

Treloar College of Further Education

Reinspection monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Independent specialist college

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REINSPECTION MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Context and focus of visit

Treloar College is an independent specialist college of further education, and a registered charity. It is located in Alton, Hampshire, and offers residential and day provision for young people aged 16 to 25 with physical difficulties and additional learning needs. The college provides vocational and academic courses from pre-entry level to level 3 programmes. In 2009/10, 67 students were studying at entry and pre-entry level and 65 at levels 1 to level 3 at the college. Twenty-two students studied at a local partner sixth form college on level 3 courses that were not available at Treloar College.

At the last inspection in 2008 the college's overall effectiveness was good, as were leadership and management and achievement and standards. Quality of provision was outstanding. In the current self-assessment report the college graded its overall effectiveness as outstanding. The monitoring visit focused on three areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.

Themes

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress has the college made through its self-assessment and improvement planning to improve the provision, in particular the quality of work experience?

Reasonable progress

At the last inspection only eight students had the opportunity to undertake work experience. The college has implemented an improvement plan and, over three years, has made significant progress in contacting local companies to find possible placements for students. It now works with 68 companies. The college has put in place a structured approach to work experience, so that all first year students have internal placements, all second year students undertake external visits to different companies, and all third year students have some kind of external work experience. However, the programme is not sufficiently individual, and does not take account of previous work experience that students may have had. For example, it may be appropriate for some students to have external work placements from the start of their programme, and others may need longer on internal placements. The programme is not sufficiently linked to the programmes of learning, transition planning and the advice and guidance service. The college has just produced a strategy document to review the current arrangements and recognises that the approach needs to be more personalised. On the basis of the observed teaching and learning during the visit, and the progress made since the previous inspection, the current self-assessment report is over optimistic in its grading.

Outcomes for learners

What progress has been made in improving outcomes for learners?

Reasonable progress

At the last inspection students' achievements were good, but the quality assurance arrangements for monitoring students' targets were weak. The college did not provide sufficient information to demonstrate value added and the distance travelled by students in all aspects of their experience. The college now monitors the students' individual targets rigorously. The students continue to make good progress in achieving their external qualifications at all levels, with very high success rates on level 1 and level 3 courses at Treloar College, but a drop between 2008/09 and 2009/10 on level 3 courses at the partner college and on level 2 provision at Treloar College. The value-added information at level 3 shows that a high number of students at the partner college did not achieve their predicted grade in 2009/10, although a very high number of students exceeded their predicted grade at Treloar College. The college does not yet use any value-added measures at level 2. It now retests students for literacy and numeracy to demonstrate progress made against the diagnostic tests, and students are progressing well. The destinations data show that 73% of students achieved their long-term goals, a slight drop from the previous year. The college has yet to use its baseline assessment and subsequent data effectively to provide information about the distance travelled by the students in all aspects of the provision since they started at the college.

Safeguarding

What progress has been made in improving safeguarding?

Insufficient progress

At the last inspection the college was not ensuring all aspects of the safeguarding of students, and this was a key area for improvement. It has rectified the specific security issues identified at that time. However, over the past six months significant shortfalls have been identified in aspects of nursing care and the arrangements for medication. Other safeguarding issues have subsequently been raised by parents, students and staff, and the local authority and the college have worked together over several months to rectify the shortfalls. The Principal, appointed in April 2010, has cooperated fully with the local authority and the Care Quality Commission, and has written an extensive action plan. The college has revised its policies and protocols and these are thorough and detailed. The college has contracted a pharmacist to come on site and take responsibility for the administration protocols and procedures of students' medicines. The Principal now chairs the Safeguarding and Student Welfare committee. Although much progress has been made, the new policies and procedures have not yet had time to be fully implemented. The college recognises that it needs to improve the communications between the different departments; to ensure that the implications of the Mental Capacity Act are fully understood and included as part of the initial assessment; and, to improve the arrangements for the reporting of incidents.

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