

# Henshaws College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number:</b>	121777
<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Sue Harrison HMI
<b>Last day of inspection:</b>	25 November 2011
<b>Type of provider:</b>	Independent specialist college
<b>Address:</b>	Bogs Lane Harrogate North Yorkshire HG1 4ED
<b>Telephone number:</b>	01423 886451

## Information about the provider

1. Henshaws College is an independent specialist provider operated by Henshaws Society for Blind People. It is based on a large campus on the outskirts of Harrogate. The college provides personalised programmes in independence and vocational pathways. Within these it embeds literacy and numeracy, expressive arts, personal and social development, therapies and specialist support, and health, fitness and leisure activities. The curriculum is delivered within the college, the residences, and in the community.
  
2. The majority of learners live in residential accommodation on the campus. All learners have additional needs to their visual impairment, ranging from a moderate learning difficulty to multiple and complex needs. In 2010/11 over half the learners had physical disabilities and 29 had severe learning difficulties. Approximately two-thirds of learners were male, and 8% were from a minority ethnic background. The college recruits learners from a large number of local authorities. In response to government priorities, in recent years the college has recruited an increasing number of day learners. In 2010/11 there were 12 day students and in the current year there are 18.
  
3. College governance is provided by Henshaws Yorkshire Board, which is chaired by a trustee of the charity. Board members are recruited from the region to ensure local representation and awareness of the needs of stakeholders in the area.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
<b>Provision for young learners:</b> Further education (16 to 18)	9 full-time learners
<b>Provision for adult learners:</b> Further education (19+)	68 full-time learners

## Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

<b>Overall effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>
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<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>
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	<b>Grade</b>
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2

## Overall effectiveness

- The college is successful at meeting the needs of students with a range of complex needs. The majority of learners make good progress. A small minority of the most able learners are not always challenged sufficiently. The college is well led and managed. Staff are skilful at helping learners to gain confidence and develop their independence. A large majority of teaching and learning is good or better, and students participate fully in a wide range of activities outside lessons. They enjoy college and receive an outstanding level of care, guidance and support which contributes to their well-being. Vocational skills are successfully developed through enterprise projects. Work is taking place to extend further the range of vocational options for learners and the links with employers. The use of technology to help learners access learning is excellent.

## Main findings

- Learners enjoy attending college and make good progress. They increase their independence to do more things for themselves and gain confidence in a range of skills. Learners' behaviour is good. They respect other people and work well together in teams.
- Learners develop good vocational skills that help them to progress to supported employment or further education and training when they leave college. All learners gain qualifications but for a small number of them this is at too low a level for the standard of work they produce.
- Learners feel safe at the college. They show good awareness of health and safety in all their activities. Learners make an excellent contribution to the life of

the college and to the wider community. They make very good progress in their personal health and fitness plans.

- Teaching and learning are good. In most lessons, learners are highly motivated to work hard and they achieve well. Initial assessment is very thorough and enables staff to plan lessons effectively. Learning support is good, with just occasional examples of support workers prompting learners too much.
- Learners' programmes meet their needs very effectively. They provide a good balance of activities to meet learners' needs, except for a small minority who are not sufficiently challenged. Students benefit from a good enterprise curriculum and extensive enrichment activities.
- The college makes good use of partnership work to develop its provision. The work with external organisations to develop access technology that enables learners to be more independent is excellent. The range of employer-based work placements is too limited.
- Care, guidance and support are outstanding. As a result, learners settle quickly into college. They receive extensive therapeutic and personal support which contributes significantly to their well-being. The college works very well with external agencies to provide high-quality guidance and support.
- Leadership and management are good. The governing body and senior managers provide a clear steer on the future direction of the college. Communication with staff is effective and the day-to-day running of the college is smooth and orderly.
- The college provides a warm and welcoming learning environment. The promotion of safeguarding is good. Skilful work takes place with learners to help them keep safe. Risk assessments are detailed and effective.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is also good. Learners are very successfully involved in making sure policies and procedures, such as anti-bullying, are meaningful to them. They show a good understanding of different cultures and religions represented in the student body.
- The college makes excellent use of the views of learners in the development of its provision. It encourages learners to voice their opinions very successfully and their views are valued. It also works very effectively with parents and carers.
- Self-assessment is effective. Curriculum teams carry out very thorough self-assessments. The involvement of residential staff is more limited. The self-assessment report is too descriptive in parts, though inspectors agreed with most of the findings.
- Accommodation and resources to support learning are of a high standard. Learners particularly enjoy the excellent health and fitness facilities. Vocational work is carried out in realistic settings and information technology is constantly updated to ensure learners are receiving the most appropriate support.

## **What does Henshaws College need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that the most able learners are sufficiently challenged by:
  - ensuring that their programmes build sufficiently on what they have already achieved
  - providing a level of accreditation that is suitable for their needs
  - developing further the employer engagement strategy to extend the range of external work placements.
- Develop further the quality assurance strategy by involving residential staff to a greater degree in the self-assessment processes, and by ensuring all aspects of the self-assessment report are equally evaluative.

## **Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**

### **What learners like:**

- the help and support they receive from staff
- the fact that they can do more things for themselves
- the opportunity to learn lots of new things
- the ability to make more decisions for themselves
- the technology that gives them greater independence
- the increasing confidence of visually impaired learners to find their way around the campus without help
- the sports and fitness centre
- the social activities with friends.

### **What learners would like to see improved:**

- the noise from some other learners in the residences
- the chance to go off campus even more.

## **Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**

### **What employers like:**

- the detailed information they receive on learners accessing a work placement
- the good level of support for learners
- the effective methods of communication with the college.

### **What employers would like to see improved:**

- no areas of improvement were identified.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 2**

5. The college has maintained a good quality of provision since the last inspection and has improved further its care, guidance and support services, which are now outstanding. It has addressed each of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection, although it recognises the need to extend further its vocational pathways. Plans are in place to build a new vocational block in 2012. Staff are keen to bring about further improvements. The self-assessment process carried out by curriculum teams is detailed and thorough. This feeds into an overall self-assessment report for the college, which in places describes rather than evaluates the provision. However, senior leaders have a good understanding of the areas for improvement and inspectors agreed with most of the college's judgements in the self-assessment report.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 2**

6. Learners enjoy attending college and a large majority make good progress in developing a range of skills. Many of them achieve their long-term goals. A high proportion of learners who left the college in 2010/11 progressed into supported employment or further education and training. Over half the leavers moved into supported living, which is lower than in previous years. The college is continuing to liaise with the authorities in the home area of a small number of 2010/11 leavers who have the potential to move into supported living but have not yet secured a place.
7. Learners develop good vocational skills as a result of work in the college enterprises, such as an early morning coffee service, 'Sandwiches to Go' and providing items for sale in local businesses. Skills developed include working to tight deadlines, being courteous to customers and working in teams to problem solve. Students learn to recognise what constitutes high-quality items and good service. The standard of work produced in art and craft is particularly commendable and has led to customised items being commissioned by both individuals and businesses. Learners have won awards at regional enterprise competitions.
8. The proportion of learners who gain accredited qualifications is high. However, a small minority of learners are working toward accreditation at a level that is too low for their ability. For example, in the 'Gallery Café' the standard of learners' work is higher than the entry level award they are working on.
9. Learners make significant gains in confidence and independence during their time at college. They ask questions in lessons, make suggestions and tell staff if they do not understand something. They make an excellent contribution to the college, for example by making videos and podcasts that are used to enrich the curriculum. They also contribute fully to the local community through enterprise work and through their involvement in disability awareness training with

external organisations. Learners develop an increased understanding of literacy and numeracy in practical sessions.

10. Learners make good progress in developing independent living skills, such as meal preparation and household tasks, and in the extent to which they can carry out personal care tasks for themselves. Learners also develop skills in managing their behaviour and how to relate to other people. They are good at taking turns in class and are keen to help each other. They make excellent gains in their personal health and fitness, and learners have gained awards in local sports challenges and Special Olympic events.
11. Learners feel safe in college. They demonstrate good understanding of health and safety in practical lessons and work placements. Learners are also developing their understanding of e-safety. They achieve well in travel proficiency tests which contribute to their safety in finding their way around the campus and when they are out in the community.

## **The quality of provision**

## **Grade 2**

12. Teaching and learning are good. A large majority of lessons are well planned, with a broad range of activities and teaching methods to help learners participate and understand. In most lessons, learners are enthusiastic and keen to succeed. For example, in an information technology lesson learners worked hard on individual tasks that were appropriate to their abilities and then produced a news podcast together to share with the rest of the college. Teachers and support staff make good use of questioning techniques to draw out learners' understanding and check learning has taken place. A small number of lessons are satisfactory, but do not engage learners as successfully because the teacher input is too lengthy or because support staff prompt learners' responses too much.
13. Staff use initial assessment effectively to identify individual targets for learners, which are integrated into all sessions. They monitor progress well against the targets in most cases. In a small number of instances, learners are still working on a target they have already achieved. Learners' ability to take part in lessons is enhanced considerably as a result of plans arising from therapeutic, medical and care assessments. In addition, all learners have a personal exercise profile which records progress in the areas of health and leisure activities.
14. Staff are appropriately qualified and extensive training is in place to develop their skills and keep them up to date, for example with developments in new technology and behaviour management. As a result, learners are able to use an excellent range of access technology and other communication methods to help them take part in lessons.
15. The range of programmes offered is good. Learners have individualised timetables which include independent living skills, vocational work, mobility training and a range of therapeutic inputs. The enterprise curriculum is excellent

and the college offers an extensive work placement programme within Henshaws Society. The number of vocational pathways available to learners has improved since the last inspection. The curriculum offers a good level of challenge for most learners; for a small minority their programme does not build sufficiently on the skills they have already achieved.

16. Learners benefit from a wide range of enrichment opportunities. They enjoy trips to historical and other sites of interest, horse riding, film club, games sessions and 'pamper yourself' events. They take part in many sporting activities, including yachting and golf. Individual needs and requests are fully supported. For example, a group of learners attended line-dancing and there is a regular church group.
17. Partnership working is good. The college works effectively with external organisations in the development of access technology products that benefit learners and contribute significantly to their independence. The college has also worked with a local college and university to develop mobility support qualifications intended to raise the skill level of staff nationally. Opportunities for learners to work with external employers are tailored to the needs of the individual, but the range of placements is too limited.
18. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Initial advice and guidance are well structured and detailed. Home and school visits ensure learners and their families or carers are successfully prepared for the transition to college. The support learners receive in a range of therapies, and in the use of access technology, is outstanding. Learners have excellent support for their personal well-being through the curriculum, additional targeted small group and individual sessions, and the college's strong links with external services. This includes work with an independent advocacy service to support learners. Transition arrangements are good to help learners when they leave college and additional staffing has been put in place recently to strengthen this further.

## **Leadership and management**

## **Grade 2**

19. Leaders and managers set high standards and staff support is strong for plans and targets aimed at bringing about further improvements. Curriculum management is good. Managers and staff make good use of data to inform planning, and the college makes good use of its links with similar providers to benchmark its performance.
20. The governing body sets a clear strategic direction and is well informed about local and national priorities. The college benefits from access to expertise within the parent company and from its fundraising activities. The governing body closely monitors the quality of provision and outcomes for learners. It listens carefully to the views of learners and has started to use link roles to strengthen further its communication with staff. Action has been taken to improve reports to governors and recent reports are sharply focused. The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively.



21. Safeguarding procedures are good. The college works very effectively with learners to develop their awareness and understanding of keeping safe. Staff roles and responsibilities for safeguarding are clear and policies and procedures are fully understood. Training is carried out at an appropriate level for different staff roles. The college works very well with external agencies to promote safeguarding. Appropriate checks are made on staff and other adults working with learners. Health and safety is well managed on the campus and appropriate risk assessments are in place for off-site work.
22. The college promotes equality and diversity well. Detailed monitoring of the achievement of different groups of learners shows no difference by gender, ethnicity or type of disability. Work with learners to promote understanding of differences between people is very effective. It builds successfully on their own experience of different cultures and religions within the student group. Learners are involved in devising anti-bullying strategies that are meaningful to them. The college is characterised by a culture of respect for individuals.
23. The learner involvement strategy is excellent. The student council plays a very active role in feeding back the views of learners. Students are also well represented on college committees. They are fully prepared for this role so that they are confident to contribute, and their views are valued. The college's liaison with parents and carers is also very good. The employer strategy is not as well developed, but employers who are involved with the college are very positive about their experience.
24. Self-assessment is effective at helping the college to maintain its strengths and identify areas for further improvement. Managers closely monitor the quality of teaching and learning, and strategies are in place to spread good practice. Residential staff are involved in the self-assessment process but to a lesser extent than curriculum areas.
25. The college provides good value for money. As a result of significant investment in accommodation and resources, the college provides a very good learning environment.

## Information about the inspection

26. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the college's quality manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding body, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
27. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the college. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF)**  
**Henshaws College**

**Learning types: 14 – 16:** Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades <b>using the 4 point scale</b> 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive
<b>Approximate number of enrolled learners</b>			
Full-time learners	82	4	78
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	2		
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2		
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2		
How well do learners progress?	2		
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
How safe do learners feel?	2		
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	1		
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	1		
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2		
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2		
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2		
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	1		
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>		
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2		
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2		
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2		
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2		
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	1		
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2		
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2		

\*where applicable to the type of provision

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