

# Langdon College

## Focused monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 131910

**Name of lead inspector:** Sue Harrison HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 3 November 2011

**Type of provider:** Independent specialist college

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## **Focused Monitoring Visit: Main Findings**

### **Context and focus of visit**

Langdon College is a residential college for Jewish students aged 16 to 25 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Those attending Langdon come from the major national Jewish communities, mainly from Manchester and London. There are currently 22 students on roll. The college's primary focus is on helping students to develop independent living and employability skills in an environment that is culturally and religiously appropriate.

The college was inspected in 2006 and was judged to be good. A monitoring visit in 2010 found reasonable progress in the college's response to equality and diversity legislation and the monitoring of health and safety, and significant progress in self-assessment, maintaining good outcomes for learners and the development of a learner involvement strategy. This report focuses on the themes explored during the monitoring visit.

### **Themes**

#### **Self-assessment and improvement planning**

<b>What progress is the college making in developing its quality improvement strategy?</b>	<b>Significant progress</b>
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The college has maintained the rigorous approach to self-assessment identified at the last monitoring visit. A culture of continuous improvement is evident, which is clearly focused on the learner's experience. Since the last visit, the extent to which learners' views are collected and acted upon has increased further. Feedback from parents and carers, and the views of other stakeholders, also play a prominent role in developing the provision. Strong links with similar providers help the college to benchmark its own performance and to identify its strengths as well as its areas for further improvement. Actions taken as a result of these quality improvement strategies are well developed to benefit learners. For example, increased monitoring of the residential aspects of the provision gives learners the opportunity to make their views known directly to managers more frequently as well as through regular meetings with their tutor and key worker.

#### **Outcomes for learners**

<b>To what extent is the college maintaining strengths in outcomes for learners?</b>	<b>Significant progress</b>
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Outcomes for the cohort of learners who left the college in 2011 were very positive. Seven out of eight achieved their long-term goals, with one moving to independent living, five to semi-independent living and one to supported accommodation. Three of the learners gained part-time paid or voluntary employment and the remainder continued in further education. Learners who attend courses at further education colleges during their time at Langdon achieve well. In 2010/11, they gained qualifications in catering and care. In addition, learners achieve awards as part of the

Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, and in information technology and office skills. They also acquire literacy and numeracy skills at an appropriate level. Observations during the visit confirmed the self-assessment view that the college continues to be successful at helping learners to improve their communication skills. They also improve the ability to manage their own behaviour and interact well with others. The number of recorded behaviour incidents has reduced in recent years as a result of staff training on the most effective ways of working with learners. .

### **Quality of Provision**

**To what extent does the curriculum continue to meet needs, particularly in the development of independent living and work-related skills?** **Reasonable Progress**

To improve further the acquisition of independent living skills, the college is developing firmer links between its daytime and residential provision. This is having a positive impact on learners' experiences. For example, learners from the same residence are grouped together for cookery lessons and the tutor works with them to prepare food in their own home rather than in the college kitchen. This realistic learning experience develops learners' confidence to practise skills in preparing evening and weekend meals. Further training is planned to help residential staff reinforce this learning, for example how to break down tasks into small steps. The college is also carrying out further training so that residential and college staff use the same communication strategies with individual learners.

External placements continue to play an important role in the work-related curriculum. The college works with a wide range of employers in order to provide a placement that is well suited to individual needs. These include national retail chains as well as placements within the service industries, leisure and entertainment, and cultural venues. Careful placement of learners, good communication with employers and regular monitoring of progress all contribute to ensuring that this is a valuable part of the college curriculum.

### **Leadership and management**

**How well does the college continue to monitor the quality of teaching and learning?** **Reasonable progress**

The college has a good understanding of the quality of its teaching and learning. In the joint observations carried out during the visit, inspector findings matched closely the judgements of the college observer. The college has identified a reduction in the proportion of good and outstanding teaching as a result of a number of factors. These include changes to lesson planning associated with national developments in the qualifications framework, and the addition of new teachers as the number of learners expands. Actions are in place to address these issues and a more frequent monitoring of lessons is planned to check the effectiveness of staff development.

Lessons observed during the visit showed a mixture of good and satisfactory practice, with some excellent engagement of learners in activities that motivated them well and increased their ability to work independently. Where this was not the case, there was a lack of challenge for learners; they made progress but their enjoyment was more limited. In all cases observed, there was a respectful relationship between staff and students and learners worked well with each other.

**To what extent does the college ensure that safeguarding training is kept up-to-date?**

**Significant progress**

Safeguarding measures continue to be a high priority for the college. Induction for new staff is thorough to ensure that they are clear about policies and procedures, and confident in their implementation. Refresher training for all staff includes internal updates and attendance at external courses, for example on e-safety. Since the last visit, further measures have been put in place to check the staff's understanding of training. Staff show good awareness of safeguarding procedures, for example in the travel training carried out with learners.

Learners are encouraged to report any concerns they have and staff are very conscientious in reporting and following up concerns. Since the last visit, there has been significant improvement in the reporting of concerns or incidents. Records are clear and demonstrate the college's strong commitment to involving appropriate external authorities where necessary. The designated governor for safeguarding brings considerable expertise to the role and carefully monitors the implementation of safeguarding policies.

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