

Lufton College

Independent specialist college

Inspection dates		16–18 September 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- Outcomes for students are good and they make good progress from their starting points. They move on successfully to voluntary or paid employment and into supported living arrangements.
- Teachers are particularly expert at meeting each student's needs. All students have individual programmes and widely differing goals in group sessions that meet their individual needs and skills.
- Students benefit from a wide range of good therapeutic support, which enables them to be more independent and participate more fully in all activities.
- The Principal and senior managers very effectively lead and manage the college, well supported by staff and the trustees, to ensure the highly successful implementation of the innovative curriculum.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Not all staff have the necessary skills to teach English, mathematics and information technology effectively.
- Some activities on the Active Lives pathway are too long for students to retain focus and concentration.
- The college's graded observation of the teaching and learning scheme is not yet extended to the curriculum learning support staff.
- The recording of safeguarding incidents on Mencap's log is not sufficiently accurate.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all staff develop skills in teaching English, mathematics and information technology to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Review the length of activities and appropriateness of accommodation on a small number of programmes on the Active Lives pathway in order to retain students' interest and enthusiasm.
- Include curriculum learning support staff in the scheme for graded observations of teaching and learning in order to help staff reflect on their practice and ensure consistently good support in all teaching sessions.
- Challenge the recording of incidents on Mencap's safeguarding log to ensure that the detail of incidents is captured and recorded accurately.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whilst at Lufton College, students greatly increase their ability to make confident choices, communicate better, manage their own behaviour and relationships and look after themselves. They successfully develop their punctuality, reliability and team working skills. Students explore interests that enable them to use their leisure time creatively. The majority of students develop specific skills in their areas of interest, which frequently lead to paid or voluntary work. Attendance and punctuality are very good. ▪ The achievement rates for students in 2012/13 were good, with learners achieving the majority of their individual targets. Students' targets reflect social, personal development and employability skills; they are developed in a wide range of settings and encourage learners to take more control of their own learning. Students' achievement of accredited qualifications, where relevant, is good and data indicate that students make good progress from their starting points. ▪ College staff routinely review a range of data about students' performance and ensure that actions are set to narrow any gaps where variations in performance of different groups of students are found. ▪ Students increase their self-confidence well and demonstrate their achievements through the good standard of their course work, in a range of social situations and in the development of independent living skills. For example, one student took a major role in the Christmas play using his speech aid to deliver his lines. The experience helped with building his confidence and raising awareness of the value of communication aids to enable young people to take part in community activities. ▪ Students' progression into supported living, further training or into voluntary or paid employment is good. The college has participated in creative partnerships to support students in moving into supported housing, working closely with local authorities and providing continuity of support during the transitional period. Transition staff have worked with advocacy services to ensure students' views are listened to and long term plans are in place to meet individual students' needs. 	
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching, learning and assessment are good and lead to good outcomes for students. Staff are strongly committed to students and have high expectations of them. Teachers create an 	

enjoyable work ethic through real work tasks with demanding targets that develop work readiness and students' pride in their achievements.

- Teachers are skilled at identifying and meeting students' needs. All students have individual programmes that suit their particular interests and have widely differing goals in group sessions that meet their individual needs and skills. Having chosen their area of interest, students begin each day by choosing which essential tasks they want to undertake. Consequently, they work with interest, enthusiasm and good humour.
- A few learning sessions on the Active Lives pathway are too long and students are not able to retain focus and energy for the last part of the session. Not all learning sessions on this pathway are located in rooms appropriate for their use at the start of the year.
- Teachers provide very good support to students in managing their own behaviour. Interventions by experienced curriculum learning support staff are generally very helpful. Most learning support staff working in the residences are also very effective, although a few provide an inappropriate level of support, for example by answering for students or using language which is not sufficiently adult focused.
- The college provides a good range of specialist therapeutic support for students and staff. Speech and language therapists, communications support staff, occupational therapists, counsellors and a relationships adviser work together very effectively with teachers and support staff. They share good practice and resources that enable students to be more independent and participate more fully in the wider curriculum offer.
- Resources are good. The college estate provides a rich environment for land-based skills including gardens, parkland and woodland. Well-designed learning materials include the effective use of photographs and symbols. Good information technology (IT) resources enable effective communication and their innovative use motivates students and staff in the residences and out in the community, although staff on the main college sites are not all equally confident in their use.
- The college has very effective strategies for establishing students' starting points. Pre-entry assessment is comprehensive and baseline assessment is detailed and thorough. Students have plentiful opportunities to try activities from a choice of three zones: land-based, enterprise and technology. This ensures that their final programme choice is one that continues to interest and inspire them and provides the right level of challenge and support.
- Teachers' assessment and monitoring of students' progress are good. The visual system of recording achievements is popular with staff, parents and students as it provides a clear picture of each student's progress and areas for further development. It is shared by all staff and immediately highlights areas that staff need to work on to prevent students falling behind.
- Feedback from staff to students on how to improve is frequent, clear and supportive. Staff recognise the smallest steps of achievement with encouraging verbal feedback to individuals during and at the end of teaching sessions. However, insufficient activity for the rest of the group during final feedback to individuals often leads to a loss of momentum and the disengagement of students.
- Teachers integrate the development of English and mathematics well in all sessions. They have received training from specialist literacy and numeracy staff and receive good support from specialist communications college staff. This training and support have had a significant impact on staff skills in developing communication techniques, including speech, signing, symbols and assistive technology. However, areas for further development for staff remain, particularly in reading and writing and in the use of IT.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Students discuss a wide variety of equalities issues during personal and social development sessions. An atmosphere of mutual respect and ease exists between students and between students and staff. Day students have become fully integrated with residential students, enjoying the same extended curriculum and making much improved progress as a result.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The Principal and senior leaders have a very clear vision for the development of the college based on detailed business planning. Senior managers have continued to implement the innovative curriculum, which was new at the time of the last inspection, to meet the needs of a wider range of students than previously attended the college. The Principal and senior managers have very high expectations for all students and have worked relentlessly to ensure all staff have the same high expectations and provide good quality training.
- The education and learning sub-committee of the Mencap board of trustees is responsible for the scrutiny of the college provision. The committee meets regularly, but minutes of meetings show little scrutiny of the college's work. However, the Principal meets formally with the Chair of the committee every month to report on the quality of provision and evaluate progress against the challenging targets set for the college.
- The college's strong focus on teaching, learning and assessment has led to significant improvements and much teaching is now good or better. This improvement is also reflected in the very good outcomes for students. However, this focus does not yet extend to the curriculum learning support staff in order to ensure consistently good support in all teaching sessions.
- Performance management of staff is closely linked to teaching, learning and assessment, and managers monitor all staff against key performance indicators each year. Where under-performance is identified managers provide very good support to enable staff to reach the required high standards. The good performance management arrangements have been particularly successful in enabling staff to evaluate and identify their own training needs. The college and the parent company are very supportive in enabling staff to improve their skills and qualifications.
- The college's assessment of its performance is accurate. Since the last inspection there has been a strong and coherent focus on quality improvement and the college can clearly evidence significant improvements. The views of students, parents and employers are used well to help improve provision. The student council is active and makes sensible suggestions for improvement, which the college frequently implement. The latest report for 2012/13 is sharp, focused, judgement rich and fully evidence based.
- Managers have been particularly successful in developing an innovative and exciting curriculum offer for all students. The college has moved from a robotic approach to curriculum design and delivery to a flexible and completely student-centred approach, which enables students to make choices that meet their needs and aspirations. A very good example is the student who works on his family farm and wants to continue to develop his skills and qualifications in this area. To enable him to do this he has been able to bring two heifers to college so he can continue to develop his skills with the cows.
- The Principal and senior managers have developed very strong partnerships with local schools, community groups and employers. The partnership working provides students with a wide range of opportunities for work experience, which enable them to develop new skills.
- The college promotes equality and diversity well and has an equality and diversity group that meets regularly. The group has its own development plan with key performance indicators, but the dates for completion of some actions are too vague. The training for staff and students on developing cultural awareness and awareness of other protected characteristics is good and the focus on meeting the cultural needs of all students, including food and faith needs, is particularly good. Staff work effectively with students to ensure they understand that bullying and harassment must not be tolerated.
- The college collates, analyses and uses a wide range of data well to identify any differences in students' performance. In 2011/12, successful action plans were put in place to improve the achievements for day students and young women, and training in autism was delivered to all staff. Data show that the achievements for these groups has improved.

- The college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students. Managers follow procedures rigorously in response to safeguarding issues, but the lack of clarity in recording on the Mencap's safeguarding log does not accurately reflect the college's good practices. The college promotes the well-being and safety of students through detailed risk assessments and very good e-safety initiatives. Students feel safe and confident to talk to staff if they have any concerns.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Lufton College of Further Education

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

Type of provider	Independent specialist college								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 120								
	Part-time: 0								
Principal/CEO	Mr Jonathan James								
Date of previous inspection	April 2010								
Website address	Baker.karenj@mencap.org.uk								
Provider information at the time of the inspection									
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above		
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	
Full-time	14	106							
Part-time									
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total				
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
Number of learners aged 14-16									
Full-time	N/A								
Part-time	N/A								
Number of community learners	N/A								
Number of employability learners	N/A								
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)								
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	■ N/A								

Contextual information

Lufton College in Yeovil, Somerset, is one of three further education colleges that form the Mencap National College. The college provides day and residential placements for students aged 16 to 25 with a range of learning disabilities. These include autistic spectrum disorder, challenging behaviour, complex emotional behaviour and complex learning difficulties. The college is managed by the Principal who is supported by a board of Mencap trustees.

Currently, Lufton has 108 students. Around 70% of the students are from the South West region with the other students coming from local authorities in the South East, the Midlands region and Wales. The college offers three learning pathways: Active Lives, Exploring Work and Citizenship.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Margaret Swift HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the quality manager 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, assessments and progress reviews. 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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