

# The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy

## Inspection report

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**Unique reference number:** 131891

**Name of lead inspector:** Margaret Swift HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 30 May 2012

**Type of provider:** Independent specialist college

**Address:** The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy  
Avon Tyrrell  
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## Information about the provider

1. The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy (FCRT) was founded in 1976. It is an Independent Specialist College (ISC) of further Education (FE) for young people between the ages of 16 and 25 years. It is based in the south of England in the New Forest on three rural sites. Currently, 39 students are funded by the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) and live in residential accommodation on all three sites. One student is privately funded.
2. Students learn through their involvement with horses. They follow the three-year residential Further Education Through Horsemastership (FETH) course, which is internally accredited. Students are taught vocational, social and independent living skills through an extended curriculum. They are able to take external qualifications in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and in horse care and riding.
3. FCRT is overseen by a board of trustees who monitor its performance. Day-to-day running is overseen by the director and senior management group, consisting of a head of education, a head of finance and company secretary and a head of personnel.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
<b>Provision for young students:</b> Further education (16 to 18)	17 full-time students
<b>Provision for adult students:</b> Further education (19+)	27 full-time students

## 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 students	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3

## Overall effectiveness

4. FCRT is a good provider. Students' achievement of accredited qualifications is good. Students make very good progress in developing their numeracy and mounted gymnastic skills, but need more opportunities to develop their literacy skills. Students make good progress in developing their independent living skills through their daily contact with horses and the effective integration of the education and residential settings. The good assessment of individual needs before students start at FCRT ensures that individual learning plans are detailed and students have programmes that closely match their needs. Staff need to further develop the processes to enable them to measure the progress of their students over the whole time at FCRT.
5. Students enjoy their learning sessions. Teachers use well-developed questioning techniques to help students develop independence in learning. They take every opportunity to develop students' numeracy and communication skills. However, not enough staff have specialist skills in literacy teaching. Teachers do not always promote equality and diversity sufficiently in lessons. Guidance at the end of the programme is good and staff manage transition to the next stage very well.
6. The director and senior managers have a clear vision for the future development of FCRT. Senior managers have recently identified new strategic objectives but they do not include the changes to funding to post-16 provision that could adversely impact on FCRT. Trustees work well with senior managers. They have had training to help them fulfil their roles, but not all have had recent training in the safeguarding of students and equality and diversity.

Arrangements for improving the quality of the provision are satisfactory, but the management information system and the use of data are underdeveloped. FCRT observes teachers regularly, but does not use the information to share good practice and improve the proportion of outstanding teaching.

## Main findings

- Through their daily contact with horses, students quickly become highly motivated and make very good progress in their personal and social skills. However, current arrangements for measuring students' progress are not sufficiently detailed in order to fully capture the improvements made.
- Students enjoy their learning and use their new knowledge and skills to make very positive contributions to their local community. They have good work skills and demonstrate their application and determination to complete all the activities with which they take part.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Staff have a good understanding and high expectations of students and behaviour management is excellent. Teachers are highly skilled at integrating numeracy and communication skills into practical activities, but FCRT has insufficient staff with specialist expertise in literacy teaching to cater for all students' reading and writing development needs.
- The programme meets students' needs well. Staff use the horse-centred curriculum extremely well to teach students to take responsibility for others and themselves. Independent living skills programmes are good and students receive very effective independent travel training. Opportunities for students to follow individual interests outside the usual programme are satisfactory.
- Staff establish close working relationships with students for which the horses provide a focus. FCRT uses the focus that the care of the horse provides as a very effective pattern for promoting students' own health care, personal hygiene and standards of behaviour.
- FCRT manages the transition students make from the centre to future placements smoothly. A member of staff is designated as a 'transition guide' for each potential leaver and these guides are effective in ensuring that students' aspirations are fully taken into account.
- Leadership and management are good. The director, senior managers and staff have high expectations for all students. Senior managers are very aware of the changes in the post-16 sector, but in developing the new strategic plan there are no specific targets to tackle the changes to funding that could adversely impact on the sustainability of the provision.
- Trustees work well with senior managers, have the same high expectations for the students and have a very good understanding of the issues affecting FCRT. Trustees received training in 2011 to help them understand their roles and the legislative requirements, but not all have had recent training in equality and diversity or the safeguarding of students.

- FCRT manages the safety and safeguarding of students very effectively. The centre understands the need to cover all aspects of student safety and students demonstrate a heightened sense of personal safety as they move around the centre.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. There is a strong ethos at FCRT of caring and mutual respect. Staff respond to individual issues and tackle discrimination well. Staff and students have a very good understanding of equality and diversity in relation to disability, but there is insufficient promotion of the wider aspects of equality and diversity in teaching sessions.
- Staff have developed a detailed quality improvement cycle but do not consistently or systematically monitor and evaluate the quality improvement activities. FCRT's observation of teaching and learning scheme is well developed, but staff do not use the information from the observations of good or better teaching and learning to share best practice.

### **What does The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy need to do to improve further?**

- Employ effective strategies for measuring the progress students make during their time at FCRT so that the speed and extent of progress made by students can be better recorded and demonstrated.
- Improve students' literacy skills by supporting staff to teach the early stages of reading and by increasing the frequency of literacy sessions.
- Develop strategic priorities that will help staff meet and tackle the challenges facing FCRT and ensure the sustainability of the provision.
- Increase students' knowledge and understanding by planning more sessions and activities around equality and diversity issues.
- Ensure all trustees are adequately trained in equality and diversity and the safeguarding of students to enable them carry out their role effectively.
- Make better use of the information from the observations of teaching and learning in order to share best practice and further improve the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning.

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

#### **What students like:**

- the horses
- going out unescorted
- the travel training
- the kind and friendly staff
- all aspects of horse care and the facilities
- weekend activities and making friends.

**What students would like to see improved:**

- to be treated more like adults
- more access to their mobile phones in the evenings
- to have more time to themselves without staff watching them
- to have a choice whether or not to work on Sunday.

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

**What employers like:**

- the good preparation of students before they start work
- the good support from the work experience coordinator
- the very polite students who gain greatly in confidence
- the high standards of training in animal care
- that employers' staff learn from working with the students.

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

- the sometimes slow communication from staff at FCRT.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 2**

7. The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy (FCRT) has improved its provision since the last inspection in 2008 and is now good. Senior managers have a clear vision and appropriate plans in place to further develop the provision. The appointment of new trustees in recent years has strengthened and broadened the expertise of the board and it supports and challenges senior managers appropriately. Since the last inspection the college has successfully remedied all the areas for improvement identified, although the management information system still requires further development.

### Outcomes for students

**Grade 2**

8. Nearly all students who take external qualifications achieve their award. Although all students follow a British Horse Society programme of study, students are only entered for the final award after a careful assessment of their needs and abilities. The proportion of those students taking externally accredited awards has risen over the last three years and achievement in numeracy and ICT is excellent at 100%.
9. Students make very good progress in their numeracy skills. Using the many contexts encountered through their equine studies, students practice increasingly complex mathematical tasks. For example students understand the need for accuracy in calculating the various ratios needed for a balanced horse feed. The opportunities presented by the equine curriculum are not used as effectively in promoting students' literacy skills.
10. Students are making very good progress in their vaulting skills – mounted gymnastics. They enjoy the challenge presented by these sessions. Under the supervision of the specialist physiotherapist, students improve their balance, body image and coordination, as well as their ability to work in a team and listen carefully to instructions. Students develop confidence and strength, which enable them to undertake complex procedures securely and with precision.
11. Good progress is made by students in acquiring independent living skills. Over the previous three years an increasing proportion of students have exceeded their predicted target for independent living, so that most students are able to move into semi-independent living environments. On leaving FCRT a large proportion of students are able to use many of the skills acquired through their daily contact with horses in new working environments.
12. Students enjoy the many opportunities to make a positive contribution to their local community. The weekly riding therapy sessions arranged for children from local special schools involve students in giving their time and expertise to promote riding therapy while supporting others. Students readily volunteer to help at local equine events. The close association with horses provides students

with a very personal understanding of the rhythms of life and how needs have to be understood if they are to be properly met. This enables students to embrace the good practice associated with health care, physical fitness, personal hygiene and maintaining a healthy diet. Students understand how safeguarding issues apply to them and appreciate the processes that FCRT has established to keep them safe.

## The quality of provision

## Grade 2

13. Teaching and learning are good. Staff have a very good understanding of the individual needs of students and have high expectations for them. Staff use well-developed questioning techniques to help students to notice, think and correct mistakes themselves. Behaviour management is excellent. Teachers set targets for all activities which are clear, specific and individual to each student. Daily use of self and peer assessment helps to develop students' ability to reflect on their own performance and to watch and analyse that of others. Teachers and students use ICT effectively in the tack room and stable yard, and a good range of software is available to help students with restricted literacy skills. Staff take every opportunity to develop students' numeracy and communication skills, but there are insufficient staff with specialist expertise in literacy teaching.
14. The range of learning opportunities meets the needs and interests of students very well. The horse-centred curriculum is extremely motivating. It teaches students to take responsibility for others and, by analogy, themselves. Independent travel training is very effective and allows students to enjoy a wide variety of days out and trips with friends. Lively evening and weekend sessions enable the students to take part in physical activities and creative pursuits. FCRT offers students satisfactory opportunities to follow individual interests such as music, singing or driving or to take additional qualifications at other institutions.
15. Students benefit from the good partnerships FCRT has developed with a wide range of local schools, groups and organisations. High profile international links bring visitors to FCRT, which enable students to meet and work alongside a wide range of people. FCRT has very good links with the Riding for Disabled Association (RDA) which provides excellent opportunities for volunteer work. The good links with employers ensure valuable work experience for all students.
16. Students benefit from a very high level of individual contact with staff so that their needs, abilities and interests are well understood. Awareness of pastoral care issues is shared effectively with all staff through the daily staff update report. Group leaders, whose role overlaps the education and care settings, provide very good continuity of care. Highly qualified health care professionals provide a wide range of support and resources.
17. Assessments undertaken by students prior to starting their course provide a comprehensive profile of their starting points, and staff use this information well



- to plan programmes of study and agree targets with the students. Staff use individual learning plans effectively to track progress and set and review targets, which become increasingly challenging over time.
18. Guidance at the end of the course is good. Each student has a member of staff who acts as a transition guide and with whom they meet on a regular basis. Staff have established effective links with social services and other key agencies, which ensure a smooth transition to the next stage for the student.

## Leadership and management

## Grade 2

19. The Director, senior managers and staff are strongly committed to the continued development of FCRT. They have high expectations for all students and set high standards. Senior managers have a clear vision for FCRT and are very aware of the changing priorities in post-16 training. Building on the previous strategic plan, managers have identified strategic and financial objectives for the period 2012 to 2014. The targets are focused on improving provision, but there are no strategic targets to address the changes to funding that could have an adverse impact on the sustainability of the provision.
20. Trustees bring a wide range of expertise to the board. They have a very good understanding of the issues affecting FCRT and they work well with senior managers. Trustees had training in 2011 to help them understand their roles and the legislative requirements, but not all have had recent training in the safeguarding of students or equality and diversity.
21. The safeguarding of students and staff is good. FCRT meets all the requirements in relation to safeguarding. The centre maintains a comprehensive central record and all staff have enhanced and regularly updated Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. The appropriate number of staff are trained to the highest level.
22. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. There is a strong ethos at FCRT of caring and mutual respect. Staff make very good use of the daily staff update report to identify and respond effectively to individual issues and tackle discrimination. However, staff do not place sufficient emphasis on equality and diversity in the students' induction programme and there is insufficient promotion of the concepts of equality and diversity beyond disability within teaching sessions. FCRT analyses data well to identify achievements of different groups and the analysis shows that all groups achieve well.
23. FCRT is particularly good at gaining the views of students, parents and employers. The views and suggestions are thoroughly analysed by staff and used to help improve the training programmes and the residential experience for all students.
24. Self-assessment and quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. Staff have developed a detailed quality improvement cycle but do not monitor and evaluate the quality improvement activities consistently or systematically. The

self-assessment process is inclusive of staff, students, parents and employers. The report is largely accurate in its grading. Data available are used well to report on the achievements of students, but the management information system is still being developed.

25. FCRT's observation of teaching and learning scheme is comprehensive but is over generously graded. Managers use the information from the observations to help improve teaching and learning deemed to be satisfactory, but do not yet fully use the information from the observations of good and better teaching to share best practice and improve the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning. Staff training and development are comprehensive and all appropriate staff are encouraged and supported to achieve teaching qualifications.
26. Resources are very good, managed effectively and used well to meet the needs of students. Achievement of qualifications and learning goals is good. Financial health, management and control are satisfactory. Value for money is good.

## Information about the inspection

27. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's director, 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 students and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
28. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of students and employers. They also looked at questionnaires students and employers had recently completed for the provider. 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)**  
**The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy**  
**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	40	7	33
Part-time learners			
<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>	2		
<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?	2		
<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?	3		
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2		
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3		
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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