

# Treloar College

## Focused monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 132980

**Name of lead inspector:** Charlie Henry HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 26 April 2012

**Type of provider:** Independent specialist college

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

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

Treloar College is an independent specialist college of further education. It offers residential and day education and training for young people aged 16 to 25 with physical disabilities, with many learners also having additional learning difficulties. The college provides vocational and academic courses from pre-entry level to level 3, including courses studied at a local partner sixth form college.

At the previous inspection in November 2011, the overall effectiveness of the college was inadequate, with inadequate capacity to improve. Outcomes for learners were judged to be satisfactory, except students' positive contribution to the community which was good. The quality of teaching and learning was inadequate; while the effectiveness of the provision to meet the needs and interests of the students, the partnerships with others, and care, support and guidance were all judged to be satisfactory. Leadership and management were inadequate, with the exception of effectiveness of the college's engagement with its users to support and promote improvement, which was satisfactory.

### **Themes**

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

<b>What progress has Treloar College made in improving self-assessment and quality improvement activities?</b>	<b>Reasonable progress</b>
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The college is evaluating the quality of its provision more rigorously. Self-assessment now uses a wide range of information regarding learners' outcomes and aspects of the quality of their provision. Importantly, self-assessment is dynamic and leads to continued development. The college evaluates the implementation of its improvement work rigorously and frequently, and this directs further action where required. For example, improvement has been made to baseline assessment of learners' independence skills. The evidence used for these assessments is moderated by managers and feedback to staff now leads to further improvement. Similarly, moderation and audit of individual learning plan targets show continuing improvements in quality. The introduction of a dedicated, multi-disciplinary team approach to all tutor groups is soundly based in evaluation of a pilot project in this area. The project evaluation has identified the need for further development of quality assurance of this team approach to ensure its aims are met fully.

## Outcomes for learners

**What progress has Treloar College made in measuring learners' progress, including their social interaction and levels of independence, and ensuring learners are on challenging programmes relevant to their needs?**

**Reasonable progress**

Learners told inspectors of their very high levels of satisfaction about improvements to their independence. They also particularly value the opportunities provided by the college to develop friendships with the other young adults who attend.

The college has made a substantial investment in staff training and careful auditing since the last inspection in order to ensure that all learners make the best progress possible. It is, however, too early to demonstrate the impact of these changes on learners' outcomes.

Improved baseline assessments enable better target setting and progress checking. Individual learning plans have improved, starting with those for first year learners. These plans provide a clearer guide towards learners' longer term aims. In addition, the college has improved its tracking and monitoring of learners' progress. The revision of the foundation curriculum has improved learning programmes for learners who have the most significant learning difficulty. The multi-disciplinary team approach has also increased the opportunity for staff within the team to challenge the targets that are being set for individual learners. However, senior managers recognise that more needs to be done to ensure consistency of expectations and challenge across all teams.

## Quality of provision

**How effective have lesson observations been in improving the quality of teaching and learning?**

**Reasonable progress**

A more structured and comprehensive approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is now in place. The new process better supports learners' progress and performance management. The accuracy of teaching and learning observations has improved and outcomes are rigorously scrutinised, internally and by external moderators. A new learning support assistant mentoring programme has also been developed, as has an external peer observation scheme. Managers are aware, however, of the need to further increase the focus on learning that takes place in lessons.

Managers now consider the quality of lessons by the level of the learners' programme. This enables the college to identify further bespoke training, providing individual teachers with high levels of support. Successive lesson observations demonstrate the effectiveness of the college's training and support.

**Has specialist training for teachers and learning support assistants been effective, particularly in improving the progress of learners with complex learning needs?**

**Reasonable progress**

The college has prioritised specialist training for staff who work with learners on foundation level programmes and with most complex needs. This training has used college expertise, for example a large number of staff have received training in aspects of speech and language therapy, and has also involved external specialists. Staff are increasing their knowledge about the needs of learners who have severe and profound learning difficulties. However, as many of these training programmes have only recently been introduced, it is not possible to fully evaluate their impact on learners' progress. Nonetheless, outcomes of lesson observations since January 2012 indicate improvements in the quality of teaching and learning for foundation level students. Staff also report of increased confidence in their work.

In addition to existing training, the college is implementing plans for a wide range of further professional development. For example, an enhanced induction programme has been established for new learning support assistants and a large proportion of existing assistants are registered on a rolling programme to undertake a nationally recognised qualification, tailored to the college's needs. The college has also drafted a level 5 qualification for working with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and has submitted this for awarding body validation.

**What progress has been made in utilising fully the expertise of the multi-disciplinary team in curriculum development, session planning and in teaching and learning?**

**Reasonable progress**

Specialist therapy staff are now making a substantially increased contribution to curriculum development and support for learners in class. The use of a dedicated multi-disciplinary team for a specific tutor group of learners has led to a substantial increase in the role of these specialist therapists in planning and providing support in learning sessions. Consequently, the number of staff working with an individual student has been reduced. The team approach ensures that an individual learner is supported by the staff who have the greatest knowledge and understanding of their needs and are therefore able to provide greater consistency in the quality of their provision. This initiative is now being rolled out to all tutor groups. It is too early to be clear about the impact of this development on outcomes for learners.

**Leadership and management**

**Have revised safeguarding policies and procedures been fully implemented?**

**Significant progress**

Significant improvements have taken place since the previous inspection to ensure staff implement fully the guidance that results from learners' risk assessments. All learners are risk assessed and specialist staff provide in-class guidance to staff about the implementation of their advice. Risk assessments are updated appropriately. Routine practice checks are carried out on the implementation of assessment

requirements, for example the correct use of manual handling assessments. Where necessary, further training is provided, for example in advising about the positioning of a chair to make the transfer of the learner as easy as possible. During inspection, staff made good use of readily-available risk assessment information.

Learners were confident about knowing to whom they should speak if they have concerns and are also confident that appropriate actions will be taken. Learners have a good understanding of cyber bullying and how to deal with it. Appropriate staff recruitment checks are carried out and staff are adequately trained in safeguarding matters.

**Are equality and diversity promoted effectively through the curriculum?**

**Significant progress**

Significant progress has been made in promoting equality and diversity throughout the college. High levels of support from the equality and diversity mentor have led to a greater understanding and clarity of expectations amongst staff. Learners are well supported and are appropriately encouraged to celebrate diversity, for example during the weekly Friday Live event. Staff and governors have received appropriate specialist training and this is augmented through the use of e-learning opportunities. The lesson observation scheme, schemes of work and staff and learner induction now ensure there is appropriate focus throughout the provision, with an emphasis on developing naturally occurring opportunities for promotion of equality and diversity. The Treloar Charter has been updated. This has involved consultation with learners and is now produced in more accessible formats. Learner equalities advocates successfully raise awareness and provide an additional forum for the learners' voice. Learners' views are gathered using a range of media and the outcomes contribute to the evaluation of provision and to its improvement. Involvement with the local community is helping to educate the public and raise their expectations of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, through, for example, art and textile displays at the local supermarket.

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