



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards  
in Education

# **Inspection report**

## **Broxtowe College**

Dates of inspection: 23 February–4 March 2004

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## Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Broxtowe College
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Nick Lewis
Address of college:	Broxtowe College High Road Chilwell Nottingham NG9 4AH
Telephone number:	0115 917 5252
Fax number:	0115 917 5204
Chair of governors:	David Kissman
Unique reference number:	130775
Name of reporting inspector:	Michael John Davis
Dates of inspection:	23 February–4 March 2004

## **Part A: Summary**

### **Information about the college**

The borough of Broxtowe is located to the west of Nottingham City, with a population of approximately 135,000. It has a wide industrial and commercial base. The college's main centres are at Chilwell and Arthur Mee in Stapleford. The college also owns 4 other centres and offers courses at over 130 community venues. There are several other post-16 education providers in the local area, including colleges and schools. In 2002/03, 88% of students were adults. Most followed part-time courses. Half of the 1,780 full-time students were aged 16 to 18. Approximately 16% of students were from minority ethnic groups and 55% were females. Most courses are for adults. The provision for students aged 16 to 18 is modest in scale. Courses range from entry level to higher education (HE). The offer spans 13 of the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) 14 areas of learning. The college's provision has steadily expanded to meet the needs of non-traditional further education (FE) students. In 2002/03, 76% of enrolments were at entry, foundation and intermediate levels. The local and national partnership arrangements are extensive. The college has a significant number of international students. There is extensive provision for school pupils aged 14 to 16. In September 2003, the college was awarded funding to develop a centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) in travel and tourism. The college has an entry-to-employment (E2E) programme, but there is no other work-based or Job Centre Plus provision. The college's mission is 'to provide high quality vocational education and training and innovative lifelong learning opportunities that contribute to economic development and social inclusion in the local communities.'

### **How effective is the college?**

Inspectors judged provision in English and modern foreign languages; health, social and childcare; and students with learning difficulties and disabilities to be good. Provision in science and mathematics; land-based; information and communications technology (ICT); travel and tourism; art, media and music; humanities; and literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Provision in business administration and professional services is unsatisfactory. Work-based provision in E2E is satisfactory. The main strengths and areas for improvement are listed below.

#### ***Key strengths***

- effective strategies to widen participation
  - responsive working with partner organisations
  - good teaching in English, modern foreign languages, health and social care and on ICT adult programmes
  - continuing improvements in retention and pass rates
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- good course provision in English and modern foreign languages, provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and health, social and childcare
  - good student progression on many courses.

*What should be improved*

- retention and pass rates for students aged 16 to 18
- students' attendance
- the proportion of good and better teaching for students aged 16 to 18
- small group sizes that negatively impact upon teaching and learning
- target setting and the monitoring of students' progress
- the rigour of the management and quality assurance of distance provision
- low proportion of short courses that are nationally accredited.

Further aspects of provision requiring improvement are identified in the sections on individual subjects and courses in the full report.

### Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas

The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5).

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Science and mathematics	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates are generally satisfactory, except in 2002/03 when general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) mathematics and advanced subsidiary-level (AS-level) biology were poor. Students achieve good standards of work and their progress is rigorously assessed. Teaching is satisfactory or better, but there insufficient checking of learning during lessons. There is very good team working, but the advanced level chemistry course was poorly designed.
Land-based	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention rates on non-accredited courses are high. Much teaching is good and students develop good practical skills. Students make slow progress in achieving national vocational qualification (NVQ) units. Resources are good. Quality assurance arrangements are not rigorous and assessment practices are insufficiently robust.
Business, administration management and professional services	<b>Unsatisfactory.</b> Pass rates are low on most courses, but students learn useful skills for work. There is wide variation in teaching standards and insufficient sharing of good practice across teams. Although pastoral and learning support are good, in individual learning plans and reviews target setting is poor.
Information and communications technology	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention rates are satisfactory, but pass rates are low on many courses. Teaching is good on adult programmes, but insufficiently challenging on full-time courses. Assignments are productively used to develop full-time students' skills. Strategies to widen participation are effective. Employer involvement on full-time courses is poor.
Travel and tourism	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention rates are high on most courses. Pass rates are high on some courses, but low on others. Teaching is generally satisfactory or better, but less effective for more able students. Support for students is very good and there is good progression to employment and HE. There is insufficient use of specialist resources and quality assurance processes lack rigour.



Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Health, social care and childcare	<b>Good.</b> Pass and retention rates are high on most courses. Pass rates are low for advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE) health and social care. Teaching is generally good, with effective links made between theory and work, but there is insufficient use of information and learning technology (ILT). Academic and personal support are good. Accommodation at the Chilwell centre is poor.
Art, media and music	<b>Satisfactory.</b> On media, music and adult courses, the teaching is good and students achieve high standards. Small class sizes inhibit learning activities. Pass rates on level 3 courses are high, but retention rates on full-time art courses are too low. Drawing and art presentation skills are not well developed. Much of the accommodation is unsuitable.
Humanities	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention and pass rates are generally satisfactory. In 2002/03. The pass rate in general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A-level) psychology was good. Most teaching is satisfactory or good, but small class sizes inhibit opportunities for learning. Students are well supported and receive constructive feedback on their work. There is insufficient analysis of pass rates relative to students' prior achievement.
English and modern foreign languages	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are high on many courses. Teaching is good and written work is thoroughly marked with full and helpful feedback. Leadership and management are good. Retention rates on adult courses are unsatisfactory. Teaching rooms are not adequately equipped for the use of ILT.
Foundation: literacy and numeracy	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention and pass rates for adult literacy and numeracy are high. There is good learning support across the wide-ranging provision, but some of the teaching is insufficiently challenging. Initial and diagnostic assessments are not used appropriately and there is insufficient monitoring of student progress. Good partnership arrangements widen access and participation.
Foundation: entry-to-employment	<b>Satisfactory.</b> The E2E programme provides students with good opportunities to gain extra qualifications, and most students progress to other courses or employment. Teachers are sensitive to students' social and personal needs. ILT is used effectively in learning. Diagnostic assessment is not used systematically to plan individual learning. Monitoring and recording of students' progress are too infrequent.

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Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	<b>Good.</b> Pass and retention rates are high and punctuality is good. Teaching and learning are good, but individual targets are insufficiently challenging. Support is very effective in meeting the needs of individual students. Management is good, but some resources are inadequate.

**How well is the college led and managed?**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, there has been a steady improvement in retention and pass rates. Support for students is good. The governors' involvement in strategic planning is effective. The curriculum offer is designed to meet local and regional needs. The college has a broad range of effective community partnerships. The college's key performance targets are clear and regularly monitored. Communications are mostly satisfactory. The college has been slow to address some poor accommodation. Slow progress has been made in accrediting some short course provision. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory, but some assessment practice is insufficiently rigorous. A minority of self-assessment reports and action plans are insufficiently detailed. The internal lesson observation scheme lacks rigour. The staff appraisal process is satisfactory. Staff have good opportunities for continuous professional development. There are very low numbers of students in some classes. Overall, the college provides value for money, but not in its provision for students aged 16 to 18.

**To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?**

The college's response to education and social inclusion is satisfactory. Widening participation is a central component of most strategic initiatives. The course offer has been specifically designed to attract hard-to-reach groups. The college is making satisfactory progress in fulfilling its obligations under the new race relations and disability discrimination legislation. The college's response to ethnic diversity is satisfactory. Policies are in place to address issues of racial discrimination and to promote racial equality. An equal opportunities committee monitors the college's equality and diversity targets. However, there is no performance monitoring at course level of student retention and pass rates by age, gender, and ethnicity. Teaching strategies to promote equal opportunities are very limited. The college has an appropriate equal opportunities policy and associated procedures. Some areas of the college are not accessible for students with restricted mobility. The college has recently completed an accessibility survey and plans are now in place to meet new legislative requirements. Staff receive adequate training on new legislation and diversity issues.

**How well are students and trainees guided and supported?**

Support and guidance for students are good. Admissions and induction arrangements are effective. Students are well prepared for their course of study. Initial assessment and diagnostic assessment are thorough. Students, including those with disabilities, learning difficulties or dyslexia, are well supported. Individual student records are detailed. However, the college does not evaluate the overall effectiveness of learning support. Academic and pastoral support are good. Tutorials are generally effective. Tutors review students' individual learning plans and targets. However, in some curriculum areas, there is insufficient emphasis on setting targets to improve performance. Teachers give good support in lessons. Students appreciate the high levels of support outside timetabled sessions. College counsellors provide a valued service. Procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory, but generally have not led to improvements. Career guidance staff are well

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informed and effective. The complete range of support services is well organised and managed. Communication between student services staff, teachers and tutors is good.

### **Students' views of the college**

Students' views about the college were taken into account and a summary of their main comments is presented below.

#### ***What students like about the college***

- good support from tutors and student services staff
- good friendships between students
- being treated as an adult
- very helpful teachers who encourage students
- improved self-confidence
- no age barriers; never too old to learn
- written work is marked quickly with helpful feedback
- look forward to coming to college
- good childcare facilities at two main centres.

#### ***What they feel could be improved***

- car parking, especially for students with disabilities
- choice of food for vegetarians and better availability in the evening
- the library which is noisy and overcrowded
- common room facilities, including those for adults
- number and range of social activities, including more sports
- heating at the Manor and Arther Mee centres
- lack of heating in the temporary mobile classrooms.

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**Other information**

The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local LSC. The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC should send to Ofsted only action plans from colleges that have been judged inadequate or have been awarded a grade 4 or 5 for curriculum provision, work-based learning and/or leadership and management.

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## Part B: The college as a whole

### Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16–18	55	38	7
19+ and WBL*	66	30	4
Learning 16–18	53	41	6
19+ and WBL*	68	29	3

*Key: The range of grades includes: Excellent (Grade 1), Very Good (Grade 2), Good (Grade 3), Satisfactory (Grade 4), Unsatisfactory (Grade 5), Poor (Grade 6) and Very Poor (Grade 7).*

*\*work-based learning*

### Achievement and standards

1. The college's retention and pass rate data for 2003 were considered reliable and used by inspectors. Comparisons with national averages are in relation to other general FE colleges.
  2. Over the last four years, retention and pass rates have generally improved, particularly in the last two years. At most levels and age categories, retention rates are now at, or above, the national average. At level 1, retention rates have remained weak. Retention rates for adults on courses at levels 2 and 3 are good. There has been a steady improvement in retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 at all levels. In 2003, at level 3, however, it only just became satisfactory and at level 1 was 9% below the national average. Retention rates for short courses are satisfactory. In 2003, pass rates were generally satisfactory and improving, but at level 2 they have stayed still. In 2003, adult pass rates at all levels were at, or above, the national averages. However, in 2001 and 2002, levels 1 and 3 were poor. Pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 have remained weak. Although improving in 2003, pass rates at levels 1 and 3, were 8% and 11% respectively, below the national averages. Pass rates on short courses are now good.
  3. Student attendance in some lessons is low. During the inspection, the average attendance rate was 76%. This is below the national average and represents a 6% decline since the last inspection. Overall student progression is good. For example, in ICT, 50% of AVCE students progress to HE and 70% of the other students progress to higher level courses. In travel and tourism and on childcare courses, over 90% of students progress to HE or related employment. In 2003, only 25% of students completing an advanced level
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programme progressed to HE. The number of students entered for key skills qualifications increased from 544 in 2002, to 1,094 in 2003. Most were at level 2, with relatively few at level 3. The proportion of students who started and then successfully completed a key skills qualification was very low. In 2002, the rate was 12% improving to 13% in 2003. Key skills retention rates in 2003 were good, at 91%. By the end of 2003, 50% of the students that had started a key skills qualification were recorded as not yet completed. The attendance at some key skills lessons is poor.

### *16 to 18 year olds*

4. At level 1, retention and pass rates have stayed consistently below the national averages. The majority of students follow open college network (OCN), English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and ICT-accredited long courses. The overall retention rates for these courses improved from 56% in 2002, to 66% in 2003; 12% below the national average. The same range of provision had pass rates that improved in 2003, but still remained low. Student enrolments at this level account for 29% of the college total overall.

5. The college does not offer any work-based training programmes other than E2E. The programme was introduced in September 2003 as a replacement for the life skills programme. The programme has been a success with a high proportion of students, at 78%, successfully progressing to FE or employment. Many students gain additional qualifications including elements from the National Skills Profile, NVQs and for young refugees, GCSEs in their native language.

6. Level 2 retention and pass rates have steadily improved and are now mostly good. Retention rates on GCSE courses are high and general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) courses have improved by 20% since 2001. Pass rates on GCSE courses have declined to the national average. GNVQ programmes have remained poor. The number of students following NVQ qualifications is very low.

7. At advanced level, retention rates are satisfactory, steadily improving from a very low base. Over the same period, pass rates have remained low; over 11% below the national average. In 2003, the average points score for students entered for AVCE, AS-level and GCE A-level examinations was 141.7. This was slightly higher than other local FE colleges, but significantly below the national average points score of 258.6 and the Nottinghamshire Local Education Authority (LEA) average of 233.6. The college's attempt to analyse and evaluate the extent to which courses have increased students' achievements at advanced level over and above what might have been predicted from their previous attainments at entry, is weak. Retention rates are good on GNVQ and Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) courses and satisfactory for AS-level and GCE A-level qualifications. Pass rates are on AS-level and GCE A-level courses have remained poor. In 2003, only 68% of students who completed their AS-level and GCE A-level course passed the examination. At the end of 2003, 73% of students who completed an AS-level course progressed to the relevant GCE A-level subject.

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8. Students generally develop good skills and produce satisfactory standards of work. The performance skills of music students are good. In practical science lessons, students handle apparatus competently, work in an organised manner and use appropriate technical language. E2E students develop social skills and confidence as well as literacy, numeracy and vocational skills. GCE A-level English students have a good understanding of technical linguistic terminology and language. Travel and tourism students demonstrate very good skills in passenger handling, communication and problem solving. However, in fashion and textiles, work is poorly presented and students display a lack of in-depth subject expertise.

### ***Adult learners***

9. At level 1, retention rates in 2003 were just above the national average for the first time in three years. Pass rates were low from 2000 to 2002, but were satisfactory in 2003. Some programmes produce good outcomes. For example, on the basic adult literacy and numeracy courses, retention and pass rates in 2003 were good. On the OCN basic literacy course for adult students with specific learning difficulties, 97% completed the course successfully.

10. Whilst pass rates at level 2 have only moved up to a satisfactory level, retention rates have steadily improved and were well above the national average in 2003. Retention rates on GCSE and NVQ courses are good. However, pass rates on these programmes are poor. A course that has shown considerable improvement is contemporary music. Retention and pass rates are high; well above the national averages.

11. At level 3, retention rates have steadily improved and have been above the average for the last two years. However, until 2003 pass rates were weak. Retention rates on GCE A-level and AS-level, AVCE and BTEC national certificate courses have remained good for the last three years. Pass rates for this range of courses, together with NVQs were good in 2003, but in previous years they were poor. For the last two years, the proportion of students that successfully completed short courses has been at least 6% above the national average.

12. In general, adults achieve better standards of work than students aged 16 to 18. This is consistent across a wide range of courses. Many of these adult students would not traditionally have followed FE courses. On literacy and numeracy courses, the majority of students develop skills relevant to their personal needs. They gain confidence and can apply what they learn to every day life. Childcare and health and social care students are able to link theory to workplace practices. ICT students, based mainly at community venues, make very good progress. They develop a wide range of skills that help them to achieve personal goals and enhance their work prospects. Students on access to HE programmes develop self-confidence and effective learning skills.

### **Quality of education and training**

13. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Inspectors graded teaching, learning and attainment in 204 lessons. Teaching was good or better in 61%, satisfactory in 34% and less than satisfactory in 5% of lessons. The good or better teaching was lower than the

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national average, at 65%, for all colleges inspected between September 2001 and June 2002. Some 61% of the learning grades were good or better, slightly below the national average. The percentage of lessons that was very good and excellent, at 20%, was 5% below the national average for similar colleges. The teaching of adult students is generally better than the teaching of students aged 16 to 18. Adults' learning in lessons was markedly better than students aged 16 to 18, some 15% higher. The best teaching was at level 1, where 74% of lessons were good or better. The weakest was at level 3, 11% below the average. Overall the proportion of less than satisfactory teaching was slightly better than the national average. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in science and mathematics; health, social and child care; and English and modern foreign languages. On AS-level courses, only 39% of lessons were good or better. The highest percentage of unsatisfactory teaching was on GNVQ intermediate courses, at 20%. The general standards of teaching were no different for full-time and part-time staff. Theory teaching was generally better than for practical sessions.

14. The best teaching is in the areas of English and modern foreign languages, land-based provision and health, social and child care. The standard of teaching for adults, following ICT courses in the community, is very high. Planning of lessons is good. Schemes of work are generally detailed. In the better lessons, teachers share the aims and objectives with their students. In science and mathematics, teachers are well prepared and knowledgeable. E2E teachers are sensitive to individual development needs. There is some good teaching in all curriculum areas. In the best lessons, teachers use an appropriate range of activities and students remained fully involved. The better teachers use a range of techniques to check on students' knowledge and understanding. Students are well motivated. They value the encouragement and help they receive from teachers.

15. Too much teaching is just satisfactory and few lessons are outstanding. The weaker lessons are often characterised by students who disengage from learning and teachers' poor use of ILT. In these lessons, students of all abilities are not sufficiently challenged and some become bored. In travel and tourism, students' critical evaluation and problem solving skills are not appropriately developed. In some lessons, teachers spend too much time talking at the front of the class and move rapidly from topic to topic. The small size of many teaching groups sometimes impacts negatively on students' learning experience. In such groups, there are limited opportunities for class discussion, role play and collaborative working. Students on the foundation diploma in art and design were not encouraged to use drawing as a tool or to develop their creative ideas. The teaching of key skills is sometimes poor.

16. Most teachers are suitably experienced. They have appropriate qualifications or are working towards them. Around 75% of full-time staff and 49% of part-time staff are teacher trained. Students on art, music, health and social care and land-based courses benefit from teachers' good industrial experience. The college effectively promotes continual professional development. The staff development programme is extensive. The annual plan has clear targets based on college priorities and specific needs. For example, specific risk assessment training for hostel staff working with vulnerable and unpredictable students. There are a satisfactory number of technicians.

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17. Teaching accommodation is generally satisfactory, but there is great variability in standards. Classrooms used for teaching health and social care students at the Arthur Mee centre are good. Whilst at the Chilwell centre, the temporary mobile classrooms are noisy, airless and cramped. The art accommodation at the Arthur Mee centre restricts activities and projects, but is good in some outreach sites. The 30-seat airline simulation cabin, used by travel and tourism students for work simulation, is excellent. Some classrooms are overcrowded, whilst others have very small groups. The college is piloting computerised registers to improve room utilisation. Learning resources are mostly satisfactory. In literacy and numeracy and the business curriculum area, teachers produce good learning materials. However, in music and media, there is a lack of good audio-visual materials to aid research. Outside of lessons, students have good access to computers with Internet capability. Few teachers use ILT during lessons. Main sites mostly offer comprehensive library and resource facilities.

18. The college recognises that it owns some poor accommodation. Strategies are in place to bring about improvements. Some of the accommodation is old and is in need upgrading. The college has been using temporary mobile classrooms for 20 years. Until the £2 million refurbishment of the Arthur Mee centre, the college has had no major building programme since the 1960s. Much of the accommodation at the Chilwell centre is only just satisfactory. Extensive building work is planned. In response to recent legislation, the college commissioned an accommodation survey. Identified issues are being addressed, but the college does yet meet the needs of all students with restricted mobility. The promotion of health and safety issues is good. Staff are required to attend training events. Posters are displayed around the college. Site maintenance is on-going and satisfactory. Students' work is generally not displayed. The Chilwell centre canteen is bare and overcrowded at busy times.

19. Assessment practice is generally satisfactory. However, tracking and monitoring of students' progress are not always effective. Full-time and substantive part-time students undertake a thorough initial assessment at the start of their course. The results are used to identify literacy and numeracy support needs. The college has well-established policies and procedures for assessment, internal verification and moderation. Internal verification is generally effective in identifying assessment practice weaknesses. However, it is poor on business, land-based and ICT part-time courses. External verifiers' and moderators' reports are carefully monitored and resulting action plans regularly checked. College managers meet regularly to ensure that assessment practices are consistently applied across different departments.

20. In most subjects, marked work is returned promptly. Comments are encouraging and help students to make improvements. For example, in science and mathematics, work is accurately marked with numerical mistakes corrected. Recorded marks are effectively used in the student review meetings, held twice a term. The standard of student progress monitoring varies considerably. It is good on ICT courses for adults, music, health and social care, science access courses, and humanities. On some business, and literacy and numeracy

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courses, however, it is unsatisfactory. In E2E provision, formal reviews of progress are too infrequent.

21. On most courses, the findings of initial assessment are used to inform individual learning plans. This is well implemented in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but is unsystematic for students following literacy, numeracy and E2E courses. In a significant number of curriculum subjects, individual learning plans lack sufficiently challenging and meaningful targets. Many students attending community-based courses do not yet have an individual learning plan. In land-based programmes, assessment practice is insufficiently robust. The use of initial assessment and the monitoring of students' progress on NVQ programmes are weak. Parents are informed of students' progress at consultation meetings. Students aged 16 to 18 receive one progress report each year. The practice of seeking students' approval before sending reports to parents is common, but not college policy. Students aged 14 to 16 on the colleges' Increased Flexibility (IF) programme receive reports each term. The standard of reporting and the arrangements for informing employers are satisfactory.

22. The college offers a broad range of courses, from entry level to HE. Most of the provision is for part-time adult students who attend courses at community venues. The course offer for full-time students aged 16 to 18 is relatively small. The college does not actively compete with local school sixth forms. The college's international students follow GCE A-level and HE foundation courses. Their presence enables many small groups to become viable. The college's community-based offer is extensive and there are 130 different locations. The college has been very successful in recruiting students who traditionally would not have followed FE courses. There is extensive literacy, numeracy, information technology (IT) and art provision. Staff work at a wide range of venues. For example, hostels for the homeless, probation hostels, women's refuges, high street skills shops, police stations and day centres.

23. The college works effectively with a wide range of local and national partners. It is very responsive. For example, the development of a skills project in Nottingham for people with health problems. The college has a national contract for supporting students and who are part of the Foyer project. Another initiative is its work with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) a national conservation volunteers group. This has led to an extensive range of land-based short courses offered across England. A workforce development unit has been established to strengthen links with local businesses. Successes include the provision of numeracy and literacy training in the workplace for the members of a large printing and media union. Some curriculum areas have good employer links, others do not. In travel and tourism, employers regularly visit the college to visit and interview students. ICT students have very limited industrial input.

24. The vocational programme for school pupils aged 14 to 16 is extensive and well managed. The college employs 40 staff, including learning support assistants. The programme for excluded school pupils is very successful. The college works with 23 schools in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. The IF programme involves over 200 pupils. Pupils

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mostly follow construction qualifications and foundation engineering qualifications. The innovative IF programme uses two trucks as fully functional construction and motor vehicle workshops. They visit nine schools each week. A construction academy developed in conjunction with an external partner, has 94 students.

25. There is no centrally managed enrichment programme. Individual programmes offer their own activities, but with varying effectiveness. The better examples include visiting speakers and student visits to exhibitions. The development of students' key skills remains weak. On a few courses, it is well established and effective. However, many students do not value what they learn. Basic skills support and testing have been improved. The college has appointed a new key skills co-ordinator at the Chilwell centre. However, pass rates remain very low and it is too early to judge the effectiveness of these new initiatives.

26. Admissions and induction arrangements are effective. They prepare students for their course of study and provide good information on college support systems. Students are helped to settle quickly on to their course, including those who start at a later date. Students who need to change options are well assisted. Career guidance staff are well informed. Students have good access to a comprehensive range of materials. These assist with progression to HE, employment and FE study. Liaison with schools has improved since the introduction of the IF programme. Guidance staff contribute to personal and social and health education (PSHE) sessions at local schools. They provide students with information about vocational career routes. Career guidance services were externally accredited for the quality of their work in February 2004. The college has received a Beacon award for its very good support for international students. Some guidance staff are multilingual.

27. Students receive good learning support. Initial assessment is effective in ensuring students who need additional learner support receive it. Students with disabilities, learning difficulties or dyslexia are well supported. Learning support is offered in a variety of modes; on an individual basis by appointment; in timetabled small groups; and in lessons on all main sites. Students at community venues are supported through a referral process. However, college arrangements for the franchise provision are underdeveloped. At the time of inspection, 670 diagnostic assessments had been undertaken. Of those receiving support, approximately 370 were full time, 203 part time and 34 were outreach students. The college has significantly increased the number of learning support assistants, to cope with increased demand. Learning support assistants are trained and appropriately matched to curriculum areas according to the students' needs. They are carefully deployed. Learning support assistants for music, art and office technology have related vocational skills. Detailed records are kept for individual students. However, overall the college does not evaluate the achievements of students who are receiving support. Support staff are well qualified. They have good specialist experience to support students with specific needs, including mental health problems. They have good awareness of current national initiatives. The full range of support services, including career advice and guidance are well organised and managed. Communication is good between student services staff, teachers and tutors.

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28. Academic and pastoral support are good. Tutorials are generally effective and are held weekly. Students receive individual tutorials once a term. New tutors are mentored. A tutorial guidance handbook outlines the role of the tutor. However, the tutors' role in monitoring attendance and punctuality receives insufficient emphasis. There are significant variances in practice. Overall, systems for attendance checking are satisfactory, but generally they have not halted a decline since the last inspection. Tutorial assistants are effective in following-up student absenteeism. On some courses at levels 1 and 2, retention rates have improved significantly. In tutorials, students' individual learning plans and targets are regularly reviewed. In some curriculum areas, there is insufficient emphasis on setting clear targets to improve individual performance. Teachers give good support in lessons. Students appreciate the high levels of help they give outside timetabled sessions. The college has satisfactory arrangements for the welfare of students aged 14 to 19.

29. College counsellors provide a valued service. The number of clients who attend counselling sessions has steadily increased. Students are referred to specialist agencies outside the college when appropriate. There is a comprehensive range of welfare and financial services available to students. In 2003/04, 90 students were in receipt of educational maintenance awards. Some students make good use of the 40 places available in the 2 college nurseries. The student association is active. They are regularly consulted by college management and student services staff. Student forums are held at the main centres to encourage greater student participation in decision making. Student surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction for the support services offered by the college.

### **Leadership and management**

30. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors and senior managers set clear strategic priorities for the college. The aims of widening participation and social inclusion are at the heart of its mission. Staff are fully committed to this ethos. The college works effectively with a broad range of external partners. The college has sought to minimise competition with other local providers. Priorities are clearly determined and underpinned by good, flexible support for students. The college has responded well to regional needs and priorities. Some 88% of students are adults studying part time. Most students follow courses at entry level, level 1 and level 2.

31. The college has addressed most of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection, but a few remain. These include small group sizes, some access issues for students with restricted mobility, missed opportunities to share good practice and lack of rigour with the self-assessment procedures. Retention and pass rates are now generally satisfactory except for students aged 16 to 18, at levels 1 and 3. Overall, rates have shown improvements over the last three years. They are now just above the national average in most areas. A high number of short courses currently lack national accreditation and adequate assessment strategies. The recorded retention and pass rates on these courses impact positively on the college's overall performance. The teaching and learning profile across the college is satisfactory, slightly below the national profile.

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32. The business planning process is effective. The three-year strategic plan contains clear and measurable key performance indicators. The availability and accuracy of management information has significantly improved. However, some reports are not suitably detailed. For example, attendance monitoring reports at the course level. Managers effectively track and monitor progress against targets. There is a strong commitment to raise standards. College targets are linked in staff work plans to performance objectives. Curriculum areas business plans contain a broad range of targets. For example, enrolment numbers, retention, pass and success rates, number of qualified staff, employer engagement, income and expenditure. There is an ILT strategy, but the use of ILT in teaching is very limited.

33. Governors play a central role in defining the educational character of the college. They are effective in setting and monitoring corporate targets. The quality of the course provision is regularly reviewed. Their oversight of the college's financial management is good. Governors are aware of most of the college's strengths and weaknesses. Sub-committees are effective and play a key advisory role for the corporation. Governor understanding of curriculum-related issues is mixed. There is an over-reliance on senior managers to guide them. The majority of college staff are unaware of who the governors are and their roles.

34. Communication across the college is satisfactory. Governors have regular contact with senior college staff. The corporation and senior management team meetings are co-ordinated and planned annually. Information is cascaded to middle managers through a series of regular informative senior management briefings. Academic and support staff value the twice-yearly site briefings. The events focus on key corporate priorities. Curriculum teams hold regular meetings. The quality of the agenda and minutes of these meetings is satisfactory. The college produces a range of useful newsletters that are widely circulated. They focus on general college issues such as marketing, students, ILT and health and safety issues. Staff make good use of their e-mail accounts. However, a small minority have difficulty in gaining access to a computer. The college is aware that some aspects of communication at the curriculum level need to be improved.

35. The management of most curriculum areas is satisfactory and some is good. Operational authority is delegated to college managers. They are held accountable and encouraged to be enterprising. Leadership and management were identified as strengths in health and social care, ICT, literacy and numeracy, science and mathematics, students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, English and modern foreign languages. However, they were a weakness in travel and tourism and land-based provision. Key strengths included good curriculum leadership, extensive partnership working, action to widen participation and good teamwork. Key weaknesses in some areas included ineffective target setting, insufficient sharing of good practice, some unsatisfactory curriculum design, lack of rigour in quality assurance processes and insufficient use of ILT.

36. Quality assurance systems and processes are mostly satisfactory. The college carries out comprehensive staff, student and external stakeholder perception surveys. These are

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analysed and effectively used as part of the quality-review process. The self-assessment process is systematic and involves most staff. The annual self-assessment report is thoroughly moderated by the academic board and the governors. The curriculum grade profile in the 2002/03 self-assessment report was slightly higher than that awarded by the inspection team. Curriculum and support areas have detailed action plans that arise from the report. However, in a minority of areas, plans fail to address some key weaknesses. The monitoring of progress against these plans is good. The quality assurance arrangements for some distant, community and franchise courses are insufficiently robust. In a minority of curriculum areas, the sharing of good curriculum practice is poor. The college lesson observation scheme, based on peer review, lacks rigour. Most staff are observed only once each year. The inspectors' lesson observation profile was significantly lower than that recorded by the college scheme. The college is aware that the scheme is weak. There are plans to make the process more robust.

37. The college has an appropriate set of policies that relate to equal opportunities issues; for example, recruitment, selection, access to training, anti-harassment and bullying. The college fulfils most of its duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA) and race relations legislation. It has maintained a strong focus on widening participation since the last inspection. The equal opportunities committee assesses the impact of the disability discrimination action plan. Teachers are required to identify how they will address equal opportunities issues on their schemes of work. However, this is often left blank. There is little promotion of equal opportunities issues in lessons. Broad targets for equality and diversity are set and monitored at the college level. However, the monitoring of retention and pass rates by age, gender, and ethnicity is weak; particularly at course level. Most college buildings and community centres are accessible for students with restricted mobility, but some are not. Students with specific learning difficulties and disabilities are fully integrated into the college community. The college's marketing plan contains a range of innovative strategies to increase the diversity of students and widen participation. For example, 'advocates' in the community are used to promote college courses and advise on local needs and priorities. Staff training on new legislation and diversity issues is adequate and ongoing.

38. The staff appraisal process is satisfactory. Individual reports are mostly detailed. The process is used to monitor performance objectives and identify opportunities for professional development. However, some appraisals are not comprehensive. The appraisal process is linked to a performance bonus scheme. This is designed to reward staff whose work is judged to exceed professional expectations. The level of investment in staff development is satisfactory. There is a good management development programme validated by a local university. The mentor scheme is effective in supporting newly appointed managers. Teachers who are not appropriately trained are encouraged to gain a qualification. The college plans to meet the national targets for qualified staff set for 2006. The college has developed a culture of continuous professional development. Staff are expected to undertake a minimum of 30 hours continuous professional development a year. Most staff consider opportunities for development to be good, but a small minority feel they are limited.

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39. Financial management is satisfactory. Over the past four years, the college has managed to maintain a small operating surplus. Delegated budgets are carefully monitored. The college has been successful at seeking out alternative provision, to ensure its financial stability. Over the last 20 years, the college has been slow to improve the poor accommodation at some main sites. However, the Arthur Mee centre has been recently refurbished and there are plans to invest a further £4.8 million on a new teaching block at the Chilwell centre. The college adopts an innovative approach to staffing some lessons. Teachers, learning support assistants and tutorial assistants are well integrated. The ratio of support assistants to students is high. During the inspection, the average group size in lessons was very low; significantly below the national average. The same weakness was identified at the last inspection. Small group sizes, besides having a negative effect on some learning activities, substantially impact on the cost effectiveness of courses. Whilst the college offers satisfactory value for money overall, this not true for provision for full-time students aged 16 to 18.



## **Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas**

### **Science and mathematics**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

#### *Strengths*

- good standard of student work
- rigorous assessment of student progress
- good range of provision
- very good team working.

#### *Weaknesses*

- low pass rates in 2002/03 in GCSE maths and AS-level biology
- insufficient checking of learning during lessons
- poor design of the advanced level chemistry programme.

#### *Scope of provision*

40. The college offers a good range of GCSE, AS-level and GCE A-Level science and mathematics courses. In addition, there are three access to HE courses; nursing, teaching and forensics, that include science and mathematics modules. Courses are offered both in the day and the evening over one or two years. At the time of the inspection, there were 424 students; 244 were full time and 180 part time. The majority of students were aged 16 to 18, but 175 were adults.

#### *Achievement and standards*

41. Retention and pass rates are generally satisfactory, at or about the national averages. The pass rate declined in 2002/03 on some courses, but increased on others. In 2002/03, AS-level and GCE A-level mathematics pass rates results improved by over 15%. However, the pass rates on GCSE mathematics and AS-level biology were low. In response to poor results, new strategies have been introduced. These include directing students with low GCSE scores to follow a foundation mathematics qualification and redesigning AS-level coursework.

42. Students' notes are mostly neat with good use of colour and highlighting to emphasise important points. In practical lessons, students handle apparatus competently and work in an organised manner. Students are able to use technical language to describe what they are doing. In one lesson, it was very evident that the group thoroughly enjoyed science.

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Students were able to develop their own ideas through discussion and gained a good insight into the theory of moments.

*A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 2001 to 2003*

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GCSE biology	2	No. of starts	30	42	28
		% retention	77	86	73
		% pass rate	43	72	45
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	141	137	160
		% retention	71	68	78
		% pass rate	69	64	47
AS-level biology	3	No. of starts	17	16	36
		% retention	94	69	78
		% pass rate	69	64	47
AS-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	17	30	49
		% retention	94	87	82
		% pass rate	75	77	68
AS-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	42	96	94
		% retention	83	85	80
		% pass rate	34	29	60
GCE A-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	*	13	17
		% retention	*	100	82
		% pass rate	*	62	95

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GCE A-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	*	27	50
		% retention	*	89	90
		% pass rate	*	63	78

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course did not run

### ***Quality of education and training***

43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers are well prepared and knowledgeable. The best lesson plans have clear objectives, focused on what students should learn. Students receive a high level of individual support during lessons. However, this is sometimes as a result of insufficient explanation or weak checking of understanding. In the best lessons, students undertake a variety of relevant tasks. Students are motivated and remain focused throughout the lesson. Students are able to ask relevant questions and give reasoned answers. In some lessons, there is good collaborative working. Students actively share ideas and develop solutions. In most lessons, tasks are completed accurately and in good time. New topics are clearly introduced. There is much good board work with good use of colour. All technical terms are explained. Everyday language is often used to describe complex concepts. These include happy and sad faces to explain positive and negative curves and cut flowers to illustrate xylem transport. Some teachers spend too much time talking at the front and sometimes move too rapidly from one topic to the next.

44. Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. Five teachers hold relevant higher degrees and three are external examiners. Technician support is good. The laboratories are very traditional, but are well maintained and have adequate equipment for the full range of courses. The fixed benches limit teaching activities and make it difficult for teachers to monitor students' work. Teachers are aware of the shortcomings and potential health and safety risks. Practical sessions are well supervised. There is no lift access to one of the main mathematics and science teaching blocks at the Chilwell centre.

45. The assessment practices are good. Students' progress is rigorously monitored. Teachers effectively use clear marking criteria based on examination requirements. Students' work is thoroughly and accurately marked. Mistakes are corrected. Students receive detailed feedback on how their work can be improved. Practice coursework is particularly well marked. Some of the best practice includes the conversion of numerical marks to an examination grade. Students' use these results to monitor progress against target grades. The assessment practice on access to HE courses is particularly good. Students who initially fail are able to be reassessed.

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46. The range of provision is good. Many science students who are successful progress to related courses at university or into employment. The provision is offered in a variety of ways. The practice of combining AS-level, GCE A-level and access to science chemistry groups is unsatisfactory. Students make poor progress when studying topics they are not ready for. A large number of international students follow science and mathematics courses. This has helped extend and enhance the provision. Without these students, many of the courses currently offered would not be viable. LSC funded students are often motivated by working with overseas students.

47. Students are well supported by enthusiastic and committed staff. Support is available both in and out of lessons. Students complete a preferred learning styles questionnaire prior to starting their course. However, there is little evidence that the outcomes inform teaching. For example, many students identified as kinaesthetic learners spend most of their time listening.

### ***Leadership and management***

48. The leadership and management of this area are good. Team work is effective and individual staff work very well together. Roles and responsibilities are clearly understood and effectively carried out. The science and mathematics teams meet very regularly. The decision to only offer science and mathematics mostly at one main centre has enabled teachers to share the same staff room. Informal communication is very effective. Communications with part-time staff is sometimes poor. Data is effectively used to inform management decisions. Teachers carefully monitor individual student's progress. The self-assessment report was mostly accurate, but some of the strengths were overstated. The co-ordination of GCSE mathematics courses across centres is weak.

**Land-based**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

***Strengths***

- good practical skills development
- much good teaching
- good resources.

***Weaknesses***

- slow progress towards achievement of NVQ units
- insufficiently robust assessment practices
- inconsistent rigour in quality assuring the provision.

***Scope of provision***

49. The college offers land-based courses through a franchised arrangement with the BTCV. The franchise operates in nine English regions including, the south-west, London, Essex, West Midlands, Staffordshire, north-west and north-east. Programmes are not offered at any of the college's main centres in Nottingham. Long course provision is offered as NVQ's at levels entry, 1 and 2. At the time of the inspection there were 69 students following these programmes. BTCV also offers over 300 one-day short courses as part of a national project. For example, in practical skills development such as tree felling, landscaping and environmental conservation. In 2002/03, over 4,500 students attended these courses.

***Achievement and standards***

50. Retention and pass rates on NVQ courses are mostly satisfactory. Some are above the national averages. Short course non-accredited provision has excellent retention rates. However, as the criteria for assessing learning is not always defined, it is not possible to compare pass rates with similar provision. Students following NVQ qualifications make slow progress in achieving individual units. Students develop good practical skills on both the long-course and short-course provision. These skills are often directly relevant to a wide range of land-based conservation work. Complementary skills such as emergency first aid and office administration are also well developed. Many students attend six or more courses over a short period. Some NVQ students also attend these courses to enhance their skills. NVQ portfolio work is satisfactory.

*A sample of retention and pass rates in land-based, 2001 to 2003*

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
BTCV college certificate (short course programme)	Entry	No. of starts	136	2762	4529
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	85	100	98
NVQ forestry	1	No. of starts	10	11	4
		% retention	30	55	50
		% pass rate	100	83	50
NVQ nursery stock production	2	No. of starts	17	10	28
		% retention	65	90	61
		% pass rate	90	67	88
NVQ garden centre skills	2	No. of starts	*	5	6
		% retention	*	100	83
		% pass rate	*	60	60
NVQ landscape practice	2	No. of starts	13	7	20
		% retention	31	71	75
		% pass rate	100	100	87
NVQ environmental conservation	2	No. of starts	*	1	13
		% retention	*	100	77
		% pass rate	*	100	63

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course did not run

***Quality of education and training***

51. Much teaching is good or better. Lessons are well planned. Practical lessons that take place in remote locations, such as woods, fields and customers' grounds are particularly effective. Schemes of work are clearly written and include aims and objectives, timing and content. Most NVQ lessons have clear assessment strategies. Health and safety issues are given a high priority. Most NVQ groups are small with less than eight students. Teachers use a wide range of teaching styles, utilise resources effectively and vary their activities. Some teaching is highly motivational. In the weaker lessons, students are not sufficiently involved. Teachers do not take into account their differing needs.

52. Teachers are vocationally experienced, but most are unqualified teachers. Currently, 23% of the 333 teachers who work for BTCV are appropriately trained. An additional 30% are following a teacher-training course offered by Broxtowe College. Teaching takes place in a wide range of good physical locations. Good use is made of real working environments. Washing facilities are provided in BTCV vans in remote locations. Teaching accommodation and resources vary from purpose-built, high-quality provision in Leeds, to site huts at the more rural locations. Some facilities are very cramped especially for the larger groups. BTCV can arrange for students in need to be provided with appropriate clothing. Some resourceful teachers buy second-hand text books for students to use. There are ICT facilities at all nine main centres. However, there is a shortage of books, vocational journals and supporting learning materials at some locations. The BTCV intranet includes information in a range of languages. The marketing materials takes account of equal opportunities issues.

53. Generally assessment practices are insufficiently robust. Some NVQ students experience long delays before the assessment process begins. For example, one student waited for nine months. There is an over-reliance on end-of-course assessment. Some students are not registered with the NVQ awarding body until after they have started being assessed. Opportunities to assess students in the workplace are often missed. At the start of any course, students' prior learning, experience and basic skills are not thoroughly assessed and recorded. The criteria for assessing non-accredited short course provision are not well established. NVQ internal verification and short-course moderation activities are not fully effective. Individual learning plans (ILPs) for NVQ students lack detail. Targets are not challenging. The monitoring of students' progress is not always rigorous.

54. In 2002, Broxtowe College and BTCV started working together on an innovative national pilot project centrally funded by the LSC. The projects primary purpose was to widen participation. Land-based vocational training was to be made available for students who would not traditionally attend FE courses. The provision is still under development. For example, there are plans to accredit and cluster short courses so that they relate to specific conservation jobs skills. NVQ provision is offered in a variety of subjects at levels 1 and 2, but not at every centre.

55. Personal support for students is good. Teachers have a good rapport and empathy with their students. Students are very positive about their teachers' ability to help them build

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confidence and acquire employability skills. The few students who are identified as needing learning support receive satisfactory help.

### ***Leadership and management***

56. Some aspects of leadership and management are unsatisfactory. A standard franchise agreement is in place. College managers regularly make regular visits to the BTCV centres. Two management groups, one for operations the other for curriculum approvals, meet regularly. However, their influence on the operational management at BTCV regional centres is not always evident. Centres have their own regional strategies, training and development plans. The college has acknowledged the need to accredit its short-course provision. A licence was granted in July 2003. However, to date, only 60% of the course provision has developed robust assessment criteria. Teaching is regularly observed at the nine regional centres. The process is good and observation forms are thoroughly completed. Areas for improvement are discussed with teachers and managers and agreed actions are followed-up. However, opportunities to identify any overall trends and support needs are missed. The analysis only reflects each centre's overall teaching profile.

57. Quality assurance systems are not sufficiently rigorous. Dependant on where students follow a course, the quality of their experience is likely to differ. For example, the differing times taken to register NVQ students and the level of detail recorded on students' records. The NVQ verification process is not effective in identifying some students' slow or erratic progress. There is some analysis of student questionnaires at local BTCV centres, regional and national provision levels. NVQ pass rate data is not used to inform course improvement. Equal opportunities data is not specifically analysed. Monitoring and support for new teaching staff are not always effective.



**Business, administration management and professional services**

Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

***Strengths***

- good development of business and personal skills in lessons
- effective support for individual students
- good enrichment opportunities for full-time students.

***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on most courses
- low retention rates on AVCE and GNVQ courses
- ineffective target setting on AVCE, GNVQ and office technology courses
- insufficient sharing of good practice between teams.

***Scope of provision***

58. At the time of the inspection, there were 751 students on business, administration and management courses. Some 77 students are aged 16 to 18 and following either GNVQ intermediate or AVCE business studies and 394 adult students are attending part time. There are 75 students following Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) accounting courses, 66 credit management and 77 on office skills programmes such as word processing and shorthand. AS levels and GCE A levels in accounting and business studies are also offered. Part-time courses include management and accounting courses. There are 95 students attending courses in local community venues available during weekdays, evenings and weekends. Some courses are available through distance learning. There is a small franchised NVQ provision in administration and management.

***Achievement and standards***

59. Pass rates on the full-time GNVQ intermediate and AVCE courses, AS-level business studies and the AAT qualification at levels 2 and 4, are significantly below national averages. Pass rates have been high on some office skills qualifications and good on individual AAT subjects. Achievement of key skills is poor, with only 5 out of 12 students completing both portfolios and external tests in 2002/03. Retention rates on GNVQ and AVCE courses have been poor for the last three years. However, the trend is upward and, in 2002/03, the rates were close to national averages. Retention rates for part-time students have been good for the last three years.

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60. The standard of students' work is satisfactory, particularly for adults. Many students are able to understand business concepts and work to deadlines. They can apply business theory to practice and are knowledgeable about topical business issues. Students are developing a good range of employment, personal and social skills. There is good progression to higher level courses in accounting and management. Most students from full-time courses progress to HE or obtain employment. Punctuality and attendance of students aged 16 to 18 are poor. Less than 60% of students regularly attend classes.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in business, administration management and professional services, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Word processing	1	No. of starts	60	25	37
		% retention	93	76	73
		% pass rate	66	42	48
NVQ accounting	2	No. of starts	32	25	20
		% retention	69	96	90
		% pass rate	82	67	67
Institute of credit management certificate	3	No. of starts	28	19	20
		% retention	71	58	85
		% pass rate	0	9	41
AS-level business studies	3	No. of starts	17	20	40
		% retention	59	60	88
		% pass rate	50	58	54
AVCE business and precursors	3	No. of starts	15	15	17
		% retention	73	33	47
		% pass rate	53	33	63

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
NVQ in accounting (one year)	3	No. of starts	28	35	35
		% retention	79	89	89
		% pass rate	50	52	71
NVQ in accounting	4	No. of starts	26	28	30
		% retention	81	71	93
		% pass rate	29	35	50

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

### ***Quality of education and training***

61. There is a wide variation in teaching standards. Teaching is generally satisfactory although there are few very good lessons. A minority of lessons are unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, teaching is well planned, with the needs of individual students recognised and supported. Many part-time teachers draw on their own commercial experience. Good use is made of current business examples to develop learning. Office skills workshops are well managed. In the weaker lessons, there is evidence of poor planning, with insufficient use made of learning support assistants. In some lessons, there is little differentiation of tasks and learning materials. Poor questioning techniques result in quieter students withdrawing from discussion and a few vociferous students answering all the questions. In most lessons, there is insufficient use of ILT. Opportunities are missed to reinforce equality and diversity issues in lessons.

62. Resources are satisfactory. Students have good access to drop-in IT centres. Learning materials are well produced. Some classrooms are cluttered, restricting practical and group activities. Most full-time teachers do not have recent commercial experience to bring realism and relevance to their teaching. However, they do undertake professional updating through staff development and attending professional events. Only GNVQ students are offered work experience opportunities.

63. Students can progress from levels 1 to 4 in accounting, business and office technology courses. However, several courses have recruited very low numbers. Some management courses did not recruit any students in 2003/04. Although students are appropriately interviewed before starting a course, the selection procedures are not always rigorous enough. A review is being carried out to identify the education and training needs of the adult community and employers. Full-time students participate in a wide number of enrichment activities. These include following additional qualifications, visiting local industry, first-aid training, listening to visiting speakers and visits abroad.

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64. On most courses, work is regularly set and marked with constructive comments. On business courses, there is insufficient setting and assessing of work in the first term. On office technology courses, although work is marked promptly, the results are not recorded by teachers or used to identify slow progress. Internal verification on business courses does not identify adequately some weak assessment practice. Recently, external verifiers have had to downgrade some assignments. Action is taken promptly to address external verification concerns. Students' individual learning plans and reviews lack precise targets and timescales. Many students make slow progress. Office technology students do not have individual learning plans, and or appropriate goals to encourage faster progress.

65. Students receive good guidance and support. Students value the encouragement and individual help given by teachers in class. Full-time students are effectively assessed and additional learning support needs are identified. Learning support assistants are well matched to support students with additional learning needs. Students receiving support fully participate in lessons. Good numeracy and literacy support is offered on an individual basis, in group sessions and in lessons. For office technology students, the learning support assistants are IT specialists and are able to support and reinforce the teaching. Part-time students have ready access to tutor support outside lessons through e-mail, telephone or meetings. Induction is good.

### ***Leadership and management***

66. Course management is mostly satisfactory. Course teams are cohesive and regular team meetings provide opportunities to share ideas and disseminate information. Managers consult teams before making decisions. The curriculum is managed by three different faculties and there is little sharing of good practice with other departments or between centres. Staff are appropriately involved in the self-assessment process and the self-assessment report was broadly accurate. The quality assurance process results in positive action being taken, but there is inconsistency in the way reviews and monitoring are carried out on different courses. Lesson plans are not systematically used or produced in a common format.

**Information and communications technology**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

***Strengths***

- good teaching and learning on adult programmes
- productive use of assignments to develop full-time students' skills
- good development of outreach centres to widen participation
- effective curriculum management for adults.

***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on a number of courses
- insufficient challenging teaching on full-time courses
- poor employer involvement on full-time courses
- insufficient use of ILT in lessons.

***Scope of provision***

67. The college offers a good range of full-time and part-time courses. Full-time courses are only offered at the Chilwell centre. The provision includes GNVQ at foundation and intermediate levels, AVCE and AS levels and GCE A levels. Most of the part-time provision is offered as flexible learning. Courses range from levels 1 to 3 and include tasters, computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) and the European computer driving licence (ECDL). Courses are offered at 126 community centres located around Nottingham and Derby. At the time of the inspection there were 3,708 students. The majority were adults; 91 students aged 16 to 18 were following full-time courses.

***Achievement and standards***

68. Pass rates are mostly satisfactory. In 2001/02, they were low on many courses, but rose significantly in 2002/03. The majority are now at or above the average. Due to very poor pass rates on the Integrated Business Technology (IBT) course at level 3, the OCN level 3 ICT was introduced in 2002/03, as a replacement. Two thirds of the students who transferred were successful. There are good pass rates on short ECDL and CLAIT courses and 'computing for the terrified'. Retention rates are satisfactory and have steadily risen since 2001/02. Student attendance on full-time courses is poor, at 69%. Registers indicate low rates of attendance as the norm.

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69. The standard of students' work is mostly satisfactory. Some AVCE projects are very good. Students develop good Internet skills and use them well to support their learning. Adults make very good progress and develop a wide range of skills. Many believe that they improve their work prospects and achieve personal goals. Progression to higher-level courses, at 70%, is good. In 2002/03, 50% of AVCE students gained a place at university.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communications technology, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Computing for the terrified	1	No. of starts	116	750	505
		% retention	85	84	83
		% pass rate	57	80	80
CLAIT (one year)	1	No. of starts	255	79	212
		% retention	68	65	81
		% pass rate	67	58	65
ECDL short	2	No. of starts	22	123	170
		% retention	95	55	87
		% pass rate	90	91	84
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	No. of starts	15	24	21
		% retention	80	88	86
		% pass rate	67	19	50
IBT III	3	No. of starts	150	68	59
		% retention	69	84	81
		% pass rate	24	28	*
AVCE**	3	No. of starts	41	39	21
		% retention	73	49	81
		% pass rate	80	58	71

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Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* data unreliable

\*\* advanced GNVQ in 2000/01

### ***Quality of education and training***

70. Teaching is generally satisfactory, but on adult courses it is good. Most lessons are well planned. Teachers effectively use questions to check on students' understanding. Technical terms are clearly explained and used in technical discussions. In flexible learning lessons, adults are able to work at an appropriate pace. Teachers provide very good one-to-one help and guidance. Students are set realistic learning goals. Learning is tracked systematically, but individual learning plans are not yet fully implemented. In the better lessons, teachers are able to teach mixed ability classes effectively. Most teaching of full-time students is adequate, but many sessions are insufficiently challenging. Teachers are supplied with information about students' preferred learning styles, but this is not effectively used. In some lessons, teachers do not regularly check students' understanding. More able students monopolise the teacher's time and the less able get left behind. In the poorer lessons, particularly in key skills, many students lose interest.

71. There is insufficient use of ILT in lessons. Few teachers use data projectors. Where they are available, they need to be specifically booked. In the few lessons where ILT is used well, it enhances the learning experience. For instance, in one tutorial a teacher demonstrated how students could look for jobs by using the Internet. There are few examples of graphics, films, cartoons, and manufacturers videos being used to enhance the quality of learning. The use of overhead projectors is poor.

72. Teachers have good technical skills and are appropriately qualified. However, few have relevant, recent industrial experience. Technical support is satisfactory. Specialist computer resources are appropriate. At the Chilwell centre, there is a library and open access computer facilities. Students can use these networked facilities outside of timetabled lessons. Computer equipment is modern with industrial-standard software and Internet facilities. A wide range of hardware is available for computer maintenance courses. Some student handouts and test materials are poorly produced.

73. Course assignments are well designed and relate to current industrial practice. For example, students built a website for customers to choose a conservatory design, and an interactive help application. There are clear assessment criteria. The marking of students work is thorough and helpful. Teachers use topical and relevant examples and tips to reinforce learning. More able students can extend their assignments. Workbooks and project specifications are good. There are additional handouts offering study notes and exercises. Students have access to files on the college's intranet.

74. Community centres are effectively used to widen participation. They are very welcoming. The centres offer flexible learning in a range of locations. These include in town centre buildings, schools, shops, a large converted post office and a police station. Centres are well equipped with up-to-date software. Most offer free or subsidised learning every day

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and most evenings, except Sunday. Students are encouraged to persevere. The more advanced courses include advanced programming and digital imaging. Employers use this provision to develop their staff's skills. There is poor employer involvement with full-time courses. There is no formal contact with local employers. Students do not have work experience. Students have limited opportunities to gain industrial experience of computer system development.

75. Support for students is satisfactory. Students who need learning support receive it. Tutors who provide support in lessons are effective. However, some tutors do not always have a sufficient understanding of the technical language. At community centres, there is no support available during lessons. Additional support is available through a well-designed set of interactive self-study materials.

### ***Leadership and management***

76. Overall management of the curriculum area is satisfactory. Teachers meet regularly. Communications are good. Limited resources are well managed. New teachers receive a good induction and are assigned a mentor. Most issues raised are dealt with promptly and effectively. There are good opportunities for staff to develop professional and technical skills. Teachers receive college training on current legislation and there is a general sharing of good practice. Partnerships arrangements have been very effective in securing good computer facilities at community centres. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and most teachers are involved. Action plans and targets are reviewed weekly. However, this has been ineffective in improving the quality of teaching or raising the retention and pass rates on some courses.



## **Travel and tourism**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

### ***Strengths***

- high retention rates on most courses
- high pass rates on the AVCE travel and tourism and the travel agents certificate
- good progression to related employment and HE
- very good support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on the intermediate diploma and on some additional qualifications
- less effective teaching and learning for more able students
- insufficient use of specialist travel resources
- insufficient rigour in quality assurance.

### ***Scope of provision***

77. The college offers a range of travel and tourism courses from level 1 to level 4. Courses include the AVCE in travel and tourism, an intermediate diploma, overseas resort representatives, cabin crew, ABTA travel agents certificate (ABTAC) and travel agents' awards. In 2002/03, the foundation in travel and tourism was offered but did not run. In September 2003, the college was awarded funding to develop a CoVE in travel and tourism. There are clear progression pathways. At the time of the inspection, there were 50 full-time and 28 part-time students aged 16 to 18. There were 7 adults following full-time courses and 120 attending courses part time. The AVCE in travel and tourism, with 42 full-time students, was the largest course.

### ***Achievement and standards***

78. Retention rates are mostly good and in some cases outstanding. From 2001/02 to 2002/03, many courses improved. Pass rates are mostly satisfactory. In 2002/03, the pass rate on the AVCE course was very good at 10% above the national average. However, on the intermediate diploma and the overseas resort representative, pass rates were below the national rates. Many full-time students who follow additional qualifications are not successful. The college, until very recently, has not been able to measure the progress students make in comparison with their prior learning. Progression is good; 30% of students

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advance to HE and 65% to related employment. There are effective links with employers who directly recruit staff from the college.

79. Most students achieve appropriate standards of work and on some courses it is good. For example, cabin crew students, whilst undertaking a simulation exercise, demonstrated very good skills in check-in procedures, passenger handling, communication and problem solving. Students are generally well motivated and contribute to the lessons well. During the inspection, student attendance was 75%, slightly below the national average.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in travel and tourism, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Air fares and ticketing	2	No. of starts	16	27	14
		% retention	81	89	93
		% pass rate	38	63	62
Intermediate diploma: travel and tourism (GNVQ intermediate 2001 and 2002)	2	No. of starts	17	17	18
		% retention	59	65	83
		% pass rate	0	82	67
AVCE: travel and tourism (GNVQ advanced 2001 and 2002)	3	No. of starts	23	42	26
		% retention	87	64	85
		% pass rate	65	70	82
Advanced certificate in overseas resort operations (short)	3	No. of starts	48	29	17
		% retention	94	97	94
		% pass rate	2	86	6
Travel agents certificate: advanced (short)	3	No. of starts	23	28	11
		% retention	87	75	100
		% pass rate	75	81	100

*Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)*

***Quality of education and training***

80. The majority of teaching is at least satisfactory and some is good. Most lessons are well planned and activities generally engage students. Schemes of work are well designed. Learning objectives are shared with the students at the start of a lesson. Teachers give clear instructions and guidance. Students understand what is expected of them. Teachers clarify key learning points by drawing upon their own experiences. For example, when explaining vertical and horizontal integration as applied by a national travel agent. Students' key skills are developed in many lessons. Communication skills are developed through group work and verbal presentations. However, formal assessment is infrequent, often resulting in students needing to duplicate work. The teaching of key skills in discrete lessons is uninspiring. Students often lose interest and progress in these lessons is slow.

81. In the weaker lessons, there is an over-reliance on paper-based activities to assess students' work. The teaching often lacks variety and students are passive learners. For example, in one lesson, students spent the whole lesson copying notes. Students' general participation was poor. Some of the more able students are not sufficiently challenged. In the weaker lessons, there are no extension activities and some students become bored. Students are not always encouraged to develop higher-level skills; for example, critical evaluation and problem solving. In a minority of lessons, the group sizes are very small. This affects the range of teaching and learning styles that the teacher can use. For example, group work and role-plays when teaching customer care skills.

82. Teachers generally are appropriately qualified, but some lack recent industrial experience; for example, as cabin crew. Learning resources are generally satisfactory. The college's 30-seat plane is used effectively to simulate the check-in and in-flight procedures. Teachers have insufficient access to specialist ILT in lessons and its use is generally poor. There is insufficient use of specialist travel resources; for example, a computer reservation system.

83. Students are well prepared for assignment work and examinations. Teachers set a wide range of written exercises and activities. Students receive useful feedback on their work that helps them to improve. Workshops are effective in supporting students with assignment work. Assignments are vocationally relevant. Internal verification and moderation systems are satisfactory. External verifier reports are mostly positive. The college is making slow progress in achieving its first-year CoVE targets. A co-ordinator has been appointed, but has yet to start. The CoVE has a good range of vocational courses in travel and tourism at levels 2 and 3 to build on. However, the college has only just started to develop bespoke courses for local companies.

84. Support for students is very good. The personal tutoring system is effective. Students' attendance and progress are carefully monitored. Individual learning plans and student targets are regularly reviewed. Initial assessment is effective. Students who need additional learner support receive it. Teachers and students have good working relationships. Teachers provide good support in lessons.

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***Leadership and management***

85. Leadership and management are mostly satisfactory. Teachers are committed to achieving the college's aims. They work well together as a team. Teachers have an adequate understanding of the college's equal opportunities policy. Teachers are aware of different learning styles and are responsive to students' individual needs. Some courses are timetabled flexibly to enable students to attend at convenient times. There is a staff development plan. The self-assessment process is not rigorous. Everyone has some involvement, but the report is not evaluative enough. Actions to address identified weaknesses are not systematically monitored. Many of the proposed actions will not raise standards. Subject teams did not review leadership and management as part of the process. Lesson observations have not brought about improvements. Good practice is not shared effectively. The use of data to inform management decisions is weak.

**Health, social care and childcare**

Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

***Strengths***

- high pass and retention rates on most courses
- much good teaching
- good links between theory and work practice
- effective academic and pastoral support.

***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on AVCE health and social care
- poor classroom accommodation at the Chilwell centre
- insufficient use of ILT to enhance learning.

***Scope of provision***

86. The college offers a wide range of courses in childcare, early years and health and social care. At the time of inspection, there were 168 students aged 16 to 18 and 64 adult students following full-time courses at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. Courses include Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) diploma and certificate courses, GNVQ foundation health and social care, foundation in caring, national certificate and diploma in care and national diploma in early years. There were 233 adult students and a small number of students aged 16 to 18 following part-time courses. Provision includes the CACHE certificate in childminding practice, a certificate in community mental health, courses for first aid, health safety and manual handling, teaching assistants, and working with students with learning difficulties.

***Achievement and standards***

87. Pass rates are high on many programmes. On the certificate in childcare and education, early years certificate, certificate in childminding practice and national diploma in early years, pass rates are well above national averages. Retention rates on level 2 courses are high on the GNVQ intermediate health and social care, certificate in childcare and education, the certificate in early years is well above the national average. Pass and retention rates on AVCE health and social care are poor. Punctuality and attendance are very good.

88. The standard of work produced in class is good and reflects the interest and care that students demonstrate in their lessons. Students are able to link theory to workplace practices effectively. Progression to higher study and employment are good. For example, in 2002/03,

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90% of the diploma in childcare and education gained employment or progressed to higher courses.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in health, social care and childcare, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
GNVQ intermediate health and social care	2	No. of starts	27	20	12
		% retention	81	95	100
		% pass rate	77	89	67
CACHE certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	8	19	12
		% retention	88	63	100
		% pass rate	83	100	100
CACHE diploma in childcare and education and precursor	3	No. of starts	14	17	18
		% retention	71	58	50
		% pass rate	100	89	85
AVCE health and social care and precursor	3	No. of starts	34	43	11
		% retention	65	42	38
		% pass rate	32	50	50
National diploma in early years	3	No. of starts	10	17	21
		% retention	90	65	71
		% pass rate	89	100	100
CACHE certificate in childminding practice	3	No. of starts	6*	18	27
		% retention	83	100	96
		% pass rate	100	33	100

*Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)*

***Quality of education and training***

89. Teaching is generally good. Lessons are well planned with clear aims and objectives. Teachers share the purpose of the lessons with students. Teachers use a variety of methods including case studies, visits and visiting speakers. However, ILT is not used sufficiently to enhance learning. In the better lessons, teachers identify preferred learning styles and modify their teaching methods to suit students' specific learning needs. Teachers check learning regularly. Teachers are well qualified vocationally and all have or are working towards a teaching qualification. Some have recent, relevant industrial experience. There is good use of professional experience to help students learn. For example, in a first diploma in caring lesson, the teacher drew on experiences in a care setting to illustrate the sense of loss often felt by clients when entering a residential home. Students are placed in a wide range of organisations and are able to share their experiences with each other in lessons. For example, in a lesson on childminding, students gave examples of activities they had used to benefit child development. Key skills are taught by vocational tutors and are seen as an integral part of the programme. In a few lessons, opportunities to develop key skills are not taken. The majority of key skills assignments are vocationally related and are of a high standard.

90. Accommodation is good at the Arthur Mee centre, but poor at the Chilwell centre. Lessons at the Chilwell centre take place in a temporary mobile unit which is poorly ventilated, has extraneous traffic noise and is too small for some activities. Students have access to high-quality resource materials for practical work and in lessons. Classrooms and corridors have well-presented displays. The learning centre has a comprehensive range of up-to-date resources including videos which the students can borrow, though few do so. Students are issued with helpful course handbooks.

91. Assessment of students' work is fair and accurate. Constructive comments guide students to make improvements. Initial assessment results are discussed with students to determine their support needs. Learning support assistants are used effectively. They assist dyslexic students or those requiring assistance during lessons. Some students attend additional support classes. Parents are informed of students' progress at parents' evenings. Parents are regularly contacted as issues arise. Student punctuality and attendance are continuing to improve.

92. There is a good range of progression opportunities in childcare, care, health and social care. Full-time students follow additional courses to broaden their experience and improve employment prospects. Links with local organisations are beneficial and allow students to visit relevant businesses or receive visits and talks in college. Collaboration with local organisations has led to an expanding range of courses for part-time students. For example, the certificate in working with people with learning difficulties. This was introduced following approaches from MENCAP and Nottingham and Derby social services.

93. Student support is good and includes high levels of support outside timetabled sessions. Well-documented tutorials are held weekly for all students. The induction

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programme enables students to settle quickly into the course. Arrangements for those who start courses late are good. The comprehensive advice and guidance available are linked to diagnostic testing and identification of additional support needs. Careers' advice is good in both lessons and tutorials. There are visiting speakers and representatives from local universities. Students appreciate the support given to them.

### ***Leadership and management***

94. Leadership and management are good. The self-assessment report is largely accurate in its judgements. The quality of provision is monitored through regular team meetings which include part-time staff. Communication between staff is good and effective. Team meetings are appropriately recorded and discussions have led to improvements. There are focus groups for students, but these do not contribute to course reviews. Equality of opportunity is an integral part of the ethos of the area and is promoted effectively in lessons.



## **Art, media and music**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

### *Strengths*

- good teaching on media, music and adult courses
- high pass rates on level 3 courses
- high standard of work in music, media and adult art courses
- effective use of teachers' industrial experience.

### *Weaknesses*

- unsuitable accommodation at main college sites
- insufficient development of students' drawing and presentation skills in art
- low retention rates on full-time art courses
- small class sizes significantly inhibit the range of learning activities.

### *Scope of provision*

95. At advanced level, the college offers AVCE in media studies and art and design, national diploma design, contemporary and popular music, foundation diploma studies in art and design and GCE A levels in art, film studies and media studies. At level 2, the college offers GNVQ intermediate art and design, contemporary and popular music, creative music through technology and GCSE media. A broad range of part-time courses take place in community venues and the college. Subjects include floristry, movement to music, watercolour painting and drawing, sculpture, guitar, singing and introduction to acting skills. At the time of the inspection, there were 112 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 31 adults. There were 543 students following part-time courses. The majority were adults. Most full-time students are following art or music courses, and a small minority take media courses. There are 11 students aged 14 to 16 attending creative studies in music or applied GCSE art lessons as part of the IF programme.

### *Achievement and standards*

96. Pass rates on level 3 courses are high. Retention rates on full-time courses are unsatisfactory. They are below national averages on intermediate art, foundation diploma and AVCE art and design courses. Retention and pass rates on the contemporary music course for adults improved significantly in 2002/03, to above the national average. Retention rates on level 1 part-time courses are high and pass rate are satisfactory.

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97. The standard of students' work on community, music performance and media courses is good. The performance skills of music students are well developed and students have a broad musical repertoire. An exercise to music course in the community, was lively and encouraged students to explore the benefits of exercise through movement. Students are well motivated and responsive. They are able to work well both in teams and independently. Sketchbooks in art and design lack individuality and the standard of work is underdeveloped. Presentation is poor and displays a lack of in-depth subject expertise, particularly in fashion and textiles.

*A sample of retention and pass rates in art, media and music, 2001 to 2003*

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
OCN introduction to life drawing	1	No. of starts	12	18	20
		% retention	100	83	95
		% pass rate	8	73	68
AVCE art and design	3	No. of starts	13	14	13
		% retention	92	43	62
		% pass rate	83	100	100
Contemporary and popular music	3	No. of starts	37	29	13
		% retention	41	66	92
		% pass rate	87	53	100
AS-level art	3	No. of starts	30	33	39
		% retention	77	85	72
		% pass rate	87	86	86
Foundation diploma studies in art and design	3	No. of starts	12	10	17
		% retention	92	70	82
		% pass rate	100	100	100

*Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)*

***Quality of education and training***

98. There is good teaching on intermediate GNVQ, AS-level media, music and part-time adult courses. In a painting lesson, using still life objects, GNVQ intermediate students were taught to mix colours accurately and effectively. The teacher's expectations were exacting and students responded well to produce lively and well-observed paintings. Teaching on the foundation diploma is less effective. Students are not encouraged to use drawing as a tool to explore and develop their creative ideas. In a life drawing class, students had a poor understanding of basic drawing skills and proportion. In some media and art lessons, teachers do not use questioning techniques very well. The result is a lack of student engagement and opportunities to consolidate learning and test knowledge. Small class sizes significantly inhibit the range of learning activities. Key skills are well integrated into all full-time courses. However, art students do not have a key skills numeracy tutor due to illness.

99. Music and media studios are well equipped. Recording studios provide students with a variety of industry-standard equipment. However, college computers have insufficient capacity to run the college's up-to-date, music-related software. Accommodation at the main college centres is poor for music, media and art. Rehearsal rooms are too small and restrict the opportunities for band work. At the Arthur Mee centre classrooms are small, creating small group sizes. There is a lack of workshop space and little large-scale art work is produced. One studio is partitioned and in a noisy main thoroughfare. The Meadows centre has one music room which is used as staff room, teaching room and technology suite. There are plans to move the media and music courses to new accommodation at the Chilwell centre.

100. The skills and experience of staff in art, media and music complement each other. Teachers in music perform outside of the college. They bring current practice and fresh ideas to their teaching. Technical support is good in art and media. The library at the Manor centre is not well stocked for all subjects. There is a lack of good audio-visual material to aid research or independent study in music and media.

101. Assessment of work and the quality of written feedback is good on media and music courses. Students are encouraged to assess and reflect on the quality of their own work using journals. The quality of assessment and feedback to art students is less satisfactory as it lacks objectivity and critical evaluation. For example, work described as 'excellent' then achieved a pass grade. Assessment on part-time community courses is good, but there is little internal moderation of standards across courses.

102. A wide range of part-time courses is offered in the community during the day and evening. Courses are not externally accredited, but serve to widen participation. For example, for young mothers, unemployed men, sheltered housing associations, women's refuge and partially sighted people. Few of these students progress on to higher-level programmes of study.

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103. Support for students is good. All students who are identified as requiring learning support receive it. The GNVQ intermediate art and design students benefit from the support of a full-time learning assistant. Good student behaviour is encouraged and managed well in lessons. Learning support tutors in music classes have relevant expertise. They are effective in understanding and supporting students' needs. Tutorials in music are well organised, comprehensive and include up-to-date comments from tutors.

### ***Leadership and management***

104. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The programme area is managed by three curriculum managers from different faculties. This results in some fragmented planning and development of the curriculum area. In one centre, communication with senior managers is perceived by staff to be poor. Staff work effectively in individual teams. However, there are few opportunities to share good practice across the programmes. Staff are appropriately involved in self-assessment at course team level. Reviews take place three times year. Data are analysed and actions identified to address issues. Targets for attendance and punctuality are well implemented. In response to issues raised at course review, actions have led to improved retention rates on music courses. The inspection awarded teaching grades much lower than those agreed by the college's lesson observation process. Art staff value good opportunities for professional staff development. Dedicated technical support in both areas is well managed and highly regarded by staff and students.

## Humanities

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

### *Strengths*

- high levels of achievement in GCE A-level psychology
- effective support for students
- thorough, constructive written and oral feedback to students.

### *Weaknesses*

- low pass and retention rates in AS-level law
- a significant number of small classes restricting the range of learning opportunities
- insufficient analysis of student pass rates relative to prior achievement.

### *Scope of provision*

105. The college offers AS levels and GCE A levels in geography, history, law, psychology and sociology. GCSE courses are provided in history, law and psychology. The access to HE courses may be followed over one and two years and have been restructured to provide a broad range of subjects linked to different career routes. GCE A levels are offered over one or two years. Most courses take place during the day. At the time of inspection, there were 277 students aged 16 to 18 and 246 adult students following humanities courses.

### *Achievement and standards*

106. Retention and pass rates are mostly satisfactory. However, in 2002/03, GCE A-level psychology students had good achievements. Retention and pass rates, together with the proportion of students gaining high passes, were well above the national averages. In AS-level law, the pass rate has been substantially below the national average in each of the last three years. During the same period, retention rates have also been below the national average. The retention rate on the access course has fallen in the last three years and is now below the national average. The pass rate has fluctuated, but in 2002/03 was well below the national average.

107. Students work hard in lessons and most take an active part in group discussions and respond well to questions. Many are willing to ask questions to further their understanding. Access students have ample opportunity to develop their self-confidence and learning skills. Students' written work and their involvement in classroom discussions demonstrate satisfactory and sometimes good progress.

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*A sample of retention and pass rates in humanities, 2001 to 2003*

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Access to HE	3	No. of starts	33	77	56
		% retention	79	73	68
		% pass rate	65	88	71
AS-level psychology	3	No. of starts	41	51	88
		% retention	68	86	78
		% pass rate	71	82	71
AS-level sociology	3	No. of starts	14	42	47
		% retention	79	81	83
		% pass rate	45	82	82
AS-level law	3	No. of starts	31	20	50
		% retention	71	60	74
		% pass rate	41	50	59
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	44	52	55
		% retention	66	71	84
		% pass rate	69	68	87
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	24	28	35
		% retention	92	89	74
		% pass rate	73	68	88

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

**Quality of education and training**

108. Most teaching is satisfactory or better, however, there is a small proportion of less than satisfactory teaching. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge of their subjects and explain topics clearly. Learning objectives are clearly outlined to students at the start of each

lesson. Some questioning is effective. For example, in a psychology lesson, the teacher carefully structured questions to explore students' understanding and ensured that all students were involved. In a law lesson, good supplementary questioning enabled students to develop their ideas, refer to earlier learning and introduce other ideas for discussion. However, in some lessons, questioning serves only to elicit basic factual information and not all students are asked to respond. The management of group work is variable. In some lessons, the teacher ensures groups work together productively. In other lessons, students, although asked to work in groups, continue to work individually. Group work does not take account of students' learning styles or abilities. There are very small numbers of students in some classes. As a result, the range of ideas introduced and views expressed by students are limited. The scope for effective group work is much reduced.

109. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. They undertake regular professional development. Although classrooms are adequate and have attractive displays, no student work is exhibited. ILT is used insufficiently in teaching and learning. There are no interactive whiteboards or data projectors in classrooms and few computers are located close to teaching areas.

110. Assessment is effective. Written work is accurately marked and feedback is thorough, constructive and appreciated by students. Teachers indicate clearly how students can improve their work. There is also much detailed and encouraging oral feedback. Assessment is closely linked to the syllabus objectives. The effective use of standardised assessment cover sheets facilitates a consistency of approach.

111. Students are well motivated and keen to learn. They are attentive in lessons and most show significant interest in their work and are keen to respond to questions and to contribute to class discussion. Students are well supported by teachers who are approachable, caring and give freely of their time. Students speak highly of the help and guidance they receive when investigating information for HE applications.

112. Subject and tutorial reviews are completed each term. On AS-level and GCE A-level courses, progress is monitored against target grades that are based on previous GCSE results. Students value the reviews and are clear about the standard of work they are achieving. However, actions arising from these reviews are very often imprecise in nature and timescale. Attendance is carefully monitored, aided by the recent appointments of two tutor administrators. Parents receive a written report on student progress each year and there is an annual parents' evening. All full-time students and part-time access students are screened to identify learning needs. They also complete a learning styles assessment, but this is not always used to inform teaching and learning in practice. Students are aware of the additional support available through student services.

### ***Leadership and management***

113. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff are fully involved in the self-assessment process, but the self-assessment lacks detail. Targets are not specific enough and responsibilities for their successful outcome are not clearly assigned. There is insufficient

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analysis of students' results in each subject when compared with their grades on entry. Teachers do not know whether students are achieving their potential. The peer lesson observation process resulted in a higher grade profile than that recorded during inspection. Staff value recent development activities. These have included sessions on learning styles and equal opportunities. Course meetings are held regularly. Their primary focus is on students and individual progress. Links with local universities have been developed to the benefit of students. Recruitment to some courses is low and has resulted in some small group sizes. Access course modules have been rewritten to enable joint teaching with AS-level or GCE A-level groups. This arrangement works satisfactorily.



**English and modern foreign languages**

Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

***Strengths***

- high pass rates
- good teaching
- thorough marking and helpful feedback on written work
- good leadership and management.

***Weaknesses***

- low retention rates on adult modern foreign languages courses
- insufficient use of ILT.

***Scope of provision***

114. The college offers a wide range of modern foreign language courses. At advanced level, the provision includes AS levels and GCE A levels in French, German and Spanish and OCN courses in French and Spanish. GCSE and OCN courses are offered in French, German, Spanish and Italian at level 2. At level 1, the same range of language course is offered, with the addition of Greek. Some courses are available during both the daytime and the evening. The English provision includes AS levels and GCE A levels in English language and literature and GCSE in English language. An accelerated one year GCE A-level English language and literature course is also offered. There are 1,270 students following courses; 127 aged 16 to 18 and 1,143 adults. Most students aged 16 to 18 are full time.

***Achievement and standards***

115. Pass rates are mostly high. In some subjects, they are significantly above the national average. In GCSE Spanish, pass rates were 21 percentage points above the national averages for the last two years. Pass rates in AS-level English language and literature have also remained well above the average. GCSE pass rates were good in 2001/02 and 2002/03, but declined to the national average last year. Retention rates on courses for students aged 16 to 18 are satisfactory, but poor on many adult modern foreign languages courses. For example, on the OCN French level 2 course, retention rates have remained significantly below the national average, at 41%. The standard of students' written work is at least satisfactory and often better. Students generally make good progress. GCE A-level English students have a good understanding of technical linguistic terminology. Modern languages students often show an above average understanding of grammar.

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*A sample of retention and pass rates in English and modern foreign languages, 2001 to 2003*

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
OCN spanish	1	No. of starts	37	93	179
		% retention	54	72	73
		% pass rate	90	85	100
OCN italian (short)	1	No. of starts	23	23	28
		% retention	87	78	57
		% pass rate	70	33	63
GCSE English (one year)	2	No. of starts	124	137	124
		% retention	77	76	78
		% pass rate	72	64	51
OCN French	2	No. of starts	15	15	22
		% retention	47	87	41
		% pass rate	86	92	89
AS-level English language and literature	3	No. of starts	25	50	35
		% retention	72	80	80
		% pass rate	94	98	89
GCE A2 English language and literature	3	No. of starts	*	11	19
		% retention	*	100	95
		% pass rate	*	100	95

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course did not run

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***Quality of education and training***

116. Most teaching is good or better. Schemes of work are clear and detailed. Lessons are well planned. Teachers share aims and objectives with students at the start of lessons. Most lessons have a wide range of activities that serve to encourage and enhance learning. For example, in a GCSE English lesson, students studied articles on bush fires in Australia. They were required to prepare and then take part in a role-play, assuming the characters of a victim and a government official. The teacher was lively and humorous and created an atmosphere where effective learning took place. Teachers regularly question students to check on their individual learning and understanding. The relationship between teachers and most students is very good.

117. Modern foreign language teachers make very good use of the language, even at the early stages of a course. For example, an OCN Spanish level 1 lesson was conducted almost entirely in Spanish. Languages teachers also make good use of authentic materials. In an OCN French level 2 lesson, the teacher used an authentic French doctor's prescription and a pharmacist's dispensing record. Examples of French medication packaging were passed around the class. There is insufficient use of ILT. Teachers rarely exploit what is available, except to create handouts from Internet web pages.

118. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. Many have a teaching qualification. Some part-time modern foreign languages teachers are native speakers. Teaching rooms are generally satisfactory. Some have attractive displays of students' work. Temporary mobile classrooms provide a less welcoming environment for learning. Teaching rooms are not adequately equipped for the use of ILT. Most rooms have only one computer and some have none. There are no rooms equipped with data projectors or interactive whiteboards. The stock of library books for English is extensive and up to date, but for languages it is limited.

119. Written work is thoroughly marked and promptly returned with all significant errors corrected. Teachers provide full and helpful feedback indicating areas for improvement. In English, assessments use external examination criteria. Opportunities for assessment are clearly indicated in schemes of work. Students' individual learning plans are effectively used to review progress and set targets. Schemes of work and lesson plans identify opportunities for key skills development. However, there few examples of this working effectively.

120. The wide range of provision in modern foreign languages is responsive to local needs. For example, the introduction of an OCN Greek level 1 course in 2003/04. Courses are offered at several community venues. Many students progress through different levels. Enrolments have increased significantly over the past three years.

121. Students appreciate the support they receive. The helpfulness of the advice given at open evenings is valued by students. Teachers provide good support for students on academic and personal matters. Learning support assistants provide good in class support for students with specific learning difficulties.

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***Leadership and management***

122. Leadership and management are good. Responsibilities are clearly defined and well understood. There are regular minuted meetings. Good practice is effectively shared. Planning is good. The self-assessment report was mostly accurate. The team know what is expected of them. Actions are reviewed for their effectiveness. Communication is good. Part-time teachers are fully involved in team activities. There are satisfactory arrangements for staff development. The staff appraisal system is rigorous and well documented. Targets are set and progress towards them regularly reviewed. The frequency of lesson observations is satisfactory. However, the grades awarded by the college are generally too high. Equal opportunities are not directly addressed. Some schemes of work, however, tackle equal opportunities issues through topic work. The team has put in place measures to improve adult retention rates. At the time of the inspection, it was too early to judge their effectiveness.

**Foundation: literacy and numeracy**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on adult literacy and numeracy courses
- good learning support
- extensive partnerships to widen participation.

***Weaknesses***

- inappropriate use of initial and diagnostic assessment
- insufficiently challenging teaching
- insufficient recording of progress.

***Scope of provision***

123. The college offers a wide range of literacy and numeracy courses part time and full time, during the day and evening, from entry level to level 2. At the time of inspection, there were 687 students on all programmes. Literacy and numeracy support are provided at the main college centres, 'skills shops' located in Long Eaton and Eastwood and community venues. Family learning takes place in 26 community venues and schools. A programme is offered in 17 hostels for homeless people and refugees and includes links with the probation service. Over 400 OCN units of study are offered. Students are able to select what is appropriate and build confidence in steps. Some 30 students study full time on a course designed to improve employment skills. The college manages and supports a national 'Foyer' project in 7 venues, which has supported 95 students during the year, including work with teenage mothers. Literacy and numeracy support is provided in the workplace in partnership with three local businesses. At the time of inspection, 177 students were receiving individual additional support.

***Achievement and standards***

124. Retention and pass rates are high on basic adult literacy and numeracy. In the national test results for 2003/04, retention rates are high at 100%; the pass rate for literacy was 75% and 93% for numeracy. The majority of students achieve several OCN units. Adult students gain confidence and apply what they learn to their everyday life. Students' numeracy skills have been developed in multiplication, division, use of decimals and measurement. For example, one student gained enough confidence to apply for a place on a construction training programme. A group of students receiving additional support were able to identify short and long vowels to improve their spelling.

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*A sample of retention and pass rates in foundation: literacy and numeracy, 2001 to 2003*

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Basic literacy (one year)	Entry	No. of starts	185	363	339
		% retention	69	85	83
		% pass rate	86	92	95
Basic numeracy (one year)	Entry	No. of starts	60	200	270
		% retention	73	82	83
		% pass rate	61	83	93

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

***Quality of education and training***

125. Much of the teaching is satisfactory and some is good, however, a small proportion of teaching is less than satisfactory. The most effective teaching is planned with a mixture of group and individual work involving mixed level ability groups from entry to level 2. An imaginative numeracy lesson used the theme of ‘pancake day’ to develop skills for gathering, handling and presenting data. The teaching strategies used included a practical demonstration and student participation. In a very challenging creative writing lesson, most students were able to produce high quality writing. In lessons for adult basic literacy and numeracy, teaching is insufficiently challenging. In these lessons, plans are very general. They do not take enough account of the individual needs, interests and experiences of the students. Opportunities for students to interact and work together are missed and worksheets do not encourage students to experiment or learn through making mistakes.

126. In most centres, students have access to good accommodation and resources. Where the provision takes place in the community, staff and students have access to resource boxes which often include laptops. Staff and students use relevant internet websites for support materials to develop literacy and numeracy skills. A grammar check program helps students to question their writing. For example, if the computer indicates a grammar error, the students are prompted to question the correction and decide if a hyphen is required.

127. There is inappropriate use of initial and diagnostic assessment. Initial assessment does not identify the level a student enters the programme. This results in the diagnostic assessment not being used to find the correct level. There are examples of students being given assessments at several levels before the correct one could be identified. On many courses, review and monitoring of student progress are unsatisfactory. On adult basic literacy and numeracy courses, the work planner is poorly completed. In some cases, there are no entries. Whilst the student is encouraged to complete what they have done, this is centred on

activities rather than the skills developed and learnt. The reviews for full-time students on the employment skills course are not regular enough. They lack detailed targets and good action plans. There is little written constructive feedback to enable students to improve.

128. Partnerships are used very effectively to widen participation. There is a wide range of opportunities for students to start literacy and numeracy courses. Strategies to reach potential students include the effective use of Learndirect and a countywide referral system. Course leaflets use appropriate illustrations and language. Activities are held in the community to raise awareness. For example, to increase understanding about the Foyer project.

129. Students receive good learning support. This is available on an individual basis by appointment, in timetabled small groups and in class on all main sites. There is a referral process for off-site provision. The learning assistants are trained and appropriately matched according to the students' needs. Specialist staff are available to support students with specific needs. Hostel support staff have received training in risk assessment to ensure they are able to effectively meet the needs of more vulnerable and unpredictable students. A dedicated support tutor provides advice and guidance to those working on the Foyer project.

### ***Leadership and management***

130. Leadership and management are good. Programme managers have a clear understanding of how to widen participation and reach under-represented groups. Financial resources are effectively managed to ensure that students in the community have access to good resources. Teaching staff are involved appropriately in the self-assessment process. However, the report is brief and descriptive. Grades awarded for internal lesson observations are higher than those awarded at inspection. Quality assurance procedures are satisfactory overall, but are insufficiently rigorous for robust internal moderation. There are good opportunities for staff development. The Foyer project is well co-ordinated and managed. Foyer staff receive appropriate training such as specific guidance on how to measure achievements to ensure maximum success for their students. The college uses the East Midlands Foyer network to disseminate good practice.

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**Foundation: entry-to-employment**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

***Strengths***

- good progression to FE or employment
- good participation in additional qualifications
- sensitive approach in lessons to students' development needs
- good use of ILT to enhance learning.

***Weaknesses***

- unsystematic use of initial and diagnostic assessment to plan learning
- insufficient formal tracking of students' progress
- narrow range of vocational options.

***Scope of provision***

131. There are 42 students following the E2E provision. Courses are provided at two centres. One is near the Nottingham city centre and the other to the west of the city. Students follow broad programmes of study which include practical, creative and social activities, literacy, numeracy, ICT, and personal and social education.

***Achievement and standards***

132. A high proportion of students, at 78%, successfully progress from the E2E programme to FE or employment. In addition, students can follow a wide range of qualifications while they are on the E2E programme. These include elements from the National Skills Profile, NVQs and, for young refugees, GCSEs in their native language. Students develop social skills and confidence as well as literacy, numeracy and vocational skills.

***Quality of education and training***

133. Teaching is satisfactory, good or better. Teachers and tutors know their students well. They set objectives which are sensitive to their development needs. For example, in a creativity lesson, one of the objectives was developing confidence in social settings. Good use is made of ILT. This enhances the students' experience both by providing them with new skills to increase their employability and by enabling them to produce visually attractive work. Students use this work as evidence to help them gain qualifications. ILT is also used effectively to extend and challenge the more able students and they are encouraged to work



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individually. For example, in one lesson, the teacher introduced a drawing feature integral to word processing programmes. While some students spent most of the lesson coming to terms with the basic tool, others were able to learn about the more advanced features and produced some interesting work.

134. In other lessons, however, teachers spend most of the time teaching the whole group as the students in the group have a wide variety of needs, backgrounds and aptitudes, many of them are not sufficiently challenged. In these lessons, some students were not able to understand what is being taught and lose concentration. The learning support assistants are not always used effectively. For example, although their availability is good, the support they give is not always clearly focused.

135. The accommodation for students on E2E programmes is good at the Meadows centre, but it is cramped and airless at the Eastwood centre. The poor accommodation at Eastwood does not provide an environment that is conducive to learning. Students have good access to computers at both centres and these are well used. At one centre, there are also computers in the base room. This allows tutors to vary learning styles during the lessons. The content of lessons is not reinforced sufficiently by additional written learning materials. This prevents students from working more independently in lessons or extending their learning in their own time.

136. Students on E2E programmes undertake diagnostic assessments to determine their learning needs. The results of these assessments are used in some numeracy lessons. However, they are not systematically used to design the students' learning programmes. Individual learning plans contain long-term aspirations. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the short-term specific learning goals that students should achieve. Individual student progress reviews are planned for each month, but are often postponed. The infrequency of formal progress review and lack of precise learning objectives, are barriers to students achieving their maximum potential as quickly as possible.

137. Students are referred to the programme by staff from Connexions, who also lead some elements of the programme. They are involved in finding students work or places on other courses, when they complete the programme. Many students have used the college counselling service. Parents and carers who, in some cases, could be valuable partners in helping the young person are not informed about the student's progress.

### ***Leadership and management***

138. Effective steps have been taken to embrace the E2E philosophy. The provision is very socially and educationally inclusive. The programmes are designed to reach out to disaffected and disengaged young people from deprived areas and to young refugees. Managers have intervened effectively to improve the range of teaching and learning strategies used. Class sizes have been increased, but more support has been provided in each lesson. The planning, reviewing and recording of learning for individual students is not undertaken rigorously. Communications are good between the small team of tutors, learning support assistants and one administrator.

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**Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**

Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

***Strengths***

- good teaching and learning
- high pass and retention rates
- very good punctuality and attendance
- effective support to meet the individual needs of students
- good leadership and management.

***Weaknesses***

- insufficiently challenging target setting in individual learning plans
- cramped and inappropriate accommodation
- insufficient availability and use of specialist resources.

***Scope of provision***

139. The college provides a range of full-time and part-time courses for school leavers and adults. The core of all courses is literacy and numeracy at entry level. Students can also follow course that are college certificated and OCN accredited. Vocational skills are developed as part of the college's work skills course, through work experience and within curriculum areas. Link programmes are offered to local special schools. The college has very good partnership arrangements with schools, social services and care homes. At the time of the inspection, there were 215 students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities following courses. Most attend programmes at one of college's three main sites. Some 78 students are based in Sheffield and Leeds. This provision is offered by the BTCV as part of a franchise arrangement. The college also works closely with MENCAP and social services to meet the needs of people who live in the Nottingham area.

***Achievement and standards***

140. Students successfully progress through the OCN accreditation routes. Adult students following the basic literacy and numeracy programmes achieve high pass rates at entry level. On the OCN basic literacy and numeracy courses for adults, over 97% complete successfully. Other students working at pre-entry level successfully achieve their core curriculum milestones. Many students successfully complete short vocationally related courses such as first aid at work. Retention rates are very good. Punctuality and attendance are excellent. Entry-level students are well prepared before they progress on to work

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experience placements and for some progress to full employment. Students are able to remain focused on challenging tasks for 20 to 30 minutes.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
OCN basic literacy	Entry	No. of starts	*	149	177
		% retention	*	94	94
		% pass rate	*	96	97
OCN basic numeracy	Entry	No. of starts	*	117	175
		% retention	*	92	94
		% pass rate	*	94	98
All OCN credits aggregated	Entry	No. of starts	*	137	169
		% retention	*	95	98
		% pass rate	*	75	83
OCN credit achievement vocational	Entry	No. of starts	*	41	47
		% retention	*	100	96
		% pass rate	*	100	89

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course did not run

***Quality of education and training***

141. Teaching is mostly good or better. Schemes of work are detailed. The planning of activities in lessons is good. Most teachers specifically plan to meet individual students' needs. Lessons are well paced and activities change at appropriate intervals. Students' concentration is maintained by the challenging nature of the activities. When students find tasks difficult, help is provided by learning support assistants. The ratio of assistants to students is very good. Sometimes there are more assistants in a lesson than can be usefully deployed. Other students following vocational courses are used imaginatively and effectively to support programmes. For example, in one lesson, students from the health care course

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made a presentation on HIV and how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. Students are enthusiastic learners including those at the BTCV.

142. Adult students make good progress on most courses. Students listen to the teacher and follow simple instructions. They support each other when appropriate and can describe activities they have undertaken. In tutorials, students are able to reflect on what they learned and analyse their progress. In a relaxation session in which students were invited to make sounds into a microphone, three students with profound and multiple disabilities were able to recognise and respond to the contribution of others. In another session students were able to follow clear instructions and design a simple powerpoint slide show including simple graphics and sound.

143. Staff are well qualified and skilled at working with students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Many have experience as social workers or have relevant vocational training. Learning support assistants play a significant role in supporting teaching and learning. The accommodation used for teaching has limitations on all three main sites. The base rooms in two centres are cramped. Teachers cannot cater easily for more than one student in a wheelchair. At one centre, students do have appropriate privacy to receive personal care. Most base teaching rooms have computers, but rarely with a printer attached. Teachers do not regularly use computers for teaching. There are insufficient specialist literacy and numeracy resources to fully meet the needs of those following the pre-entry curriculum.

144. There is an effective use of initial diagnostic assessment tools. Adult students are placed on courses appropriate to the level to their abilities. Student progress reviews are mostly effective. However, student targets for social, behavioural and academic progress are often too general or long-term. They do not help students or teachers measure progress.

145. There is a wide range of vocational and leisure courses. Students can follow a range of courses including art, pottery, gardening and food preparation. The college provides opportunities for students to follow courses that reflect their vocational and recreational interests. The structure of the learning day is designed to allow students to arrive on time. There are good external links both with local groups and national organisations. The college is effective in finding good vocational work placements. On a number of occasions these placements have led to permanent supported work-placements or unsupported employment. Some students progress to NVQ courses in food preparation and British Sign Language.

146. Tutorials are regular and effective. They are carefully planned and well managed. Students receive very good individual help and pastoral support. Students effectively use tutorials to raise any concerns they may have. The support students receive at BTCV is equally good. A student satisfaction sheet is regularly completed as a tutorial activity. The results are carefully analysed. The information is used improve the provision. Students and staff establish very good working relationships.

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***Leadership and management***

147. Leadership and management are mostly good. The recently appointed programme manager provides strong, energetic leadership. Inclusivity is actively promoted. Staff meet frequently and regularly to discuss students' work and achievements. There are clear procedures to ensure that improvement is continuous. Course reviews are comprehensive and take appropriate account of students' views. The self-assessment report is mostly accurate and the accompanying development plan well considered. However, some of the weaknesses in the BTCV provision are not identified. The current procedures for the observation of teaching and learning are not sufficiently rigorous. There is an over-optimistic view of standards. Teachers who would benefit from professional support are not identified. Full-time staff are appraised three times a year by the programme manager. Performance issues are clearly linked to continuing professional development. Part-time staff are not included in this process.

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**Part D: College data**
**Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age**

Level	16–18 %	19+ %
1	29	60
2	27	21
3	19	7
4/5	0	1
Other	25	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: provided by the college in 2004*

**Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age**

Curriculum area	16–18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments (%)
Science and mathematics	742	682	4
Land-based provision	252	4,740	16
Construction	108	1,672	6
Engineering, technology and manufacture	107	530	2
Business administration, management and professional	188	1,782	6
Information and communication technology	493	5,232	18
Retailing, customer service and transportation	5	379	1
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	280	393	2
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	2	157	0
Health, social care and public services	276	760	3
Visual and performing arts and media	272	2,451	9
Humanities	377	365	2
English, languages and communication	729	1,769	8

Curriculum area	16–18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments (%)
Foundation programmes	782	3,119	12
Other/Unknown	1,151	2,190	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,764</b>	<b>26,221</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in 2004

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16–18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
1	Starters excluding transfers	182	171	343	1,711	1,719	1,762
	Retention rate %	78	68	57	79	67	67
	National average %	76	75	76	73	69	70
	Pass rate %	43	41	56	49	62	59
	National average %	65	69	71	66	68	71
2	Starters excluding transfers	740	614	574	955	1,050	1,046
	Retention rate %	78	68	74	76	65	69
	National average %	72	70	72	70	68	68
	Pass rate %	59	66	74	57	70	72
	National average %	67	69	71	64	68	72
3	Starters excluding transfers	681	740	825	848	1,049	1,047
	Retention rate %	63	72	76	64	69	75
	National average %	67	71	77	69	68	70
	Pass rate %	67	68	63	59	48	65
	National average %	75	77	79	66	69	72
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	4	10	5	87	75	51
	Retention rate %	100	70	100	55	51	67
	National average %	66	73	71	67	67	67
	Pass rate %	0	0	60	23	29	50
	National average %	65	54	53	58	55	56

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*Note: summary of retention and achievement for the last three years by age and level of course, compared against national averages for colleges of the same type (that is general FE/tertiary colleges or sixth form colleges).*

*Sources of information:*

1. *National averages: Benchmarking Data 2000 to 2002: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2003.*
2. *College rates for 1999/2000 to 2001/02: College ISR.*

**Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level**

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	54	42	4	80
Level 2 (intermediate)	63	27	10	51
Level 1 (foundation)	74	22	4	27
Other sessions	65	31	4	46
<b>Totals</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>204</b>



**Notes**