

**REPORT  
FROM THE  
INSPECTORATE**

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# **Middlesbrough College**

**January 1997**

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**THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL**

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**THE FURTHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL**

*The Further Education Funding Council has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate inspects and reports on each college of further education every four years. The inspectorate also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum and gives advice to the FEFC's quality assessment committee.*

*College inspections are carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circular 93/28. They involve full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have knowledge and experience in the work they inspect. Inspection teams normally include at least one member who does not work in education and a member of staff from the college being inspected.*

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## **GRADE DESCRIPTORS**

*The procedures for assessing quality are set out in the Council Circular 93/28. During their inspection, inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Their assessments are set out in the reports. They also use a five-point grading scale to summarise the balance between strengths and weaknesses.*

*The descriptors for the grades are:*

- grade 1 – provision which has many strengths and very few weaknesses*
- grade 2 – provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses*
- grade 3 – provision with a balance of strengths and weaknesses*
- grade 4 – provision in which the weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths*
- grade 5 – provision which has many weaknesses and very few strengths.*

*By June 1996, some 329 college inspections had been completed. The grade profiles for aspects of cross-college provision and programme areas for the 329 colleges are shown in the following table.*

### **College grade profiles 1993-96**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Inspection grades</b>				
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Programme area	9%	59%	29%	3%	<1%
Cross-college provision	14%	50%	31%	5%	<1%
Overall	12%	54%	30%	4%	<1%

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# FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 05/97

**MIDDLESBROUGH COLLEGE**  
**NORTHERN REGION**  
**Inspected March-October 1996**

## Summary

Middlesbrough College was established as a tertiary college on 1 August 1995 as the result of a merger between a general further education college and a sixth form college. The board and senior managers provide firm direction, and considerable progress has been made in creating a single strong organisation. In the vocational areas covered by the college, and in general education, an extensive range of courses offers good opportunities for progression. The overall standard of teaching is high and students on vocational courses, in particular, achieve well. The academic work of the college receives good administrative support and all managers benefit from an effective and accessible computerised information system. The physical resources used on many of the vocational courses reflect industrial standards. There are close links with employers through the governors and at course level. To maintain its progress the college should address: the weaknesses in the senior and middle management structure; the low proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who follow general and vocational courses; inconsistencies in the quality assurance system and the need for it to be extended to service areas; significant resource difficulties associated with one of its campuses.

The grades awarded as a result of the inspection are given below.

<b>Aspects of cross-college provision</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Responsiveness and range of provision	2
Governance and management	2
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	3
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	2
accommodation	3

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Science, including mathematics	2	Health and social care	2
Business	2	Hairdressing and beauty	1
Secretarial	2	English, modern languages and other humanities	2
Hotel and catering, including leisure and tourism	2	Basic education, including provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	3

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1 The college was inspected between March and October 1996. Inspectors spent a total of 82 days in the college. They visited 217 classes, examined students' work and inspected enrolment and induction processes. Discussions were held with college governors, managers, staff, and students. Inspectors met with representatives of business and industry, including the Teesside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), and spoke with staff from Teesside University, head teachers and others in the local community who have a strong interest in the college.

## **THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS**

2 Middlesbrough College was established as a tertiary college on 1 August 1995 as the result of a merger between a general further education college and a sixth form college. The principal centre for vocational courses is the Kirby campus which is one mile to the south of the centre of Middlesbrough. General education courses are largely based at the Acklam campus which is about a mile further south.

3 Middlesbrough has a population of 150,000 and was established as a separate authority in 1996 as a result of local government reorganisation. It is part of the Teesside conurbation which is a major centre for chemical and heavy industries. However, over 60 per cent of those in employment are in the service sector in small and medium-sized businesses. In July 1996, unemployment in Middlesbrough was over 16 per cent compared with 14 per cent for the region and 7.6 per cent nationally. Of the unemployed, 40 per cent are long term, and 30 per cent are under 25 years of age. Middlesbrough borough has 4.4 per cent of its population from minority ethnic groups, mainly of Asian origin, and this proportion is reflected in the college's enrolments.

4 The number of young people in Middlesbrough pursuing post-16 education has risen from 37 per cent in 1987 to 54 per cent in 1996. This remains below the regional figure of 60 per cent and the national figure of 70 per cent. A further 21 per cent of young people enter full-time youth training schemes. Fewer than 5 per cent of those leaving Middlesbrough schools enter employment.

5 There are three other further education institutions in the Middlesbrough authority: Cleveland College of Art and Design, St Mary Roman Catholic Sixth Form College, and Teesside Tertiary College which is also the result of a recent merger. The authority has one city technology college and 15 other 11 to 16 schools. In addition, the Teesside conurbation contains another four general further education colleges, five sixth form colleges, three 11 to 18 schools and two 11 to 18 independent schools. Middlesbrough College attracts students from a wide area. Approximately 54 per cent come from Middlesbrough, 32 per cent from other Teesside authorities and 14 per cent from outside the region.

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6 The previous college on the Kirby campus had been designated as a specialist institution for courses associated with business and the service industries. As a result, Middlesbrough College does not offer courses in construction and engineering. Its main vocational programmes, based primarily at the Kirby campus, are in business and secretarial studies; leisure and tourism; health and care; hospitality and catering; and hairdressing and beauty. Higher education courses are available in some of these areas, mainly through collaboration with Teesside University.

7 In 1995-96, the college enrolled 8,532 students of whom 1,600 were on full-time courses. Student numbers by age, by level of study, and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2 and 3, respectively. The college employs the equivalent of 283 staff on full-time or fractional contracts, of whom 161 are in teaching posts. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4. Apart from the senior managers, academic staff are grouped into nine schools which are aligned with the main curriculum areas.

8 The college's stated mission is to 'provide a high-quality learning environment characterised by lifelong opportunity for students'. It states that it will achieve this mission by:

- responding positively to the needs of its students (present and future)
- appointing staff with appropriate skills and qualifications, supporting their employment through appropriate training and other professional development, and actively promoting equal opportunities for all who work and study at the college
- becoming an accessible resource for the local community
- increasing student participation through recruitment, retention and achievement
- enabling each student through guidance, counselling and support to develop fully their potential, abilities and competence
- contributing to the prosperity and quality of life in the area
- using available resources efficiently and effectively
- ensuring a sound financial base for the corporation to support the mission
- contributing to the national targets for education and training.

#### **RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION**

9 The governors and managers of the college have decided not to enter programme areas already extensively covered by other specialist providers in the locality. Within the remaining vocational provision, the range of subjects covered and the opportunities provided for progression are good.

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A particular feature is the number of learning opportunities offered for those who have low level qualifications on entry. These include:

- 14 national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at level 1
- four general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) at foundation level
- 27 NVQs or their equivalent at level 2
- seven GNVQs at intermediate level.

10 Students can progress from these to courses leading to 14 NVQs at level 3, to seven GNVQs or to five other advanced level qualifications. Three-quarters of the NVQs, and 90 per cent of the GNVQs or their equivalents, recruited sufficiently to run in 1995-96. At the higher level, the college offers five NVQ programmes at level 4, four higher national certificate programmes and two higher national diploma programmes. In addition, there is a large number of courses leading to professional qualifications, for example the certificate and diploma for legal secretaries and the national certificate for licensees. The college's courses are mainly provided through the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC), the City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) and the RSA Examinations Board (RSA). Students can progress in their vocational area through full-time, part-time day and evening-only attendance. Opportunities for pursuing vocational courses through more flexible attendance patterns are limited.

11 The extensive range of general education subjects includes:

- 47 general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects
- 19 GCE advanced supplementary (AS) subjects
- 39 general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) subjects.

In 1995-96, 37 of the GCE A level subjects, four of the GCE AS and 25 of the GCSE subjects recruited successfully. The majority of subjects are offered full time or part time. A positive feature is the number of subjects available at each level which can be followed through flexible attendance or through distance learning. However, not many students are attracted to this route. In 1995-96, 62 students undertook 24 GCE A level and GCSE subjects from a total of 38 subjects available. The college offers three access programmes which provide routes to higher education for adults with few prior qualifications.

12 The college's provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is mainly through separate specialist courses which focus on independent living and pre-vocational skills. The college works closely with local special schools and training centres. It offers link courses in the summer term to help students cope with the change to a college environment. There are good examples of the college providing programmes suited to particular groups of students which they find enjoyable and stimulating. Students from the Upsall Hall centre for adults



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with learning difficulties have benefited from an NVQ level 1 programme in catering and are now operating their own food outlet at the centre. The college has established a salon at Kiltonthorpe special school where second-year students help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to acquire hairdressing skills. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who attend other courses at the college is low and largely limited to those with physical, hearing or visual impairments or dyslexia.

13 Links between the college and local schools are extensive. In several instances, the collaboration of the college's staff and/or students with the schools has distinctly and beneficially affected the experience of pupils. The 'Aiming Further and Higher' project, which was partly funded by Teesside TEC and involved 10 secondary schools, gained a regional training award in 1996. In this project, pupils' key stage 4 work has been accredited by the college for recognition in GNVQ units and teachers have been assisted to achieve assessor/verifier awards. The majority of participating schools now offer GNVQ units or part units, or certificated information technology skills, in their curriculum. In another constructive partnership, a primary school in an area of social deprivation accepts students from the nursery nurses course on weekly half-day placements to work on basic skills with individual pupils. Students and staff have taken the children on day trips and last year 23 children joined students on a three-day residential programme of outdoor activities.

14 The college's declared aim to become 'an accessible resource for the local community' lacks a clear focus in the college to promote its implementation. However, access is being widened by the offer of places in the college nursery to the public and by the college music society which brings groups of performers from outside the college to its public concerts. A small number of programmes, mainly in information technology, childcare and youth leadership, are delivered at other centres through collaborative arrangements with community groups.

15 Links between employers and the college are strong. Employers appreciate the prompt attention they receive from college staff and the direct, reliable communication arrangements. Vocational areas have advisory committees with a membership predominantly from industry or commerce; employers are regularly invited to join panels that review the quality of courses. Employers speak highly of the quality of the students whom they subsequently employ and of the standards the college achieves in its vocational work. However, the income which the college derives from providing specific courses or other services to businesses is small. Some of this work is delivered through the college company, Training and Management Enterprises, and some directly through the schools within the college.

16 College managers are placing an increased emphasis on the marketing of the college and its services. Marketing is the responsibility of

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one of the assistant principals who is supported in this work by a full-time marketing officer. A college marketing group includes deputy heads of schools and the Training and Management Enterprises manager. Its role is to support the marketing team in achieving the college's general marketing goals and objectives, and in the implementation of the college's marketing strategy. Promotion includes press advertising and editorials, targeted circulars, local radio advertising and sponsorship of commercial radio programmes. Considerable effort is put into aligning college promotional activity with national awareness-raising events such as adult learners week. The college has relied mainly on broad labour market information supplied by the local TEC and others, but now realises that it needs more sophisticated information. The college's stance on marketing is moving quickly from one relying on its reputation for providing education and training of high quality for specific client groups to one aiming at a wider client base. However, there is still a perception among those dealing with the college that it is less well known than other colleges in the locality.

17 The college has made a clear commitment to equal opportunities in its mission statement. The equal opportunities group is a subgroup of the academic board. It includes a member of the governing body and representatives of the senior management team. The group has recently undertaken a review of the college's equal opportunities policy and has produced an action plan which identifies clear targets, timescales and responsibilities for its implementation. The policy and the action plan have been considered, and are supported, by organisations outside the college involved with equal opportunities and racial equality. The college operates a friendship scheme for overseas students which brings together overseas students and English speaking students who are studying at the college on a one-to-one basis.

#### **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

18 The governors and managers have successfully steered the college through a period of difficulty and change as a result of the merger following so soon after incorporation. The number of staff has decreased significantly, mainly through voluntary redundancies; this, together with the introduction of new contracts, has involved considerable upheaval.

19 The college's board of corporation should have 20 members. At the time of the inspection there were only 14 members, but nominations have been agreed to fill the vacancies. The existing members bring a wide and relevant experience to the board. Well-considered appointments have resulted in a balance in the numbers of female and male governors. The membership includes the principal, representation from a minority ethnic group, and a member whose professional work is with people with disabilities. There are two staff members, one from the support staff and the other a teacher. The independent members represent most of the vocational areas of the college's work. They include representatives from

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Teesside TEC and from higher education, and two co-opted members one of whom is the chairman of the board. Governors have established a code of conduct and the clerk maintains a register of interests. The board set up a search committee to fill the six vacancies. The nominations took account of an analysis of the current governors' interests and expertise. An induction programme has been planned for the incoming members.

20 The merger created a considerable workload for board members and there was poor attendance at some committee meetings. In order to alleviate this, the assets and premises, and the finance and general purposes committees have been combined, reducing the number of committees to seven. The governors are kept well informed by the principal and the directorate. For example, Council Circular 96/13, *Financial Returns* was discussed at the first meeting after its publication. There have been a number of training events to ensure that governors are able to make informed decisions. Governors have strong links with the academic work of the college. Some are members of advisory boards and all receive the minutes of the academic board. Governors attend the equal opportunities group and the refectory reorganisation working group. Their links with the student body are less developed; the board has identified ways to help to make them more effective.

21 Members of the board are clear about their strategic role. They have, in collaboration with senior managers, determined the mission and 13 strategic objectives which formed the basis of the college's strategic plan. The plan contains a variety of indicators which governors use regularly to monitor the college's performance.

22 The two main management groups within the college are the directorate, comprising the principal, vice-principal, five assistant principals and the clerk to the governors, and the college management committee. The head of finance attends directorate meetings by standing invitation. The college management committee is chaired by the vice-principal and attended by the heads of schools or their deputies. Members of the directorate work well together and communicate with each other effectively. Issues identified are usually dealt with quickly, but some decisions have been made with insufficient consultation with those most affected. Directorate and college management committee meetings are well run and minutes are efficiently kept. The college recognises that the number of senior post holders is too high. The board has decided to undertake a review of senior posts by April 1997. There are few women at or above head of school management level.

23 The strategic plan is implemented at college and school level through annual operating statements derived from the plan. The principal regularly reviews the work of members of the directorate by monitoring the achievement of targets within these operating statements. The vice-principal similarly monitors the performance of the heads of school against each school's operating statements.

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24 The vice-principal and heads of schools are responsible for the academic programme. The management arrangements show some weaknesses. The schools have deputy and assistant heads, though the tasks undertaken within these roles vary between schools. There are college co-ordinators responsible for student services and information technology who report directly to an assistant principal. The effectiveness of the co-ordination of cross-college activities is variable. For example, there is no forum for the work of internal verifiers. The agendas and minutes of meetings at school and course level show considerable variation in quality.

25 The academic board meets every term. It has an effective structure of seven subcommittees. While most members attend the main board regularly, the more frequent meetings of its subcommittees lead to some absenteeism. Although the principal and vice-principal are ex-officio members of the board, they do not attend meetings. This is intended to enable more open discussion of matters prior to advising the principal. Current college policies are inconsistent in approach and lack co-ordination. There is no structure for determining or routinely reviewing them. Subcommittees of the academic board believe that their draft policies go through the academic board to the principal and to the governing body for ratification, but there are instances of policies considered as approved which have not followed these procedures. The college's health and safety committee has appropriate representation. Risk assessment and accident analysis is carried out, but the committee's work is not routinely reported to the governing body and it does not set targets for its operation.

26 The college's budget and income targets are determined by the governing body which receives regular reports from the principal. The delegation of resources to schools is managed by the assistant principal (resources) in conjunction with the assistant principal (human resource development), the head of finance and the appropriate head of school. A sophisticated resourcing model is used which is well understood. Heads of schools have had training to ensure that they can use the model to plan their academic programmes. The computerised financial management information system is effective. It generates useful reports at a variety of managerial levels which are open to all budget holders. For example, a costing summary sheet for all schools is available to each of the heads. Budget holders largely manage their budgets independently but overall control and responsibility remain with the directorate.

27 The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6. The college receives approximately 85 per cent of its income from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) recurrent funds. Its average level of funding has decreased from £17.07 per unit in 1994-95 to £17.00 in 1995-96. The median for tertiary and general further education colleges in 1995-96 was £17.84 per unit.

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28 The information requirements of different users of the computerised management information system were determined through consultation. The relevance of this information is maintained through a users' group. The main elements of this well-developed computerised system cover finance, assets, personnel, payroll and student enrolment. Eight other colleges purchase Middlesbrough College's payroll and personnel bureau services. The student record system has been developed internally. All these systems are extensively used by the majority of managers at, and above, head of school level. Tutors and individual teachers also use the terminals for their daily management duties. There is a substantial recovery plan in case of disastrous loss of data which involves storage of discs in another building and at a separate agency. Some staff still maintain independent paper databases.

### **STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

29 The college gives a high priority to making students welcome in the college. Liaison with 50 secondary schools in Cleveland and North Yorkshire is co-ordinated effectively by a cross-college schools services committee which includes some students. Members of the committee, staff and students, visit secondary schools to talk about the college and its courses, and to interview year 11 pupils. They attend parents evenings, secondary school open evenings and careers conventions to give advice and guidance. The student members receive accreditation on their college courses for their contributions. Secondary school staff speak appreciatively of the responsiveness of individual college staff and their willingness to work with them. 'Taster' sessions, which enable prospective students to sample courses at the college, take place between November and February and during the summer term for prospective students from the secondary schools and elsewhere. These sessions help to inform their decisions about education and training. Students planning to join vocational programmes appreciate the opportunity these sessions provide for them to experience the practical aspects of their courses in advance. For example, prospective hair and beauty students receive basic training in the techniques of make-up.

30 The college made significant improvements to procedures for the enrolment of students at the beginning of the 1996-97 academic year. It acted speedily on information received from student questionnaires and evaluations, and on recommendations from the enrolment planning group. The well-managed enrolment period has been extended and enrolment times varied. The processes for receiving, monitoring, processing and documenting applications to the college are administered efficiently through the college's student services unit. All full-time students are interviewed by appropriate teaching staff prior to enrolment and there are clear entry criteria. Interviews are generally conducted impartially but there were instances of students being enrolled on inappropriate courses. Some students on health and care programmes were recruited onto a

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playgroup course because a more suitable course was not available: 42 per cent left prematurely because they found it too demanding. Part-time students do not always receive sufficiently-specific guidance to make an informed choice of course. Such students were not always aware of the significance of the learning agreement and other forms relating to guidance which they had signed.

31 The college recognised, through its review process, that the 1995 induction programme was unsatisfactory in some respects and refined it for September 1996. The new programme included tours of the college campus at which the students were to be based but rarely introduced them to facilities at the other campus. Tutors were clearly briefed on the procedures to follow and were supported by a comprehensive checklist. They managed the introductory tutorial meetings in different ways. While some tutors were expert at putting students at ease, others overwhelmed students with information. In some groups, students had not been introduced to other members of the group after three days in college. Responsibility for part-time induction rests with the schools. The college has a declared policy on accrediting students for their prior learning and this is applied effectively in many vocational areas.

32 The quality of the tutorial curriculum experienced by full-time students in 1995-96 was variable. It included provision for individual interviews with tutors and for a taught programme. The tutorial advisory group, comprising assistant heads of school, the careers adviser and the assistant principal (learning support), has revised the taught programme extensively for 1996-97 and provided a checklist of suggested areas to be covered. Some students remain dissatisfied with this aspect of the tutorial arrangements; they report that they generally use the time to complete other work. Careers advice forms part of the programme. The co-ordination of the careers advice provision, and the guidance system for those hoping to progress to higher education courses, are good. The college has a comprehensive service agreement with Future Steps, the regional careers service, for which it provides a permanent base. The organisations work well together; each college school is linked to a nominated careers adviser from Future Steps. Middlesbrough College is a member of a scheme which offers opportunities to several GCE A level students each year to attend week-long academic courses at Oxford and Cambridge which enhance their studies and introduce them to aspects of university life.

33 Students speak warmly of the individual support they receive from their subject teachers which is often freely given in the teachers' own time. Individual tutorial sessions are used to review the progress of each full-time student; tutors keep good records of the students' achievements. All full-time students are expected to complete action plans, but tutors' approaches to this are inconsistent. The college does not monitor the completion of records of achievement by the students and few students met in the inspection were actively encouraged to maintain these records.

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Attendance is closely monitored through an optical mark reader register system. Most tutors determine causes of absence rapidly and the system automatically prompts them to contact students after four days of unexplained absence.

34 Tutorials for part-time students were piloted in 1995-96. As a result of the positive response from students, they are now included within teaching time in most part-time courses in 1996-97. All part-time students receive personal interviews with staff and these are recorded. The 'flying tutor' scheme is a valued initiative in some schools. These tutors are full-time members of the teaching staff who are specifically timetabled to visit part-time classes. They deal with students' queries, advise on the completion of documentation and support visiting lecturers. These tutors identified part-time and adult students' wishes to participate in careers guidance and, in response, a further agreement was made with Future Steps. Action plans are not routinely completed by part-time students, some of whom are not sure whether they are reaching appropriate standards in their work.

35 The college has a considered approach to the diagnostic screening of incoming students who may need support in their studies. The year 1996-97 is the second of a three-year pilot programme and the college is consulting external agencies for advice and staff development. The number of students screened has been increased from 120 in the first year to over 300, including some students at the Acklam campus for the first time. In the third year, the intention is to screen all full-time students. This careful approach is intended to ensure that facilities are in place to meet the identified needs. A new workshop for numeracy and literacy development was opened on the Kirby campus in September 1996. Workshops operate on a smaller scale at the Acklam campus but attendance is poor. The number of teaching staff hours dedicated to supporting students in the workshops has been recently increased. Some observed workshop sessions failed to take sufficient account of students' individual needs.

36 Until August 1996, the college had no professional counselling provision. A part-time counsellor is now employed, working for 15 hours a week. This is a small amount of time in view of the size of the college, and there is an increasing demand for the service from students and staff. The counselling rooms are also used for other purposes, and lack sufficient privacy. Some students who are in receipt of benefit, or come from households where there is no wage earner, receive free childcare provision in the college's 24-place nursery. This is in welcoming and well-equipped accommodation on the Kirby campus. There is a waiting list for the places allocated for students.

37 Students regret the absence of social and recreational activities which would enable them to meet other students outside their immediate course. Student councils for each campus have recently been introduced. Some of the students' concerns have been addressed, such as the request for a

payphone at the Acklam campus. The students' union is moribund. The college is attempting to revitalise it and elections are scheduled. Students are cynical about the possible influence of formal student bodies.

### TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

38 Inspectors observed 217 learning sessions. Strengths outweighed weaknesses in 68 per cent of the sessions, and weaknesses outweighed strengths in only 6 per cent. The average attendance at the sessions inspected was 78 per cent. The best attendance was in health and care courses; the worst was in some humanities subjects. The following table shows the grades awarded to the sessions inspected.

#### Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level		9	19	12	3	1	44
GCSE		6	7	7	1	0	21
GNVQ		9	14	13	3	0	39
NVQ		14	12	6	1	0	33
Basic education		0	6	3	1	0	10
Other vocational*		12	12	7	1	0	32
Other		10	18	8	2	0	38
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>217</b>

\* includes vocational provision leading to qualifications from BTEC, C&G and RSA.

39 Teaching in science courses was guided by thorough schemes of work which included assignment dates, resource needs and specifications for students' activities. Individual lesson plans varied in quality; the best gave full details of timings and activities throughout the session and were shared with the students. A number of teaching techniques were used to good effect in the better sessions; these included practical work, group work, computer simulation and demonstration. In poorer lessons the pace of work was too slow and discussions were sometimes stilted. In some practical classes, insufficient care was taken to ensure that students wore protective clothing. Work was regularly set and marked within appropriate timescales. However, the records kept by a few teachers lacked detail and only recorded that work had been submitted rather than the standards achieved or the problems encountered. Overall, courses and lessons in mathematics were well planned. Students at the Kirby campus benefited from its mathematics workshop. At the Acklam campus, a joint student-staff workroom provided good learning opportunities. Students' progress in mathematics was carefully monitored and full records were kept. Mathematics teachers were inconsistent in their marking practices. Some work was meticulously annotated with reasons for lost marks clearly shown while in other cases marked work had no commentary.



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40 Business courses were well planned. Teachers prepared well for each session, and most students had done the preparatory work set for them. The enthusiasm of many teachers for their subject often motivated the students. A session covering the Factories Act was enlivened by humorous examples, appropriate case law and sharp questioning of students. Teachers did not always check students' understanding sufficiently. Vocational assignments were relevant and some benefited from being developed with local employers.

41 Teachers in administrative and secretarial studies were well organised and worked co-operatively in course teams. A good rapport was maintained with students. Teachers drew on knowledge which their students had gained in the workplace. Students were sometimes encouraged to negotiate the pace of work and the learning methods to be used to enable their learning needs to be better satisfied. One lecturer in information technology applications had produced an excellent guide to a commercial spreadsheet programme. A student had designed an innovative method of transposing data, and was asked to demonstrate the technique before the class. Some learning materials were of poor quality. Assessment and internal verification processes were promptly and effectively carried out and portfolio work was well organised. In one good session which took place at a petroleum company, the teacher guided the students through the types of evidence which could be used and assessed in the workplace.

42 The majority of sessions observed in courses dealing with hotel operations were awarded grade 1. Sessions based in classrooms were often timetabled for three hours but most were carefully planned by teachers who used a wide variety of methods to ensure that students' interest was maintained. Exposition was clear, material was related to what had gone before and to other modules, there was good use of questions and answers, and students' contributions were responded to promptly and used in the work. However, in some sessions teachers did not always check sufficiently whether learning had taken place and in a few sessions too much material was dictated or had to be copied down. The supportive teaching staff in catering studies were skilled in encouraging their students to develop skills in food preparation and associated subjects. Clear targets and aims within lessons led students to produce high standards of practical work. Learning packages provided a sound underpinning framework for practical sessions. The college kitchens and restaurants provided a satisfactorily realistic work environment for all full-time and advanced level part-time students, though not for part-time students at levels 1 and 2.

43 Students in leisure and tourism received a well-structured learning experience. The teachers' command of their subjects and knowledge of current industrial practice promoted students' learning. Some of the teaching was imaginative. In one GNVQ advanced class, students worked

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in pairs to role-play a welcome party for a group of tourists arriving at a resort. They prepared information in the form of notices, posters and a booklet. They then presented the information to the rest of the class, using aids such as video and audio tapes, and served welcoming refreshments. In a minority of lessons, teachers failed to share the purpose of the session with their students, or did not take into account students' ability or maturity. Assignments were well designed. They were marked with clear comments on how the work could be improved but marking did not pay sufficient attention to spelling and grammar.

44 Courses in health and childcare studies benefited from detailed schemes of work and lesson plans, and from assignments which were well designed. Students received learning materials of high quality, though the range of audio-visual aids used by teachers was often limited. Teachers successfully related lesson content to the interests and experience of their students, though they sometimes failed to check on students' learning or to provide them with opportunities to participate. Assessments of students' work were accurate, fair and consistent, but some written comments on students' work were poorly presented.

45 Half the sessions observed in hairdressing and beauty therapy were awarded a grade 1; none had weaknesses which outweighed the strengths. Good teaching was seen in both theory and practical sessions. Schemes of work and lesson plans were used systematically and all students were provided with good-quality learning packs and other handouts produced in the college. Effective class management often gave students responsibility for their learning in practical sessions, for example by acting as salon managers. However, some long sessions did not contain sufficient variety. Courses were enriched by periods of work experience, competition work, talks from suppliers and other special events. Assignments were regularly set and thoroughly marked; most teachers used a standard form to give a constructive commentary to the students.

46 Teaching in English was good overall; no observed classes had weaknesses which outweighed the strengths. Classroom management was sound, and well-formulated questions were used to good effect to promote learning. Some teaching was unimaginative and did not allow students to contribute. Marking of work was generally thorough. The GCE A level students at the Kirby campus were helped to reinforce their work on language structures by working closely with students on courses in English as a second or other language, and with students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Modern languages teaching was generally of a high standard and creative lesson planning developed students' competence in communication and core skills. In one GCE A level class carried out entirely in French, students worked in small groups to prepare for a debate on European Union membership and then presented their conclusions to the class. The teacher noted key points on the board and these were used as the basis for students' essays. In English and in some

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modern language subjects where the teaching is shared by a number of teachers, the lesson plans seen were poorly implemented and opportunities to build on each other's work were missed.

47 In other humanities subjects, the teaching was more variable in quality. The teachers' direct challenges to the students, passion for the subject and refusal to accept poor responses from students added sharpness and effectiveness to the best sessions. Lack of planning in the poorer sessions resulted in insufficient pace and few opportunities for students of differing capabilities to work at an appropriate level. Students' files were often disorganised. Teachers failed to check that learning was taking place in some of the group work sessions. Teachers on the public services and access programmes had effective documentation which identified core skills and personal development opportunities.

48 Teachers of basic education and of courses in English as a second or other language, and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, had thorough schemes of work and lesson plans. Records of tutorial activity and achievement were well maintained. The pace of work in sessions was generally appropriate to the student group and clear planning ensured a variety of learning opportunities in most sessions. The quality of oral feedback to students on assessed work was good though few helpful written comments were made. In the information technology workshop, self-management of learning was a strong feature. Few other opportunities for self-managed study were apparent elsewhere. Too many sessions consisted of a discussion led by the teacher. Some learning resources were unimaginative and few were in a form that non-readers could use. Opportunities were lost for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to develop reading skills, and too little use was made of information technology.

#### **STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS**

49 Specialist subject inspectors visited the college in March 1996. The most recent college and national performance data available at that time related to courses that were completed in 1994-95 in the two constituent colleges. The comments and comparisons made which follow refer to that data. The Department for Education and Employment waived the requirement for the new college to report on its 1994-95 results since these would refer to colleges which no longer existed. As a result, neither Middlesbrough College nor either of its two constituent colleges appear in nationally published data for that year. The college has calculated that the average points score (where grade A=10 points, E=2) achieved per GCE A level entry in 1995 was 3.9. This would place the college in the middle third of all further education institutions on this performance measure, based on the data in the 1995 tables published by the Department. Overall comparative data for vocational courses has not been calculated by the college.

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50 Students in the sciences and mathematics were able to work confidently on their own or in groups. Many pieces of work examined in science subjects showed the students' abilities to use computers as wordprocessors or to analyse experimental results. Too many students in GCSE mathematics classes lacked appropriate numeracy skills and did not maintain their files in reasonable order. Some GCE A level students in science subjects had low levels of prior achievement and found the work particularly difficult. GCE A level pass rates were appreciably above national figures in biological sciences and all the mathematics subjects. In pure and applied mathematics, all students who enrolled on the course achieved their qualification, and three-quarters of them obtained grades A to C. Results on other courses were more variable. For example, full-time GCE A level chemistry and physics and GCSE mathematics results were below national averages. Completion rates were generally poor in GCSE and evening courses.

51 In business studies, students worked well together in class and provided mutual support. Their contributions displayed a sound grasp of the principles of the subjects. On a range of business, secretarial and administration courses, a high number of students finished their studies though completion rates were low on a few full-time business courses. Pass rates on GNVQ advanced business studies were high, and many students were successful in additional units. There were high pass rates on short courses and single-subject qualifications in the secretarial and administration area, including courses leading to NVQs in business administration, RSA information technology awards and BTEC continuing education certificates. In contrast, pass rates in GCE A level and GCSE business subjects were poor. Full-time students taking the NVQ level 3 in business administration found it difficult to achieve their practical competencies in the work environment provided at the college.

52 A high standard of practical skills was exhibited by students on catering courses. Most NVQ students kept careful, detailed and concise records of their achievements. In some courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, appropriate work standards were not achieved and the system used to record evidence needed further development. Standards in hotel courses were high and results were generally better than national averages. On the two-year GNVQ advanced course in hospitality, 86 per cent of the students who enrolled remained in attendance to its end and 87 per cent of those who completed gained their award. This compares with a national pass rate of 36 per cent. Assignments were attractively presented, although too many were handed in late. Analysis and evaluation by students within their assignments were weak. Students on GNVQ courses in leisure and tourism achieved external test results and pass rates above the national average. They were generally motivated and worked well without direct supervision. Many classes required students to take part in role-play or to work in groups. Such activity was undertaken with good will and sometimes considerable flair.

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Students occasionally displayed weaknesses in numeracy, spelling and basic grammar.

53 Full-time students in childcare studies worked confidently and demonstrated professional skills. In some classes, students displayed critical abilities and management skills in discussion and project work. Students' assignment work in health studies courses was of high quality. Some of the assignments which had been awarded a distinction grade indicated substantial and impressive research and report writing skills. However, a significant proportion of students in health studies made little or no contribution to sessions. Results in the majority of childcare and health studies courses compared well with national averages. For example, 83 per cent of the students who enrolled on the two-year BTEC national diploma in nursery nursing completed their studies and all of those who completed achieved their qualification.

54 Some notable competition successes, including a C&G medal for the highest marks in the country, have created a strong corporate pride amongst students and staff on hairdressing and beauty therapy courses. Achievements in the great majority of their courses were high compared with national figures. The quality of the students training on, and graduating from, these courses was remarked upon by professionals in the industry who were interviewed during the inspection. One mature student from a course in teaching exercise and exercise to music has been nominated for an adult learners' week prize. He had previously worked as a diesel fitter and is now head instructor and deputy manager at a health club. A few hairdressing programmes had low completion and pass rates.

55 Students on GCE A level English courses generally handled difficult concepts well. They supported their judgements with well-prepared evidence in both oral and written work. Modern language students accepted a demanding work rate and developed good practical skills and a knowledge of the language they were learning in a wider context. The proportion of students who remained on their courses to the end varied considerably in English and foreign language subjects, though some improvements have been achieved on courses where retention was particularly poor. Pass rates for full-time GCE A level courses in English were generally above the comparable national averages. Those for the part-time classes, which were mainly held in the evening, were more varied. Pass rates in examinations in the various modern foreign language courses also varied widely.

56 Students seen in classes in other humanities subjects were lively and had come prepared with relevant materials to take part in sessions. However, many of the courses suffered from poor completion rates. Examination pass rates at GCSE and GCE A level in these areas were varied. For example, in full-time sociology courses the proportions of students who passed were above the comparable national figure whilst

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the results for those on the part-time GCE A level course were poor. The access courses, which are designed to enable adults to enter higher education, were successful in their aims. More than 80 per cent of the students who completed their courses obtained places in higher education.

57 Students in basic education classes recognised their improved abilities. In most of the sessions observed, the progress made by students was evident and this included improved skills in problem solving and communication. Students of English as a second or other language, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, maintained their attendance on their courses well. Those on the GNVQ foundation in health and social care showed less commitment; the attendance in the sessions observed was 68 per cent. The achievement of qualifications varied considerably between areas. Some students were entered for inappropriate qualifications: students of English as a second or other language were entered prematurely for their intermediate level examinations, while those on GNVQ foundation in health and social care were put in for a mathematics examination which they felt was too easy for them.

58 Over both constituent institutions, 45 per cent of the students on full-time courses who completed in 1995 went on to university or other higher education courses. A further 13 per cent progressed within further education or enrolled at a specialist art college. Five per cent were accepted on youth training schemes. Half of the students who were successful in full-time advanced level vocational courses progressed to a higher education course, and a quarter found employment.

#### **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

59 The college is committed through its mission statement, strategic plan and operational statements to providing a high-quality learning environment for all students. Quality assurance was more highly developed at the previous general further education college than at the sixth form college. Since the merger, the college has rapidly introduced common arrangements but these are not yet fully in place and effective. A quality policy and common documentation for course review are included in the staff handbook. A committee for quality assurance, a staff-development committee and a programme validation committee have been established as subcommittees of the academic board. Responsibility for quality assurance lies with the assistant principal (programme development). Deputy heads of school have a responsibility for quality assurance within their schools.

60 Schools are required to review their performance annually using common procedures, documentation and performance indicators. The school review process uses a checklist based on Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*, and draws on reviews by all course teams within a school. The rigour of school review reports varies. Course review procedures cover all full-time and part-time courses and are also

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applied to collaborative arrangements. Courses offered by Training and Management Enterprises are subject to procedures accredited through International Standards Organisation (ISO) 9000 but these procedures have not otherwise informed the college's quality system. Course reviews have sometimes been effective in focusing on quality improvement and some action plans have provided a sound basis for school review and the development of school operational plans. A number of curriculum areas follow the good practice of using representatives from other schools as a means of cross-moderating course reviews. However, not all course reviews are sufficiently evaluative and procedures are not always implemented.

61 Enrolments and pass rates are generally reviewed against past performance and national averages. While all courses identify enrolment targets, targets for retention and achievement are not always set at course level. There are clear procedures for the internal audit of student records, and assistant heads of school produce overview reports and monitor action taken by tutors. The performance of full-time GCSE and GCE A level students in 1995-96 was analysed by subject but not by overall performance in the group of subjects taken. Acklam College had been involved in a local education authority (LEA) scheme to compare its students' performances at GCE A level against those expected from GCSE results on entry. A pilot scheme has recently extended this scheme across the merged college.

62 The views of all students are actively sought through three questionnaires related to their course experiences and through another related to marketing. Action is taken in response to students' views. In a number of curriculum areas, additional questionnaires have been introduced which supplement the college system. Students are not routinely informed of the results from questionnaires or of subsequent actions. Some complained that they are expected to fill in too many questionnaires. In some curriculum areas, students also have the opportunity to express their views through regular student committee meetings and they are represented at course reviews, but this is not a requirement. The views of employers are obtained through questionnaires, visits to students on work experience and through employer representation on advisory committees and course review panels. Reports on the quality of courses from external verifiers are generally favourable; their views are taken into account and actions are taken on their recommendations.

63 The college has not yet developed comprehensive procedures to identify quality standards, set targets, and review and evaluate college services. Data from student questionnaires have been used to improve college marketing and student facilities. Reviews of induction and enrolment arrangements have led to improvements. The learning resource centres have also undertaken a review which draws comparisons between present and previous performance. The college has been involved in a pilot scheme involving 70 colleges which has developed 115 performance

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indicators for use by managers to measure colleges' performance over a wide area of their operations.

64 The college is required to produce a self-assessment report as part of the inspection process. The report is clearly structured and well written. It was issued to all staff and to governors. The report reviews the college against each of the aspects of Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. Within each aspect review there is a summary, a list of perceived 'strengths' and a list of 'areas for development'. Referenced sources are quoted to support strengths and action plans suggested for the areas for development. The report provided descriptors for each section which indicated the grades expected. The report was derived from a series of position papers each covering the work of a curriculum area or an aspect of cross-college activity, for example, marketing. The inspection team considered that the position papers gave a fair picture of most aspects of the college's work but that the self-assessment report did not identify weaknesses sufficiently. The grades implied in the report generally matched those awarded by the inspection team.

65 Staff development is the responsibility of the assistant principal (human resource development) assisted by the staff-development co-ordinator. The college has a staff-development policy and 1 per cent of its budget is allocated to these activities. A range of relevant staff-development opportunities has been provided for staff in most curriculum areas, but development has not always been effectively used to support planning targets. A requirement for heads of schools to complete training needs analyses based on their operational statements was introduced in spring 1995 but the quality of the analyses has been variable. There are well-developed induction arrangements for all staff, but no mentorship scheme. Part of the staff-development budget is allocated to provide financial support for staff who wish to gain improved formal qualifications, when this is in line with the college's strategic plan. In 1995-96, 18 academic staff and 12 support staff were involved. Staff-development activities are systematically recorded and staff perceptions of internal courses are collected. The staff-development co-ordinator evaluates the programme of training mounted by the college itself. There is no annual report on staff development overall. Progress towards the achievement of Investor in People status was delayed by the college merger. A statement of intent was submitted in March 1996 and a target date of July 1997 has been identified for accreditation.

66 The college has appraisal schemes which include all staff. Training has been provided for appraisers and appraisees, and existing arrangements at Kirby have been introduced on the Acklam campus. Procedures are well documented. The appraisal scheme for academic staff follows a two-year cycle and was introduced by the LEA before incorporation. It is based on the principles of choice of appraiser and confidentiality. The majority of staff choose to be appraised by their line



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managers rather than by peers. The scheme is not intended to review performance. It does not identify training needs related to strategic or operational plans and specific targets are often not identified. A review by the staff-development committee indicated that only half of academic staff thought that the scheme had improved their performance. The cycle has been disrupted by the priority given to post-merger matters in 1995-96, and not all staff have been appraised. The scheme for support staff is based on a one-year cycle and has been introduced since the merger.

67 Copies of the student handbook and charter are issued to all students. These have been rapidly revised in response to feedback from inspection in September 1996, and re-issued. While the original charter was poorly produced and did not conform to the college's house style, the revised version is clearly laid out, accentuates the college's main commitments and advertises college services. The charter has been produced in Urdu and Mandarin and is available in Braille and on tape. Draft charters have been produced for employers and for students on franchised courses. The college's performance against the standards identified in the charter is checked through student questionnaires. Some students are critical of how the charter has been introduced to them and sceptical of its value. Arrangements for student representation on the student council, the college's commitments to its students, and the complaints procedure are not always adequately explained by tutors.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Staffing**

68 Teachers are well qualified. Nearly three-quarters of the full-time academic staff have a first or higher degree, and most others hold relevant academic or vocational qualifications. In a few cases, teachers' qualifications or training do not match their teaching duties. For example, some staff teaching groups of students with special learning needs had not yet undertaken development to prepare them for this work. In some curriculum areas, almost all the staff have a recognised professional teaching qualification. In some vocational areas, for example leisure and tourism, many of the full-time teachers have recent commercial experience. Other areas, such as business, lack teachers with recent experience outside education. Progress has been good towards attaining the assessor/verifier awards needed to support courses leading to NVQs and GNVQs. In some subject areas, all full-time staff have at least the requirements for internal assessorships. This includes the staff who teach English, and it enables them to assess communication key skills on courses. College managers are increasingly deploying teaching staff across both campuses, but a few teachers feel isolated through being timetabled mainly at one campus.

69 The number of teachers employed on part-time or fractional contracts amounts to 23 per cent of the teaching establishment, when expressed as full-time equivalents. Some areas of work have a disproportionately high

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number of teachers on these contracts and this leads to difficulties in the co-ordination and management of the teaching team. For example, almost half the teaching on the separate courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is by teachers who are not on full-time contracts. Some difficulties have been experienced in the recruitment of suitably experienced staff on part-time contracts.

70 Support staff feel valued by the college. Technicians, and others close to the teaching process, are members of course and school teams. Administrative support for teaching teams is generally good. Course managers of the GNVQs in health and social care are relieved of much of the routine paperwork burden by professional administrative staff. Teaching staff in humanities subjects are supported by a secretary and clerk on each campus.

### **Equipment/learning resources**

71 Most teaching rooms are equipped with basic teaching aids such as overhead projectors and screens, writing boards and blinds. Screens and/or boards are sometimes badly positioned and at the Acklam campus the blackboards are often in poor condition. Teachers have access to a good supply of other aids, such as video players, though this is not the case on the Acklam campus. In most of the vocational areas the range and quality of the specialist equipment is good. Hair and beauty therapy salons replicate the best commercial practice. Catering kitchens are equipped to modern standards, though students sometimes experience a shortage of small cookware items. All rooms dedicated to business studies are equipped with closed-circuit television. The room used for teaching accommodation services is in need of upgrading and the facilities to support the teaching of modern foreign languages are inadequate. Generally, the equipment is well maintained and there is a rolling programme for replacement which is implemented effectively. There is a corporate will to obtain value for money in equipment purchases. However, the durability and reliability of equipment is not systematically monitored.

72 The learning resource centre at the Kirby campus is well equipped and has sufficient study spaces; the Acklam campus has poorer resources. The number and quality of specialist texts is generally adequate and the stock is often complemented by the issue of set texts to students. There has been a significant investment in the bookstock; almost 40 per cent of the books are less than five years old. A wide range of periodicals is purchased and these are supplemented by departmental resources. Books and periodicals are listed on a computerised catalogue system which is networked between both campuses, though it is not accessible directly to students at Acklam. A large number of compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) databases are available and these can be used on individual computers or through a college network. The college is part of a regional partnership which provides connections to the Internet, though this facility is only available at the Kirby campus.

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73 Overall, the information technology equipment is up to date, in sufficient quantity and is appropriately networked. Full-time and part-time students make good use of the information technology workshops where they are given the opportunity to work towards accreditation. Last year, 500 part-time students attended a variety of workshops and 120 were awarded basic information technology certification. The dedicated information technology provision in specialist areas is often good and most teaching staff have access to computing facilities in their staff rooms. At the Kirby campus, an information technology workshop for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has a specialist range of software and hardware; similar facilities are provided in the learning resource centre on the Kirby campus. The college has an appropriate strategy for meeting the increasing demands made by modern multi-media software.

### **Accommodation**

74 The Kirby campus comprises a number of interlinked buildings dating from 1911 and the 1960s. A Victorian former private residence, 'Barns House', is separately located on the campus and is also used as teaching accommodation. Several mobile classrooms at the rear of the main buildings have been improved recently. The campus includes car parking and a grassed sports area. The centrepiece of the Acklam campus is Acklam Hall Manor House which is a Grade I listed building set in pleasant parkland. The listed status limits the options the college has for refurbishing or remodelling the building. Attached to the hall are additional blocks dating from the 1950s and 1960s. The visual impact of the hall is spoilt by another large modern building which is not owned by the college; it is unused and boarded up. All students have access to a sports centre adjacent to the Acklam campus which includes a swimming pool, though this is little used by students from the Kirby campus.

75 The college has made significant strides in upgrading its estate. Buildings are generally in good condition. They are kept clean and tidy and virtually no vandalism is evident. The utilisation of the available teaching space is improving but the Acklam buildings remain a difficulty. Many teaching rooms on this campus are too small or of an unsuitable shape, especially in the older building. A number of rooms are accessible only from outside or through other rooms. This campus has been the focus of much recent improvement including the provision of new toilets for staff, students and people with disabilities. A large hall has been refurbished to provide a new centre for the performing arts and extra teaching rooms. The refectory and students' social spaces remain poor. There are specialist teaching rooms on both campuses which reflect the work of the students in a stimulating way, for example, the beauty salons at Kirby and the art room at Acklam. Elsewhere, rooms and corridors are often dull. The travel bureau at the Kirby campus is poorly located, and science laboratories on both campuses are old-fashioned and unexciting.

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External consultants have been employed for advice on technical matters, but aspects of interior design across the college are not co-ordinated.

76 At the Kirby campus, people using wheelchairs can reach over three-quarters of the floor area and they have purpose-built refuges in case of emergencies. Access has been improved at the Acklam campus, for instance, by the provision of ramps to buildings, but some significant facilities for example, the learning resource centre and the science laboratories cannot be reached by wheelchair users. Improvements to aid students with visual impairments are at an early stage of implementation.

77 External signposting to, and within, the campuses is poor. At enrolment, students frequently reported getting lost trying to find their way to the campuses. The arrangement of buildings on each campus is complex and internal signposting is inconsistent and unhelpful. Preferred routes between main locations such as the learning resource centres, refectories and reception desks are unclear. Security on each campus has been improved through uniformed patrols, closed-circuit television cameras and extra lighting.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES**

78 The college has made considerable progress towards achieving its mission since the merger in 1995. Its strengths include:

- the strong direction given by the board of corporation and the senior managers
- the extensive range of general and vocational education provision, within inherited limitations
- close links with industry, local schools and other institutions
- an effective computerised management information system and the use made of it at all levels
- the continuing improvement of the enrolment, induction and screening processes for new students
- the high overall standard of the teaching in classroom and practical sessions
- the high levels of achievement of students in many of the vocational areas
- the development of a formal system of quality assurance covering both general and vocational education programmes
- teachers who are well qualified academically and professionally, and the support given to them by other staff
- the range and quality of the physical resources in some of the vocational areas, which match industrial standards.

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79 The college should address a number of issues which include:

- the high number of senior post holders and the responsibilities of middle managers
- the low level of integration with other courses of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- inconsistent application of the quality assurance system and its extension to cover service functions in the college
- significant accommodation difficulties and resource inequalities between the two campuses.

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## FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)

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  - 2 Percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)

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  - 3 Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)

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  - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)

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  - 5 Income (for 12 months to July 1996)

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  - 6 Expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)

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**Note:** the information contained in the figures was provided by the college to the inspection team.

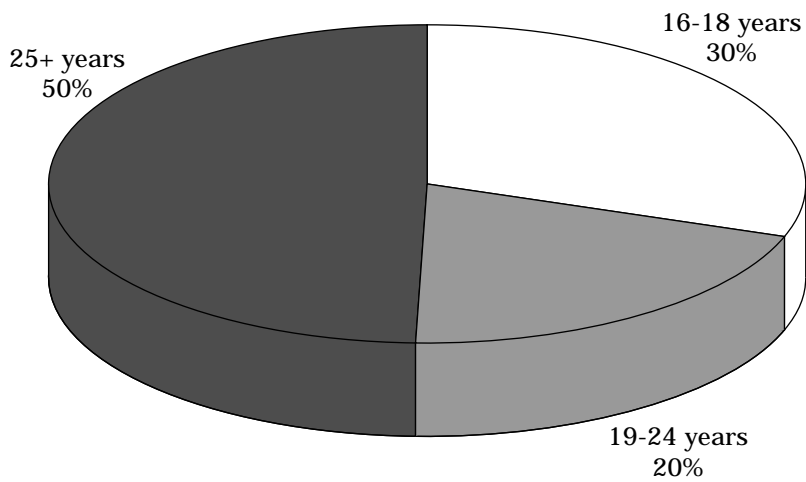
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**Figure 1**

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**Middlesbrough College: percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)**



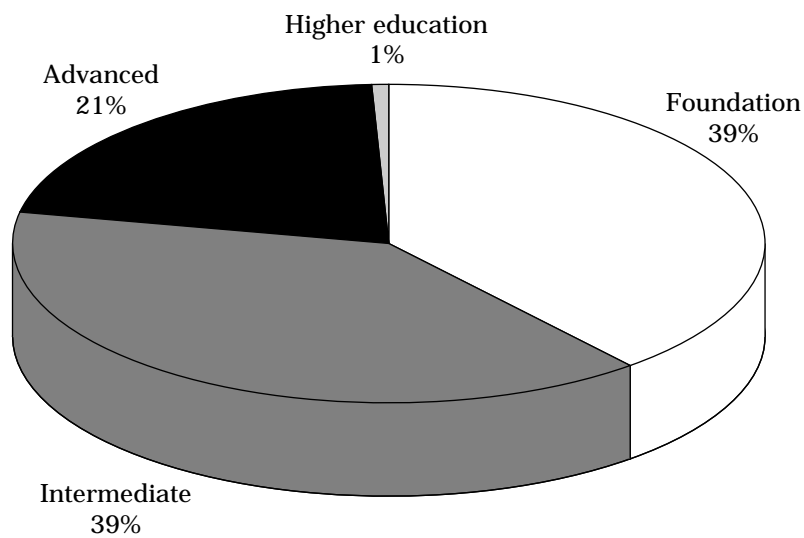
Student numbers: 8,532

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**Figure 2**

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**Middlesbrough College: percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)**

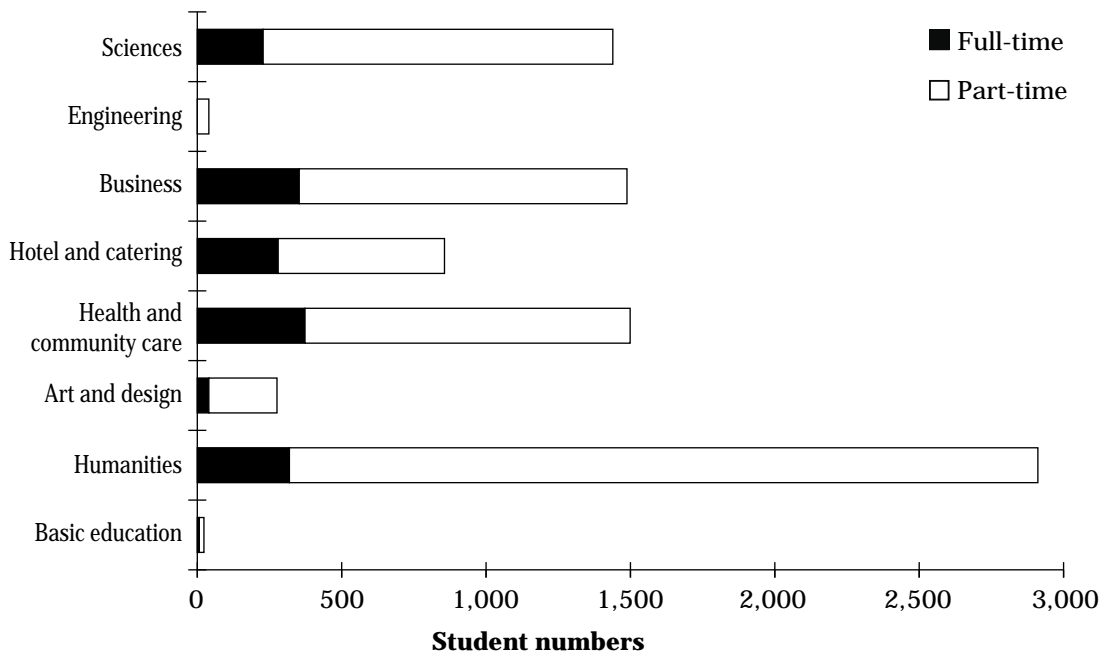


Student numbers: 8,532

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**Figure 3**

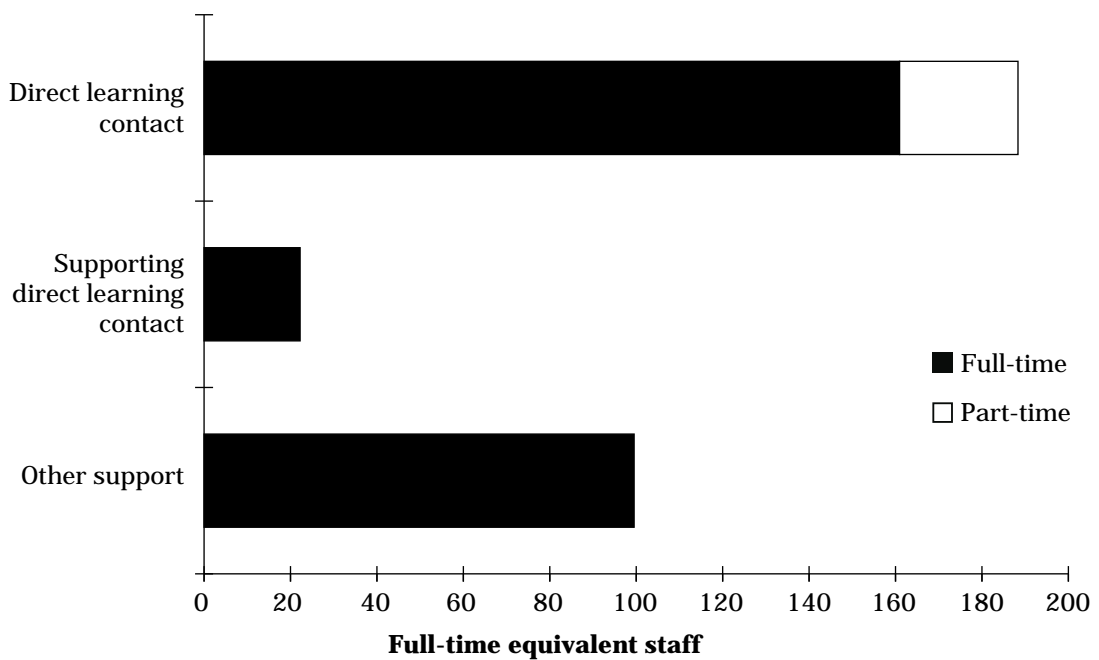
**Middlesbrough College: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)**



Student numbers: 8,532

**Figure 4**

**Middlesbrough College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)**



Full-time equivalent staff: 310

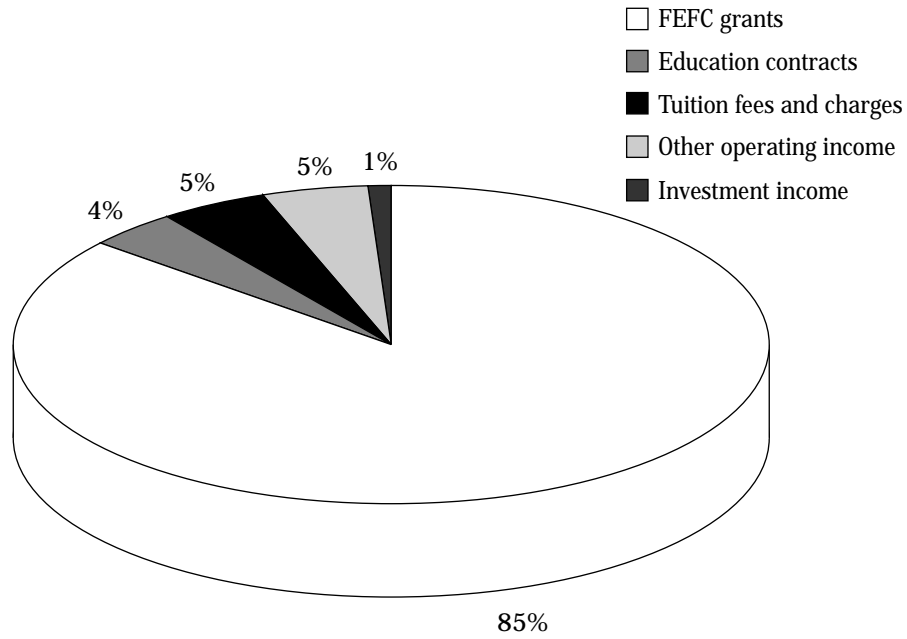


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**Figure 5**

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**Middlesbrough College: income (for 12 months to July 1996)**

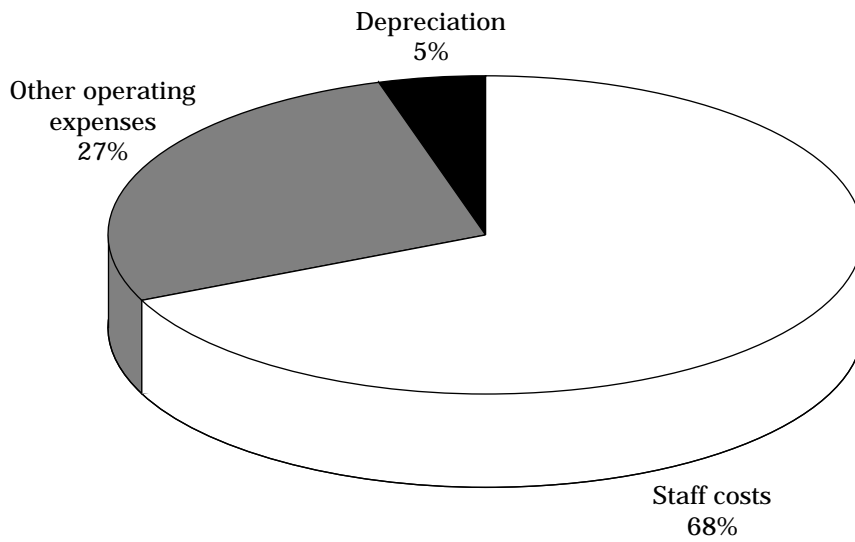


Income: £8,661,000

**Figure 6**

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**Middlesbrough College: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)**



Expenditure: £8,920,000

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