

# Farleigh Further Education College (Frome)

|  |                         |                        |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Inspection dates</b>                      |                         | 12-14 March 2013       |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>This inspection:</b> | <b>Good-2</b>          |
|  | Previous inspection:    | Good-2                 |
| Outcomes for learners                        |                         | Good-2                 |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment |                         | Good-2                 |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   |                         | Requires improvement-3 |

## Independent specialist college

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider is good because:

- The vast majority of learners gain their qualifications and successfully achieve their independence and behavioural targets.
- Particularly good advice and guidance ensure nearly all learners successfully progress to further and higher education and employment.
- Learners make significant progress in developing their social and communication skills which they use well in developing more successful ways of interacting with other people.
- Teaching and learning are lively and stimulating and learners work with interest and enjoyment.
- General and specialist support ensures that learners are able to manage anxiety and concentrate on learning.
- The curriculum is unusually varied and broad and meets the individual needs of all learners well.

#### This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Learners aged over 19 and those on intermediate courses are not as successful as other learners.
- Too many learners return home at the end of their training.
- Not enough lessons are outstanding and not enough use is made of the information gained from observing lessons to help further improve teaching and learning.
- Senior managers have been slow to implement plans to improve the resources and accommodation for the learners on the Farleigh Further Education College (FFEC) site.
- The wide variety of data collected is not fully used to improve the provision further.

## Full report

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all learners are successful in achieving their learning and personal goals.
- Focus more sharply on improving the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that a larger proportion of lessons is good or better.
- Implement plans to improve accommodation and resources to better meet the needs of all learners.
- Analyse recorded incidents to better identify trends and patterns in learners' behaviour and equality and diversity issues.

### Inspection judgements

|                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| <b>Outcomes for learners</b> | Good |
|------------------------------|------|

- Outcomes for learners are good. Learners achieve well on GCE A-level, GCSE, vocational courses and work-based learning programmes. Learners make considerable progress in their ability to manage their level of anxiety when in unfamiliar surroundings. Most learners at all levels enjoy the wide range of courses available to them.
- All learners are enrolled on an accredited learning programme. In 2011/12, most learners following advanced courses at FFEC and at the general further education (GFE) partner colleges achieved, or exceeded, their target grades, with just under two thirds achieving high grades at A level. All learners taking GCSE courses were successful, but only just over half achieved an A\* to C grade. In the last year two learners gained admission to Cambridge University.
- Learners' achievement rates on vocational courses have remained good over the last three years. All learners on advanced vocational courses achieved their qualification, with three quarters of learners exceeding their predicted grades. Learners on foundation and intermediate courses have been less successful, largely because some learners are reluctant to complete the classroom-based elements of their qualification.
- The college collates and analyses the performance of all learners well. Information gathered over the last three years clearly shows that there are no significant variations in achievement between different groups of learners in relation to their gender or ethnicity. However, the performance of learners aged over 19 and those on intermediate courses dipped in 2012.
- Learners make good progress towards achieving their independence and behavioural targets. One learner successfully embraced the target of trying new foods by deciding to eat a different piece of fruit after each meal. Learners make very good progress in their social and communication skills. They are able to express and promote their views eloquently and with growing empathy towards the needs of others. Learners' attendance in lessons at the partner colleges is good, but attendance in lessons at FFEC requires improvement.
- Progression into higher or further education remains good, with over half of learners taking this route. Although fewer learners than in previous years are gaining university places, more are taking vocational courses in further education colleges. One learner, having joined the college with a range of sensory and behavioural issues, successfully progressed onto an advanced extended diploma in engineering.
- Over the last three years the number of learners gaining employment has increased so that nearly a third of leavers now move into a range of appropriate working environments. The number of learners moving into independent living has increased slowly in recent years but too many still return to live at home.

**The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and this is reflected in the good outcomes for learners. Staff have high expectations of learners, are ambitious for them and set challenging behavioural and academic targets.
- Staff are well qualified, experienced and skilled. Teaching is often lively and stimulating and learners work with interest and enjoyment, ask intelligent questions and concentrate well. Teachers and support staff are particularly skilled at developing learners' personal, communication and social skills and at helping learners manage their anxiety in unfamiliar situations.
- Appropriate guidance for teachers on the management of learners' behaviour provides a sound basis for the good classroom management. The college provides support staff for each learner according to their level of need identified at the start of the academic year and learners value this support. However, as learners make progress in reducing and managing their anxieties, the level of support is not reviewed and staff are not always deployed effectively; learners attending GFE partner colleges do not always receive help with their college work outside of lesson time.
- Specialist therapeutic staff provide good support. A wide range of therapeutic interventions is available, with some specialist therapies supplied by a partner agency. An effective referral system provides flexible support tailored to learners' individual requirements. However, the college is aware that it needs to improve and extend the accommodation for therapeutic interventions.
- Teachers' assessment and recording of learners' progress are good. Assessment of learners' starting points is thorough and includes specialist assessments where appropriate. Staff keep detailed records of learners' progress in all areas of their programme, which contribute to comprehensive annual review reports.
- Teachers give frequent encouraging verbal feedback to learners on their work. They are particularly good at recognising learners' achievements in managing social situations, initiating conversations or disagreeing politely, so that learners understand and develop more successful ways of interacting with other people.
- Advice and guidance in supporting learners with their next steps are good. Learners applying to university receive very helpful guidance in making appropriate choices and accessing the specialist support services of their preferred university. Staff in partner colleges use their wide knowledge of the vocational curriculum very effectively to help those learners considering a vocational route. Learners receive effective career advice from a specialist organisation.
- The development of learners' functional skills is good. Teachers' attention to learners' speaking and listening skills is particularly effective. Learners' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are very good. All learners without mathematics or English qualifications at level 2 follow accredited programmes based on the results of their initial assessment. However, teachers do not always make good use of specialist software with reluctant learners of mathematics or English and do not always plan well enough for individual needs. Teachers do not use a wide enough variety of resources, particularly in mathematics.
- The promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum is good. Learners develop a good understanding of equality and diversity issues during personal and social development courses at partner colleges. On A-level history, philosophy and languages at FFEC, matters such as religious, racial and gender discrimination are usefully explored as part of the syllabus. FFEC staff use individual learners' passages through life stages to develop all learners' understanding of matters such as sexual orientation or gender realignment.

**The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Requires improvement

- The Principal and senior managers have a clear vision for the future development of FFEC and have a good understanding of the external influences impacting upon the college, but have been slow to implement the plans for development. They have high expectations for all learners and this is reflected in the good achievements. Challenging performance targets are set by Priory, the parent company, and these are monitored effectively by the operations manager from Priory.
- In recent years the learner profile has changed and continues to change. The college now has more learners with very challenging behaviour and who are less academically able; consequently, a higher proportion of learners now stay at FFEC for their education than in previous years. The Principal, who has only been at the college for 18 months, has developed coherent and appropriate plans to meet the needs of future learners but progress to implement the changes required, particularly to the teaching and therapeutic services accommodation, has been slow.
- Members of FFEC's advisory board are fully committed to the development of the college. The board is made up of a wide range of representatives, but currently there are no employer members. The Principal provides a report for each board meeting, but there is insufficient detail on learners' achievements and other key aspects of performance such as the quality of teaching and learning.
- Although teaching, learning and assessment are good overall, senior managers have been slow to implement changes and improvements to their observation of teaching and learning scheme. A new performance management system for teachers, which strongly focuses on teaching and learning, has recently been developed and is to be in place for September 2013. The new system has clear targets for teaching staff, which managers hope will enable them to better address performance issues.
- Observations of lessons identify areas for improvement, but little use is made of the information to further improve teaching and learning. At the time of the inspection a small minority of teachers had not been observed for over a year. The three full-time teachers have visited other independent specialist colleges to observe teaching and share good practice, but this good practice is not shared sufficiently well with part-time teachers.
- Resources are generally good, but some rooms in partner colleges do not have enough computers to accommodate whole groups. Teaching accommodation at FFEC is poor but senior managers, with support from Priory, are implementing plans to improve the facilities. Information technology resources at FFEC are now adequate and the college has plans to install wireless-free services this year.
- Training for staff is particularly good. Staff have very good access to a wide range of appropriate on-line training through Priory in addition to the regular training events held in the college. Training ensures that staff have the skills and knowledge to support learners. In addition to an annual appraisal, staff have regular supervisions which they find particularly useful in helping them reflect on their work and identify training needs.
- Self-assessment and quality improvement are fully inclusive of all staff, but the most recent self-assessment report is too descriptive. Data are used well to track and report on achievements but are not used sufficiently well to evidence other aspects of the provision. The views of learners, employers and parents provide very positive feedback on the quality of provision, but these views are not reflected in the self-assessment report.
- The curriculum is unusually broad and varied and meets the wide range of learners' needs well. The college is particularly good at developing the curriculum around the individual interests of all learners. In recent years the college has enrolled more learners on work-based learning

programmes and the curriculum has been adapted and developed well to meet the needs of this group. There are particularly good links with employers and with the GFE partner colleges.

- Equality and diversity are promoted well throughout the college and the residential houses. Discrimination and bullying are not tolerated and when incidents do occur they are dealt with very effectively. Staff have appropriate and regular training in equality and diversity, but some of the training is online, which staff report is not as effective as the training sessions lead by specialists.
- Statutory requirements for safeguarding of learners are met. Recruitment practices are thorough and Criminal Records Bureau checks are carried out on all new staff. All staff receive regular training in child protection and safeguarding. Safeguarding and welfare incidents are logged and recorded thoroughly, but staff do not analyse the incidents to identify trends and patterns in behaviour of individual learners to help them improve.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Farleigh Further Education College (Frome)

| Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:<br><br>1: Outstanding<br>2: Good<br>3: Requires improvement<br>4: Inadequate | Overall | 16-18 Learning programmes | 19+ Learning programmes | Other work-based learning |
|---|---------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>  | 2       | 2                         | 2                       | 2                         |
| Outcomes for learners   | 2       | 2                         | 2                       | 2                         |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment  | 2       | 2                         | 2                       | 2                         |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management  | 3       | 3                         | 3                       | 3                         |

## Provider details

### Farleigh Further Education College (Frome)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Type of provider</b>  | Independent specialist college                               |
| <b>Age range of learners</b>   | 16-18  |
| <b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b> | Full-time: 88  |
|  | Part-time: 0   |
| <b>Principal/CEO</b>   | Principal Mr Alun Maddocks                                   |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>   | June 2007  |
| <b>Website address</b>   | <a href="http://www.priorygroup.com">www.priorygroup.com</a> |

| <b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>                                       |   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|---|---|-----|-----------------|-----|----------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| <b>Main course or learning programme level</b>  | <b>Level 1 or below</b>   |     | <b>Level 2</b>  |     | <b>Level 3</b> |     | <b>Level 4 and above</b> |     |
| <b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>                                     | 16-18   | 19+ | 16-18           | 19+ | 16-18          | 19+ | 16-18                    | 19+ |
| <b>Full-time</b>  | 18  | 8   | 18              | 10  | 20             | 9   |                          |     |
| <b>Part-time</b>  |   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>                                    |   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | <b>Intermediate</b>   |     | <b>Advanced</b> |     | <b>Higher</b>  |     |                          |     |
|   | 16-18   | 19+ | 16-18           | 19+ | 16-18          | 19+ |                          |     |
| <b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>  |   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | N/A   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of community learners</b>   |   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | N/A   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of employability learners</b>   |   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | N/A   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Funding received from</b>  |   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | Education Funding Agency (EFA)  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b> |   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Wiltshire College</li> <li>■ Strode College</li> <li>■ City of Bath college</li> <li>■ Andover College</li> <li>■ Filton College</li> <li>■ Larkrise Community Farm</li> </ul> |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |

## Information about this inspection

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Lead inspector</b> | Margaret Swift HMI |
|-----------------------|--------------------|

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by Head of Education as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions and assessments. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision.

## What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement            |
|---------|----------------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          |
| Grade 2 | Good                 |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           |

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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