lack rigour and are not validated effectively. The college has an effective system for identifying and improving underperforming courses. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly and is now good in most areas. Observations of teaching and learning are

- comprehensive but staff development and action planning following observations are not fully effective. The college has not yet achieved its objective of excellence in teaching and learning. Curriculum management is good in most areas.
32. Staff are enthusiastically committed to helping learners succeed and are well qualified. They have increasing opportunities for professional development but managers have identified insufficient industrial updating as an area for development. Sharing of best practice throughout the college is increasing. Staff and managers use data from a reliable management information system effectively to monitor performance and plan actions for improvement but some staff still lack confidence in data use. Learners are highly satisfied with their experiences at the college.
 33. The promotion of equality and diversity is good, including successful policies and practices to increase the diversity of the learner body. Physical access for learners with impaired mobility is good. Transition arrangements from school to college for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very effective and valued by schools, parents and community leaders, as is the support provided before and after enrolment. The college responds very well to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA). The college's action to meet the requirements for safeguarding young people under the Child Protection Act is effective with very good attention paid to the safety of learners. Staff and governors are appropriately trained and experienced in their responsibilities. The college has very effective systems in place to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harassment, including cyber-bullying, and carefully monitors their effectiveness. Participation rates of learners with minority ethnic heritage are particularly high. However, with a few exceptions, equal opportunities and diversity are not promoted sufficiently in lessons.
 34. Accommodation and facilities are satisfactory overall. Accommodation deficiencies are identified clearly in the property strategy and are to be addressed through a major building project, although the funding for this is uncertain. Specialist resources and rooms are at least satisfactory but some areas are cramped and temporary arrangements for language teaching are unsatisfactory.
 35. Governance is strong and support to the governing body through the clerk is good. Governors have a very good range of strategic experience and expertise which they use effectively to steer the college. Performance monitoring is good and managed well by a quality committee with regular strategy reviews. Governors are well informed and challenge managers appropriately.
 36. Financial management is good, with sound monitoring and control procedures. The college provides good value for money.

Sector subject areas

Science and mathematics

Good: Grade 2

Context

37. The college offers a range of science and mathematics courses including GCSE science, physics, and mathematics. Level 3 courses include GCE AS and A-level mathematics, further mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics and geology. A BTEC award in applied science (forensics) taken together with a double award A level in applied science provides a vocational pathway to HE. At the time of inspection 910 learners were studying in this area and all were aged 16 to 18.

Strengths

- high success rates on GCE A-level science and vocational courses
- very high success rates on GCE A and AS level mathematics
- high standards of learners' written, practical and mathematical work
- good use of strategies to manage and check learning
- good range of science courses to enable progression to HE
- particularly good support to promote learning
- good course management.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates and value added in GCE AS chemistry
- insufficient use of opportunities in lessons to inspire and challenge the most able
- underdeveloped use of lesson observation and self-assessment to monitor and improve provision
- untidy and disorganised laboratories in some areas.

Achievement and standards

38. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates on GCE A level and on vocational courses have improved and are high. Value added data show that the majority of learners on these courses achieve a grade at or above what would be expected. The success rates on GCE A and AS-level mathematics are very high. The proportion of learners achieving a high grade pass at GCSE is above that for similar colleges.
39. The standards of learners' written and practical work are good. They carry out experiments safely and methodically. Learners are skilled in expressing scientific ideas using correct grammar and terminology. In mathematics, learners present their work neatly and demonstrate confidence in manipulating numbers and algebra. Attendance rates are high.

40. However, success rates on GCE AS chemistry have declined and are now more than 10 percentage points below the national average and in 2007/08 too many learners on GCE AS physics and chemistry did not achieve the grade expected.

Quality of provision

41. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers make particularly effective use of ILT. Learning is well supported by learning materials designed to allow learners to discover new ideas for themselves or to immediately apply new information to exam-style questions. Teachers make good use of individual whiteboards to ensure all learners take part in problem solving and can show their methodology. Additional learning support is effective. Assessment is satisfactory and used well to monitor and plan for learners' progress.
42. Teachers do not take advantage of opportunities to discuss ideas that would challenge, inspire or meet the intellectual curiosity of the most able. The higher skills of critical thinking, evaluation and abstract thought are insufficiently developed.
43. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners is good. The college offers a wide range of science courses. A significant proportion of learners on the geology and the vocational science programme progress to related HE courses.
44. Guidance and support for learners are good. Learners receive particularly good support through targeted workshops, learning facilitators and use of the college's learning zone in the learning resource centre. Teachers use diagnostic testing well, both to identify those learners most at risk of failing and to target induction classes. Information, advice and guidance in relation to career progression and HE are excellent.

Leadership and management

45. Leadership and management are good. Course management is good and managers ensure that teachers follow schemes of learning and share the good quality learning materials effectively. Leaders focus on improving learning and success rates are improving. Managers' analysis of performance data and self-assessment judgements are accurate but the setting and monitoring of actions are underdeveloped. The department's use of lesson observations to monitor and improve teaching is insufficient in extent and rigour.
46. Accommodation is satisfactory; all laboratories and classrooms are equipped with data projectors and interactive whiteboards. Some laboratories are disorganised and untidy.
47. Managers monitor the performance of different groups of learners well but actions to promote equality of opportunity through the curriculum are not well developed.

Arts, media and publishing

Good: Grade 2

Context

48. The college offers a range of courses in arts, media and performing arts, including courses at level 2 in art and design and GCE AS and A level in fine art, dance, design and technology, film studies, graphic design, media, music, performing arts, photography and textiles. The college also offers a national certificate in media, a national diploma in art and design and a diploma in foundation studies in art and design. At the time of the inspection there were 897 learners on art, design and media courses and 221 learners on performing arts courses. Almost all learners are aged 16 to 18.

Strengths

- high success rates on most courses
- high standard of learners' work
- much good teaching, learning and in-class support
- very good curriculum management
- good technician support.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient development of learners' specialist vocabulary
- insufficient rigour in self-assessment
- cramped and unkempt studios in some areas.

Achievement and standards

49. Achievement and standards are good and show an overall pattern of improvement. Success rates on many courses have been above national averages for the last three years. In 2007/08 several courses had success rates of 100%. Much of learners' work is of a high standard. Learners produce very good exploratory and imaginative work across the art and design area and good practical work in dance, film, graphic design, media, music and photography. Developmental work in the early stages of learners' projects shows some excellent primary research. Attendance is high and learners are enthusiastic and committed to their chosen vocation.

Quality of provision

50. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons well and use a good range of assignments and projects with challenging aims, objectives and learning outcomes. In the best lessons, teachers encourage and motivate learners, helping them to experiment and explore ideas independently. Many teachers make good use of ILT to support teaching and learning. Learners make good progress and make positive contributions in lessons. Assessment is satisfactory. Additional learning support is effective. However, teachers do not focus sufficiently on developing learners' specialist vocabulary and some learners struggle when discussing and presenting their work.

51. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners is good. The wide range of courses ensures that learners can choose appropriate combinations that match their career aspirations. Enrichment activities are good. Learners make good progression and the courses prepare them well for the demands of HE.
52. Support and guidance are good. Learners respond very well to the feedback they receive from their tutors. The monitoring of learners' progress is thorough and tutors provide very good help to enable learners to achieve. Information, advice and guidance in relation to career progression and HE are excellent.

Leadership and management

53. Leadership and management are good. Curriculum management is very good. Managers make good use of accurate and timely management information. Staff teams meet regularly and communication between managers, teachers and technicians is good.
54. Teachers are appropriately qualified and many have up-to-date professional experience. A team of enthusiastic specialist technicians provides teachers and learners with very good support.
55. The self-assessment report includes information from course reviews, lesson observations and learner views. However, the self-assessment report lacks consistency and some judgments are contradictory. Despite some very good examples of projects celebrating diversity, the self-assessment report does not provide information on the success of arrangements for equality and diversity.
56. Accommodation and specialist resources are satisfactory overall. However, some studios are cramped and have insufficient storage space.

Social sciences

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

57. The college offers a range of GCE A and AS levels in the social sciences including economics, geography, politics, psychology and sociology. Courses include an AS level citizenship course and GCSE sociology, and the psychology element of the International Baccalaureate provision. At the time of inspection there were 1,017 learners all aged 16 to 18.

Strengths

- high success rates on most GCE A-level courses
- good classroom management
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress
- very effective support for most learners.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on GCE AS psychology and politics courses
- poor value added on GCE A and AS level economics courses
- insufficiently demanding lessons for more able learners
- insufficiently rigorous self-assessment processes.

Achievement and standards

58. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Retention rates are high across all courses and success rates at GCE A level are above national average on most courses. On most GCE A-level courses, value added data show that learners make only the progress that would be predicted from their GCSE points scores.
59. Learners demonstrate good subject knowledge in class and written work, though higher order analytical skills are less secure. Learners enjoy their work, and are enthusiastic and motivated, making good contributions to lessons. Attendance is good.
60. At GCE AS level, success rates on politics and psychology courses are below national average. Value added data show that learners on both GCE A and GCE AS-level economics make poor progress.

Quality of provision

61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers' expectations of learners are clear and classroom management is highly effective. High quality written resources are available to support teaching. The best materials encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers complement their lessons by innovative use of ILT, including discussion forums and interactive resources, which learners access from home. Assessment practices

make good use of peer marking. Teachers return marked work promptly with detailed, helpful comments. Additional learning support is effective.

62. Lessons are insufficiently demanding for the most able learners. In GCE AS-level lessons, the higher order skills of analysis, application and evaluation remain underdeveloped. In most lessons, teachers do not exploit opportunities to challenge learners and deepen understanding.
63. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners is good. Managers ensure that the curriculum offered responds well to the needs of learners. A GCE AS level in citizenship and GCSE sociology provide additional opportunities for learners. The department makes a significant contribution to key skills provision through its innovative psychology course.
64. Guidance and support for learners are good. Tutors monitor the progress of learners effectively and target timely support effectively. Managers use data particularly effectively to identify those learners at risk of underachievement. Information, advice and guidance in relation to career progression and HE are excellent.

Leadership and management

65. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Teachers and managers focus clearly on raising success rates and actively seek and share new strategies for improvement. Managers plan courses well and regular monitoring ensures that teachers follow schemes of work.
66. Managers monitor learners' performance by gender, ethnicity and other factors closely. Teachers promote equal opportunities and diversity actively in lessons.
67. The self-assessment process has insufficient rigour. Course reviews do not capture key strengths and areas for improvement effectively, particularly in relation to teaching and learning. The training of staff in self-assessment is inadequate. The outcomes of lesson observation are not exploited fully.

Languages, literature and culture

Good: Grade 2

Context

68. The college offers GCE AS and A levels in English, English language and literature, literature, French, German, Italian and Spanish, and GCSE English. The college offers these subjects also as part of its International Baccalaureate provision. The FLAW qualification is offered in Spanish. There are 718 learners on English courses and 118 on modern foreign language (MFL) courses. All but two learners are aged 16 to 18 and studying full-time.

Strengths

- very high success rates in GCE A and AS-level MFL
- very high success rates on GCSE English
- much good teaching
- wide choice of subjects to enable progression from level 2
- good support for the needs of individual learners.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient opportunities for more able learners to develop skills in English and MFL
- poor planning of accommodation for MFL courses.

Achievement and standards

69. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates in most MFL and in GCSE English are very high. Value added data show that most learners achieve the grades expected in relation to their GCSE points scores.
70. Learners develop excellent listening skills, a wide vocabulary and a good understanding of other cultures. Some are less confident in speaking. In English, learners develop good knowledge and skills and clearly enjoy discussing language and literature. The majority of learners use linguistic and literary terms appropriately. Attendance is good but punctuality in some English lessons is poor.

Quality of provision

71. Teaching and learning are good. Learners enjoy lively lessons with very good opportunities to interact and learn collaboratively with their peers. In the best lessons, teachers create good opportunities for learners to reflect on their own performance and to review that of others. Learners make perceptive observations about the poems they are studying. In MFL, teachers conduct all lessons in the foreign language, providing excellent opportunities for listening.

72. In languages, teachers use ILT very imaginatively to support learning. Assessment and monitoring of learners' work are good. Additional learning support is effective.
73. In some English lessons, however, activities do not have sufficient challenge for learners with the potential to achieve the highest grades. In MFL, some lessons do not provide enough opportunities for more extended speaking. Too often teachers do not encourage speaking which makes use of extended complex sentences and discussion.
74. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners is good. Large numbers of learners take GCSE English, which enables them to progress to employment, further education or training. The wide choice of MFL and English courses at level 3 provides excellent progression opportunities. Learners who speak additional languages, such as Urdu or Polish, are also helped to gain qualifications.
75. Guidance and support are good. Learners benefit from regular, helpful, subject-specific support from teachers, tutors and language assistants. Information, advice and guidance in relation to career progression and HE are excellent.

Leadership and management

76. Leadership and management are good. Managers provide clear direction and courses are well organised. Teams share a common purpose and teachers are encouraged to develop innovative approaches. The sharing of ideas across MFL teaching is leading to improvements; for example, in the use of ILT to support learning.
77. Teachers plan opportunities to promote greater understanding of equality and diversity but sometimes miss them when they arise in lessons.
78. The self-assessment report gives an accurate overall picture of the provision but some aspects of quality assurance, such as course reviews, lack rigour. Some good initiatives to improve the quality of provision are in place.
79. Accommodation for modern foreign languages is inadequate. Rooms are dispersed across the campus and are often cramped or unsuitable.

Business, administration and law

Good: Grade 2

Context

80. The college offers GCE AS and A-level courses in business studies, accounting and law. There are over 700 learners on these courses. There is a single GCSE course in business and communications systems. BTEC vocational business courses are offered at levels 1, 2 and 3 and certificate and diploma courses in administration are offered at levels 2 and 3. Some 368 learners are on these courses. Fifty learners are taking legal secretaries courses. More than 100 learners following GCE A-level programmes are also taking additional qualifications in administration. At the time of inspection there were 1,218 learners.

Strengths

- high success rates on most courses
- excellent value-added scores on GCE AS and GCE A-level law
- much good teaching
- good advice, guidance and matching of programmes to learners' interests and needs
- very effective monitoring of learners' progress.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient planning of lessons to meet the individual needs of some learners
- insufficient opportunities for work experience
- insufficient use of external links to share good practice.

Achievement and standards

81. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates across GCE programmes are high and typically above 90%. On vocational programmes, success rates are above national average. Learners on law programmes make outstanding progress relative to their GCSE points scores. The proportion of high grade passes is exceptional in law.
82. The standard of learners' written and oral work is generally good. The best written work on vocational courses is imaginative and based securely in a vocational context and characterised by good independent research and presentation. Learners enjoy their courses and satisfaction levels are very high. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Quality of provision

83. Teaching and learning are good. This strength is recognised in the college self-assessment report. Teachers plan lessons well and include a wide variety of logically structured learning activities. In the best lessons the activities are imaginative and teachers use ILT very well. The virtual learning environment provides good forums for communication and learning. Assessment is

satisfactory. Teachers mark learners' work conscientiously and return it promptly. Additional learning support is effective.

84. In weaker lessons teachers do not focus sufficiently on learning. Lesson planning documentation shows a comprehensive understanding of the learners' current and past attainments but teachers do not always use this knowledge effectively to meet individual needs.
85. The development of employability skills in lessons is limited and there are too few opportunities for work experience, particularly for learners on vocational courses.
86. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners is good. The combination of GCE and administration and business courses is particularly well matched to individual needs. The curriculum provides a very good range of additional courses to enrich learning and to develop functional skills.
87. Guidance and support are good. Learners appreciate the advice and guidance they receive before and on programme. Tutors discuss learners' progress regularly and motivationally with learners. Information, advice and guidance in relation to career progression and HE are excellent.

Leadership and management

88. Leadership and management are good. Overall success rates have improved faster than national averages since 2004/05. Quality improvement arrangements are good at course level. Teachers are well qualified. The self-assessment is broadly accurate.
89. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Managers monitor the performance of different groups of learners well but actions to promote equality of opportunity through the curriculum are not well developed.
90. Managers have yet to develop good strategies to identify and share good practice. For example, there are few links with external organisations, which leaders might use to promote best practice within the department.

Learners' achievement **

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
1 Long	05/06	232	84	71	13	8	12	57	-45
	06/07	198	83	73	10	7	71	64	7
	07/08*	103	88	N/A		6	50	N/A	
Other	05/06	215	84	71	13	8	12	57	-45
	06/07	198	83	72	11	7	71	64	7
	07/08*	103	88	N/A				N/A	

* college data

** course areas with low numbers or which have been discontinued have been omitted from the table for improved clarity

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
2 Long	05/06	906	80	78	2	18	22	65	-43
	06/07	1,022	86	81	5	17	59	65	-6
	07/08*	1,111	87	N/A		9	44	N/A	
GCSEs	05/06	547	84	82	2				
	06/07	438	85	83	2				
	07/08*	441	86	N/A					
GNVQs and precursors	05/06	17	82	77	5				
	06/07	34	82	78	4				
	07/08*	36	72	N/A					
Other	05/06	342	75	70	5	18	22	63	-41
	06/07	550	87	79	8	17	59	62	-3
	07/08*	634	88	N/A		9	44	N/A	

* college data

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
3 Long	05/06	6,340	84	84	0	15	87	65	22
	06/07	6,170	84	85	-1	5	0	69	-69
	07/08*	6,240	85	N/A		2	100.0	N/A	
A/A2 Levels	05/06	2,448	92	93	-1	12	92	78	14
	06/07	2,474	90	93	-3	3	0	80	-80
	07/08*	2,247	91	N/A				N/A	
AS Levels	05/06	3,174	80	79	1				
	06/07	3,372	79	80	-1				
	07/08*	3,657	83	N/A					
Other	05/06	142	80	79	1				
	06/07	297	76	80	-4				
	07/08*	336	82	N/A					

* college data