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Kensington and Chelsea College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
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Inspection report

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Kensington and Chelsea College
Type of college:	Further Education College
Principal:	Mike Jutsum
Address of college:	Hortensia Road, London SW10 0QS
Telephone number:	020 7573 3600
Fax number:	020 7351 0956
Chair of governors:	Sheila Porritt
Unique reference number:	130410
Name of lead inspector:	Alex Falconer, HMI
Dates of inspection:	26 February – 2 March 2007

Background of the organisation

1. Kensington and Chelsea College was established by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in 1990, by the merger of two former Inner London Education Authority adult education institutes. Most of the learners are over 19 years of age although an increasing number of learners aged 16-18 are enrolling on vocational courses. In addition to courses funded directly by the London Central Learning and Skills Council, the college also provides a wide range of non-vocational courses for adults on behalf of the Royal Borough. These include first steps courses, programmes that allow progression to further education (FE) and courses for enrichment and personal development. From July 2006, the college became lead provider for Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) in the western sector of London. The college has a small contract for the provision of work-based learning.
2. Kensington and Chelsea are made up of very diverse communities. Some sections of the population in the Royal Borough live with social and educational deficiencies and the college is classified as one of the 9% of FE colleges nationally where levels of deprivation are very high. This contrasts with other areas of housing occupied by entrepreneurs, professionals and City workers who command very high salaries. The college mission states that: "Kensington and Chelsea College provides high quality education, training and development programmes for adults to help them achieve their fullest potential as individuals and as members of society. In meeting this, the college will be responsive to national educational priorities, and to the needs of employers and the community".
3. In 2005/06, the college had a total of 27,544 enrolments. Over 9,000 learners followed FE courses, 4,200 were on adult and community programmes and 768 took part in other courses, such as higher education or full cost recovery. Four per cent of all learners declared a disability or learning difficulty and 61% were from black or minority ethnic heritage. Seventy-eight per cent of learners were female. In 2005/06, the total college budget was £12.1 million, with approximately £8.9 million received from the Learning and Skills Council and £650,000 received from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea under the Adult Learning Plan. The OLASS contract added £5.6m in July 2006. Subsequently, a further £2.5m has been added by European Social Fund (ESF) support for OLASS related work and a further £300,000 for community work related to the Probation Service.

Scope of the inspection

4. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; and data on enrolments and learners' achievements over the

period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:

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

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: grade 2
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Capacity to improve	Good: grade 2
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Achievements and standards	Satisfactory: grade 3
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Quality of provision	Good: grade 2
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Leadership and management	Good: grade 2
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Note: Where contributory grades have been awarded, they are shown in the relevant sections of the report. Contributory grades represent the judgement of the team that the quality of the aspect of provision indicated by the grade differs from the grade overall.

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: grade 2

5. Inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of provision as good. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Success rates have improved over the past three years. Adult success rates on long courses, the main provision of the college, were above the national average in 2006. However, success rates for learners aged 16-18 were satisfactory and success rates on short courses were below the national average. Learners often achieve good standards in their work, although their attendance and punctuality are poor. This was a weakness identified in the last inspection and at 72% in 2007 is a serious barrier to learners' success.
6. Teaching and learning are good. The college's self-assessment report accurately identifies the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. Learners are often purposefully engaged in lessons which are well planned by teachers to meet the needs of all learners. Learners make good progress and demonstrate appropriate skill development. The college successfully celebrates learners' achievements through attractive displays and exhibitions. Assessment is accurate. Good progress has been made in the provision and use of information learning technologies (ILT) in teaching and learning. Some lessons do not meet the full range of learners' needs and individual learning plans do not always identify specific, measurable targets.
7. The approach to social and educational inclusion is good, with a good and expanding range of curriculum opportunities to meet the needs and interests of learners. The OLASS provision has been well planned and developed. In addition, the college has a small work-based learning programme and plans for additional discrete courses for learners aged 16-18 are well advanced. Good partnership arrangements exist with the LSC, employers and other education providers.
8. Guidance and support for learners are good. Initial guidance and enrolment information is comprehensive. Good individual support is provided for those whose first language is not English. The tutorial provision is well regarded by learners and they are effectively supported in progressing to further study. Learners feel safe and the college works hard to help learners adopt healthy life styles. There are appropriate arrangements for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
9. Leadership and management are good. The principal and senior managers provide clear leadership and the college has successfully developed new curriculum and community links. Communication throughout the college is good and staff development has been effective in supporting change. Quality assurance procedures are well established but some aspects lack rigour.

Governance is good. Financial management is good and the college provides satisfactory value for money.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

10. The college demonstrates a good capacity to improve its provision for learners. Managers, governors and staff are committed to modernising and widening the curriculum and engaging with partners. Self-assessment is inclusive and the report identifies key strengths and weaknesses, presenting an accurate assessment of the college.

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

11. The college has made good progress in addressing areas for improvement noted in the last inspection in 2002. These include substantial improvements to the range of provision, including OLASS, work-based learning and 14-19 provision. Other improvements are in support for learners, partnership arrangements, use of data to monitor performance, quality of tutorial provision and the introduction of ILT into classrooms and support facilities. The English as a foreign language provision has been reinspected and found satisfactory. There has been insufficient progress made in improving attendance.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- safe and welcoming environment for learners
- good support for learners
- strong senior leadership
- good strategic planning
- strong partnership working.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- poor attendance
- accessibility of some accommodation
- impact of quality assurance in raising standards.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

12. The achievements and standards of learners are satisfactory. Overall success rates for adult and 16-18 year old learners show an upward trend from 2003/04 to 2005/06. Success rates for adult learners, the main provision of the college, have improved over the past three years. In 2003/04, adult success rates on long courses were below national average at all levels and improved to above average in 2005/06. Success rates for learners aged 16-18 are generally satisfactory, although they too have improved over three years. However, short course success rates have remained below national averages.
13. Pass rates have also improved since the last inspection. Learners achieved good pass rates in 2006 in hairdressing and beauty therapy, fine art, fashion and design. In other areas such as food studies, sports and health and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), however, pass rates were much lower. Progression to other FE courses and on to higher education has increased and, in the main, learners make progress with their studies in line with that predicted from their prior attainment. Overall retention is satisfactory and has shown an improved trend over the past three years. Retention rates in 2006 were best in fashion, fine art, graphic design and modern foreign languages.
14. The attendance and punctuality of learners continue to be poor. This weakness was identified in the previous inspection and, despite action from senior managers and curriculum leaders, attendance has improved little over the past three years. At 72%, attendance is a serious barrier to learners' completion and achievement.
15. The standard of learners' work in lessons and workshops is good. For example, oral skills are well developed in adult evening modern foreign language programmes. Learners' technical skills are well developed in the creative and performing arts. In addition, discussion and debate are encouraged in a range of courses and play an important role in developing learners' confidence.
16. The college successfully celebrates the achievements of the learners through attractive displays, specialist exhibitions and shows. Millinery and visual and performing arts learners regularly receive top prizes in national competitions.

Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

17. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The college's self-assessment of teaching and learning is accurate. Most teachers plan their lessons effectively to meet the needs of learners. In the better lessons, all learners are purposefully engaged and contribute constructively to discussions. They work well in small groups with good humour and support each other. They are confident in presenting their ideas and findings from collaborative work. The standard of

- learners' work in lessons is good. On visual arts programmes, learners demonstrate good knowledge and technical skills. Their work is prominently displayed throughout the college. Assessment is effective and teachers are skilled in observing, listening and recording learners' developing knowledge, skills and abilities. Good progress has been made in the provision and use of ILT in teaching and learning. However, some teachers still need to update their teaching resources. Effective vocationally contextualised key skills assignments are used in health, care and early years care programmes.
18. A minority of lessons are poorly planned; lesson materials are out of date and fail to meet the needs of individual learners. Individual learning plans do not always identify specific measurable targets for learners and progress against these targets is not sufficiently monitored.
 19. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is good, and improving. There are school partnerships in five curriculum areas for September 2007 and the college has applied to pilot the specialised diploma in construction. Work-based learning programmes have recently been introduced and the number of 16-18 year old full-time learners is increasing. The college has a centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) for career pathways in the National Health Service. Skills for Life are being embedded in vocational programmes. A photography course for deaf learners has been introduced. OLASS and ESF transition projects are allowing development of construction and courses for offenders. Good partnership arrangements exist with the LSC, employers, schools and local education authorities. They are extremely positive about the role and responsiveness of the college. Good progression opportunities exist internally and externally. Enrichment activities include relevant trips and visits, but there are few opportunities for learners to take part in sporting activities.
 20. Guidance and support for learners are good. Varied and clear pre-course information is available. Admissions interviews cover course requirements and costs. Additional learning support is good. Initial assessment identifies broad literacy and numeracy levels of learners, but there are some inconsistencies in the application of written tests. Improvements, such as testing for second language learners, are being introduced. Financial support, including child care, is well managed. Good individual ESOL support is provided. Particularly good support from communicators and support workers enables deaf learners to fully participate in learning. Induction raises awareness of welfare and additional support, such as counselling, available to learners. Good support is provided for applications to higher education, particularly for personal statements. The tutorial provision is good and is viewed positively by learners.

Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

21. Leadership and management are good. The principal has provided a new clear direction for the college with strong support from the senior team. The expansion into new areas of activity, such as in provision for learners aged 14-

- 19, OLASS and international recruitment, is clear and understood by staff. The college is responsive in meeting the needs of learners and employers in a highly competitive local environment. There is a culture of continuous improvement. Communication and teamwork throughout the college have improved and are now good. Staff development is effective in supporting curriculum and culture change. Staff appraisals are up to date. Financial management is good and the college provides satisfactory value for money.
22. Curriculum management is good overall. Staff development supports those in new or changed roles. Management of the developing work-based learning programme is good. The college has made significant investment in accommodation to provide modern, professional environments in the majority of vocational areas. New facilities have been secured for new areas of learning and maintenance plans match the college's development plans. Accommodation in some areas is still unattractive and the college has developed an appropriate property strategy to address this. Learning resources are good. Significant recent investment has taken place in IT resources. Teachers comment positively on the improvements to the range of teaching and learning techniques they can now employ.
23. Quality assurance procedures are comprehensive and often well applied. Senior managers review programmes, aspects of the quality improvement plan are implemented by course teams and learners' views are considered. However, although success rates have improved, performance remains below national averages in some areas. There is a significant campaign in place to improve attendance and retention, but attendance remains low. The college's teaching observation process lacks rigour. Some observers are reluctant to feedback more challenging issues identified during the observations and fail to accurately convey their judgments to enable teachers to improve their practice.
24. The self-assessment process is well established. Staff are able at all levels to indicate how provision for learners has improved as a result of the processes. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report.
25. The college's response to social and educational inclusion is good and it actively promotes learning opportunities for disadvantaged groups. Learners feel safe at the college and there is a strong sense of respect for others. Satisfactory efforts have been made to meet the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002. However, only 59% of accommodation is currently accessible for those with restricted mobility.
26. Staff are well qualified with specialist relevant curriculum expertise. They reflect the ethnic mix of the community. Minority ethnic groups are underrepresented at management level, but the college has embarked on an initiative to support managers from minority ethnic groups. The college meets its statutory requirements under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The achievements of learners from minority ethnic groups are monitored but analysis shows no significant difference in performance between ethnic groups.

An extensive programme of staff training has taken place in equality and diversity and appropriate policies are in place to ensure that the college is fully compliant in this area. The college meets its statutory requirements under the Children Act 2004. Required checks have been successfully completed for those staff with significant contact with younger learners. The college has an appropriate policy for child protection and protection of vulnerable adults and staff are aware of their responsibilities. There is a range of equality improvement groups.

27. Governance is good. Governors are able to demonstrate significant improvements resulting from constructive challenge to the executive; for example, improvements in the quality of financial and other management information reporting. Governors provide strong support for the executive to implement change.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

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

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate#	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate#	Diff
1 Long	03/04	62	45	59	-14	1519	50	60	-10
	04/05	86	49	62	-13	1230	58	64	-6
	05/06	43	58			765	60		
NVQs	03/04	9	89	61	+28	90	58	66	-8
	04/05	15	87	66	+21	68	44	70	-26
	05/06	8	100			120	45		
Other	03/04	53	38	59	-21	1428	49	58	-9
	04/05	71	41	61	-20	1162	58	61	-3
	05/06	35	49			645	63		

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate#	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate#	Diff
2 Long	03/04	101	47	56	-9	949	66	54	+12
	04/05	63	52	60	-8	787	61	59	+2
	05/06	91	63			928	75		
GCSEs	03/04	42	57	64	-7	285	71	58	+13
	04/05	26	50	65	-15	264	66	63	+3
	05/06	23	61			207	71		
NVQs	03/04	17	18	50	-32	144	55	54	+1
	04/05	27	52	56	-4	159	54	62	-8
	05/06	19	74			84	51		
Other	03/04	42	48	53	-5	520	66	53	+13
	04/05	10	60	58	+2	363	62	57	+5
	05/06	49	59			637	79		

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate#	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate#	Diff
3 Long	03/04	27	74	57	+17	624	63	54	+9
	04/05	26	65	62	+3	553	62	57	+5
	05/06	50	60			687	68		
A/A2 Levels	03/04	17	76	84	-8	73	53	71	-18
	04/05	13	62	85	-23	63	59	74	-15
	05/06	23	78			56	64		
AS Levels	03/04	1	100	60	+40	64	64	50	+14
	04/05	1	100	63	+37	65	49	53	-4
	05/06	3	67			80	58		
NVQs	03/04	1	100	50	+50	45	51	48	+3
	04/05					28	75	54	+21
	05/06					43	60		
Other	03/04	8	63	51	+12	442	66	54	+12
	04/05	12	67	56	+11	397	64	56	+8
	05/06	24	42			508	70		

Table 4

Success rates on short courses, expected end year and age, 2004 to 2006, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Exp End Year	16-18				19+				
	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate#	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate#	Diff	
Short All Levels	03/04	567	55	74	-19	11063	66	80	-14
	04/05	528	63	77	-14	12048	71	83	-12
	05/06	428	71	77	-6	9447	71	83	-12

#National rates for 05/06 are not yet available – so national rates for 04/05 have been used.