

Henshaws College

Independent specialist college

Inspection dates		12-14 May 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- not enough of the teaching, learning and assessment are good or better
- teachers' reviewing and recording of all aspects of students' progress are not sufficiently comprehensive to judge the full extent of the progress students make over time
- the development of students' English and mathematical skills is not yet good
- support staff do not promote learning and independence skills sufficiently
- few staff have effective skills in Makaton signing and intensive interaction techniques to enable them to meet students' complex needs
- quality assurance processes are insufficiently rigorous and revised procedures have yet to bring about improvement in all areas of the college's work
- key reports submitted to the board are not sufficiently evaluative in measuring improvement to enable governors to challenge senior managers on aspects of quality and performance.

This provider has the following strengths:

- students on all courses develop their communication and personal skills very well, and many make good progress in learning to develop and improve their behaviour
- most students participate in an increasing range of effective external work placements and/or internal work-related activities
- very good support from specialist therapists enables students to gain access to the curriculum, engage fully in activities and communicate very effectively
- good information, advice and guidance support students when moving on from the college
- individual study programmes meet the needs of students very well; effective working with the local authority and schools ensures that planned provision reflects their needs effectively
- the management of staff performance is effective and supports teachers to improve their practice
- arrangements to safeguard students are good.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by providing training that improves observers’ skills in evaluating the quality of all aspects of staff performance, particularly in promoting learning and providing support. Ensure that they take fully into account the college’s key improvement priorities. Provide precise feedback and rigorously monitor action plans to accelerate improvement in performance.
- Ensure that senior managers provide evaluative reports to governors that include measurement of improvement against clear performance targets across all aspects of the provision. Enable governors and senior managers to collaborate in using evaluative data and evidence effectively to support self-assessment and ensure that quality improvement is systematic and timely.
- Provide training for teachers to ensure better use of the electronic system to capture more accurately the progress of all students from their starting points. Monitor rigorously to ensure that the recording of progress captures evidence about the quality of the skills that students develop and the barriers hindering progress. Ensure staff review and revise targets frequently.
- Provide training to ensure that teachers set challenging targets and provide high-quality learning activities for students to develop their English and mathematical skills so they can apply them in everyday life.
- Ensure that teaching and support staff receive the training required to meet students’ needs including the skills to promote consistent learning and independence, as well as specialist skills in Makaton signing and intensive interaction techniques. Monitor the effective use of these skills in promoting learning and communication through the lesson observation process.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The provision caters for students with high levels of need who are on individual study programmes from pre-entry to level 1, in five pathways, depending on individual levels of need and ability. The pathways are employability, independence, health and well-being, personal and social development and the developing autism centre. Where appropriate, students take accredited awards and all progress is measured through Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA). ▪ Outcomes for students require improvement. In 2013/14, a paper-based RARPA system was in place which hindered the production of accurate data and its monitoring. The introduction of an electronic system in the current year provides more accurate achievement data than in previous years. However, RARPA remains underdeveloped and managers are aware that the recording of progress against targets does not reflect sufficiently the progress that students are making. ▪ In the current year, many students are making satisfactory or better progress towards their individual learning targets, although progress towards English, mathematics and employability targets is below the expected rate. Employability targets have too many small objectives to achieve which slows students’ progress. Students do not have sufficient appropriately planned learning activities to practise and extend their English and mathematical skills and to apply them in everyday life. ▪ The majority of students are successful in achieving relevant qualifications to accredit their developing skills, particularly in personal and social development. It is too soon to judge the success of the recently introduced English and mathematics qualifications. ▪ Students develop their communication skills very well. A few students become adept at using tablet computers to aid communication and make choices. Students make good progress in the development of personal and social skills, as well as the skills to enable greater independence, 	

including mobility and travel training. Most students develop the skills required to enable them to manage their own behaviour in order to take part in a wider range of activities.

- Most students participate in an increasing range of effective external work placements and/or internal work-related activity. A high level of support helps students to adapt to new environments well and learn to follow routines and instructions effectively. For example, in a busy town centre café students greet and serve customers with confidence and pay good attention to health and safety. In an enterprise scheme, students make, print and sell mugs and develop their team working skills very well. The students have recently won two Young Enterprise awards for their organisational skills.
- College data show no significant differences in achievement between groups of students. Managers and staff identify and take appropriate actions where individuals are performing less well. While rates of attendance and retention are high, they are below targets set by managers.
- The majority of students progress successfully to their chosen and projected destinations. Of the most recent group of leavers, a significant number moved into further education and work-based training, a few progressed into residential care arrangements, and a small number into voluntary and self-employment.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- As part of this inspection, inspectors sampled and graded a proportion of the college's provision in study programmes for students aged 19 years and over. They also sampled on-and off-site work experience, the developing provision for students on the autism spectrum, as well as the impact of the range of specialist therapies on students' learning.
- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, which is reflected in the inconsistent student outcomes. Most teachers hold a relevant teaching qualification. Most support staff have relevant training in care and support; however, the majority do not have training in learning support. Staff have a wide range of relevant experience of working with students with high levels of need. However, training is required to ensure that all staff have effective Makaton signing and intensive interaction skills.
- In the better sessions, teachers engage students in making decisions about their learning. Teachers plan and deliver effective learning opportunities for students to extend their communication skills very well. For example, in an art lesson students worked well together to explain their progress against their targets.
- In the minority of weaker lessons, the pace of learning is slow; students are overly passive and activities are insufficiently challenging. Teachers do not give students enough time to think and respond to questions or make choices. As a result, students do not have the opportunity to develop their thinking skills fully, or make choices and respond appropriately.
- The initial assessment to identify students' specialist therapeutic needs and to place students on the appropriate study programme is good. Classroom accommodation and learning resources have been very well adapted to meet students' individual needs, particularly in the new media and information technology centre. The new autism centre and provision is developing well.
- The assessment of students' English and mathematical skills is insufficiently detailed. Although all students have targets relating to improving these skills, teachers do not use these consistently well to plan and deliver effective activities to enable students to extend their skills sufficiently.
- The recording of students' progress against their targets is not effective enough to show how well they are making progress in all aspects of their programme. The electronic tracking system relies too much on the number of times a student has achieved a small step towards their target; it does not provide sufficient evidence about the quality of achievement, as well as the skills developed, the barriers to progress and the next step.
- Teachers do not measure students' progress often enough or use the information effectively to provide students with detailed feedback on the progress they are making and what they can do

better. As a result, the revision of targets is not sufficiently frequent to enable students to make consistent progress across all areas.

- Support for students is not consistently good. A minority of support assistants continue to give too much support and restrict the opportunities for students to develop thinking, learning and independence skills. However, staff make good use of positive behaviour management strategies to enable students to participate fully in college life.
- Support from the multi-disciplinary team including occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and assistive technology is very good. Innovative use of adaptive information and learning technologies and assistive technology enables all students to engage in learning, communicate very effectively or to manage their environment well. For example, the use of switches and adaptive software enables students to use the computer to gain access to the internet and to communicate effectively using email.
- Information, advice and guidance provided to support students when moving on from the college are good. The integrated transition planning includes an annual review of students' progress towards their long-term goals, with a detailed action plan to prepare students for their life beyond college.
- The promotion of equality in lessons is good. Teachers and specialist therapists provide a calm, inclusive and respectful learning environment. Staff promote respect and tolerance very well. The celebration of diversity in cross-college events and through the tutorial programme is effective and wide ranging.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Most teachers work well with the students, showing them respect and promoting good behaviour. Leaders and governors have undergone a considerable period of instability since the last inspection. As a result, they have been unsuccessful in maintaining the good standards of provision reported at the last inspection.
- Trustees, governors and leaders are developing a clear vision about the future of the provision and are ambitious for the students. In response to the increasing complexity of students' needs, the curriculum has undergone considerable change to provide highly personalised study programmes across a range of appropriate pathways.
- Governance of the college is improving with the clarification of the differing roles and responsibilities of the education committee and the trustee board. The appointment of a new principal has increased the pace of improvement in the quality of the provision. Governors provide increased challenge to senior managers but it is too soon to see the full impact of this. However, senior managers' reports to governors are not sufficiently evaluative in measuring improvement against meaningful performance targets.
- The curriculum matches the needs of students very well and has a good focus on supporting their independence and behaviour management skills. Most students have some form of appropriate external work experience and/or work-related activity to help them develop the skills they will need for life after college. However, the implementation of the English and mathematics strategy is not sufficiently effective in enabling students to extend their skills.
- Arrangements for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning require improvement. While observations take place frequently, they do not sufficiently evaluate how well teachers perform in key areas for improvement identified within the quality improvement plan.
- Quality assurance arrangements lack rigour and planning does not include sufficient targets to measure and promote systematic improvement. The college's self-assessment report is mostly accurate in identifying what needs to improve and identifies accurately many of the areas for improvement identified in the inspection. However, the data and evidence used to inform judgements lack rigour.

- Managers implement the performance management arrangements of all staff effectively, and provide additional support and guidance for those staff struggling to improve. Where this fails to improve practice, they have required staff to leave the organisation. As a result, teaching and learning are improving.
- The range of staff training to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently effective and gaps exist in staff's skills. Staff's skills in identifying and using the best methods with students with complex learning difficulties and disabilities are improving with good support from specialist therapists. However, support staff have not had sufficient training to develop their skills in promoting independence and learning. Training to support students to manage their behaviour is good. However, in key areas such as Makaton signing and intensive interaction techniques, staff do not have sufficiently developed skills.
- Resources are very good and include significant investment in information and learning technology and augmentative and assistive technologies. Students benefit greatly from the sensory adaptations made to rooms. Specialist equipment, including mobile hoists, successfully enables students in wheelchairs to use sports equipment and take part in leisure activities.
- Senior managers are working effectively with the local authority and specialist providers to develop stronger links and collaborative working to meet local needs. Leaders and managers have responded well to local need in providing a unit for students with autism which is due to open in September 2015. Increased links with local schools are improving opportunities for joint working.
- The focus on inclusivity, tolerance and a culture of valuing difference is very good. Staff receive updated training annually in aspects of equality and diversity including the Prevent agenda. The small number of incidents of bullying and harassment are resolved and dealt with quickly.
- Safeguarding of all students is good. Managers have a strong focus on students' safety and the prevention of harm. Risk assessments are successful in identifying and minimising the risks involved to students across different learning environments and activities. A strong focus on e-safety has raised students' awareness of the dangers in using social media and websites. Safeguarding training for staff is effective.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Henshaws College

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outcomes for learners	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	N/A

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Independent living and leisure skills	3

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent specialist college							
Age range of learners	19+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	62							
Principal/CEO	Miss Angela North							
Date of previous inspection	November 2011							
Website address	http://henshaws.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+
	N/A	46	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
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:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N/A 							

Contextual information

Henshaws College is an independent specialist provider operated by Henshaws Society for Blind People. It caters for students with very high needs, and is based on a large campus on the outskirts of Harrogate. A new principal started in December 2014. All of the current students are over 19 years of age, approximately two thirds are male and 13% are from a minority ethnic background. Of the current 46 students, 31 live in residential accommodation on the campus for all or part of the week. In the current year, approximately half of the students have needs in addition to their visual impairment; the remaining students have a range of complex learning needs including severe learning difficulties, physical disabilities and autism.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Margaret Hobson HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by the vice-principal 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 relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject area listed in the report above.

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:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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