



Hinwick Hall College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published March 2006	Provider reference 133098
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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Hinwick Hall
Type of college:	Independent Specialist Residential
Principal:	Martyn Hays
Address of college:	Hinwick Wellingborough Northants NN29 7JD
Telephone number:	01933 312470
Fax number:	01933 312470
Chair of governors:	Sarah Pane
Unique reference number:	133098
Name of reporting inspector:	Joyce Deere, ALI
Dates of inspection:	31 January – 2 February 2006

Background of the organisation

1. Hinwick Hall College is owned by the Shaftesbury Society, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. The college is situated in North Bedfordshire, close to the Northamptonshire border. The Hall is a Grade II listed building set in extensive grounds. The college currently provides for 57 learners aged 16 to 25 years, all with physical and learning difficulties. The majority of learners have communication difficulties, some very complex. Most are aged over 19, with only six aged 16 to 18 years. Three are day learners and five learners are of black and minority ethnic heritage.
2. The college's overall aim is 'to educate, train and support young people with disabilities, to enable them to achieve their potential for as effective an adulthood as possible'. The college's philosophy is Christian, with a belief in the dignity of the individual and the individual's rights to be in charge of as many aspects of their life as they are able. The college curriculum offers a range of activities including creative arts, world of work, daily living skills, literacy, numeracy, communications and ICT.
3. The current principal and head of education were appointed a few weeks before the inspection, having been in post temporarily for eighteen months. In addition to the senior management team, the college has 12 lecturers, 25 education support staff as well as specialist therapists, and 106 care and health staff.

Scope of the inspection

4. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; and data on enrolments and learners' achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:
 - overall effectiveness of the college and its capacity to improve further
 - achievements and standards
 - quality of provision
 - leadership and management
 - specialist provision in: Social and Life Skills.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Inadequate : grade 4
Capacity to improve	Inadequate : grade 4
Achievements and standards	Inadequate : grade 4
Quality of provision	Satisfactory : grade 3
Leadership and management	Inadequate : grade 4

Note: Where contributory grades have been awarded, they are shown in the relevant sections of the report. Contributory grades represent the judgement of the team that the quality of the aspect of provision indicated by the grade differs from the grade overall.

Curriculum areas

Social and life skills	Inadequate : grade 4
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Inadequate : grade 4

5. Learners' achievements and the quality of their work are inadequate. Systems for target planning and recording progress are unsatisfactory, and not based on an accurate baseline of learners' attainments and capabilities. Progress in communication, and in physical developments, are well recorded by specialist therapeutic staff, but learners make insufficient progress in literacy and numeracy. A small, but increasing number of learners take part in work-related activities.
6. The quality of teaching and learning in the main teaching programme is inadequate. The better lessons are appropriately challenging, but in many lessons, activities are insufficiently varied or inappropriate, with too much emphasis on task completion by the group. Planning is not sufficiently based on meeting individual needs, and literacy and numeracy are not yet well developed. The college does not carry out a baseline assessment, and learners do not have a meaningful individual learning plan.
7. The college's response to social and educational inclusion is satisfactory. Learners are drawn from across the country and have diverse needs. The opportunities for enrichment and community engagement are good as is the specialist support and quality of intervention provided by the team of therapists and medical staff. The formally taught programme is less successful in meeting all learners' needs, and individual learners' programmes lack overall coherence. Arrangements for safeguarding and learner protection are now satisfactory.
8. Support and guidance are satisfactory. The specialist support team is very effective in providing communication aids and adaptations, as well as intensive physical support for learners. Links with the Connexions service and the arrangements for transition on leaving the college are satisfactory. Not all learners receive the amount of individual support specified on their contract with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).
9. Leadership and management are inadequate. Significant changes in leadership have taken place since the last inspection, and permanent appointments have only recently been made, with many improvements still in the planning stages. The college has not maintained its previous high quality of work. The quality assurance framework has serious weaknesses, and the college has not met all of the requirements of equalities legislation. Governors do not monitor the quality of provision adequately. The self-assessment report is unsatisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Inadequate : grade 4

10. The college demonstrates poor capacity to improve. The framework for quality assurance is inadequate. There is no routine monitoring of teaching and learning, and no overview of how well learners are learning. There has been too little progress in addressing the main areas for improvement from the last inspection. Inspectors found the self-assessment report inadequate. It identified some of the weaknesses but overestimated the strengths, principally due to inadequate information about learners' achievements and the quality of the provision. While the staff show a commitment to supporting their new managers to raise standards and enthusiastically address new initiatives, actions have not yet brought about necessary improvements.

The effectiveness of the steps taken by the college to promote improvement since the last inspection

11. The college has made inadequate progress in addressing the key areas for improvement noted during the last inspection. The trustees and governors now have a clearer involvement in setting the strategic direction of the college. However they, along with college managers, do not adequately monitor learners' achievements and the overall quality of the provision. Significant weaknesses in the level of challenge in some lessons to meet learners' needs remain. Very few of the strengths identified at the previous inspection have been maintained.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- good opportunities for enrichment and community engagement
- very effective specialist multi-disciplinary team.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- inadequate baseline assessment
- declining quality of teaching and learning
- lack of coherence in individual learners' programmes
- attention to requirements of equality and diversity legislation
- quality assurance
- governors' monitoring of the college's effectiveness.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Inadequate : grade 4

12. Learners' achievements, and the quality of their work across the curriculum, are inadequate. The self-assessment report identifies that the systems for target planning and recording progress are unsatisfactory and that they are not based on an accurate baseline of learners' attainments and capabilities. However, it has underestimated the impact of this serious weakness on achievements. There are no differences between the achievements of learners of different ages.
13. The learners' work is recognised through external awards in a range of areas of the curriculum, including creative arts, the world of work and personal development. However, due to the serious weaknesses in assessment and recording, these awards do not record the progress made. The college also provides certificates and prizes for other aspects of progress in the different areas of the curriculum. These awards are valued by learners.
14. Learners make clear progress in their communication and physical development. This progress is well recorded by speech and language therapists and physiotherapists. However, learners do not make sufficient progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills. These weaknesses are recognised in the college's self-assessment.
15. Several of the learners have successfully completed work placements. An increasing number of learners progress from the college to supported living settings in the community. In so doing, they take part in supported work placements and attend community education classes part-time.
16. The college is successful in raising learners' self-esteem and improving their self-confidence. Learners enjoy their work and are pleased to talk about their experiences. Retention, punctuality and attendance are good, and are as expected for a specialist college.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory : grade 3

17. The quality of teaching and learning in the formal educational provision is inadequate. The self-assessment report did not identify weaker aspects of teaching and learning. In the better lessons the activities are appropriately challenging, but in the poorer lessons, activities are insufficiently varied and demanding. The quality of teaching and learning has declined since the last inspection. Planning does not focus sufficiently on individual learner needs, and too much time is spent on activities such as cutting, pasting, colouring and copying out words. Literacy and numeracy are not yet embedded into all activities where appropriate. Teachers miss valuable opportunities to link the

lesson activities to learners' future lives as adults. The ratio of learning support staff to learners is not adequate in some lessons. Teaching resources are generally sufficient and provision for ICT is sufficient. Equality and diversity are not routinely promoted through the curriculum. Assessment and target-setting are not adequate.

18. The college's response to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory. Learners are drawn from across the country and have diverse physical and learning needs, with most requiring specialist support to develop communication and social skills. The number of learners from black and minority ethnic heritage has decreased slightly since the previous inspection. Much of the college site is accessible for wheelchair users and those with visual impairment. Residential accommodation is being improved to meet the social care standards. The college is focusing more effectively on finding more appropriate living accommodation and learning opportunities for learners when they leave the college.
19. The college's overall provision, including that in the evening and weekends, is satisfactory in meeting the wider needs and interests of learners, who enjoy their experience of being in residence. The enrichment provision and opportunities for community engagement are very good, with good use made of local and regional amenities. All venues are risk-assessed and all learners have individual risk assessments. The arrangements for links between educational and residential provision have improved. Learners appreciate the opportunity to participate in a student council. The formal curriculum lacks overall coherence. Learners do not have an appropriate baseline assessment, and teachers plan individually, without sufficient guidance. Not all have sufficient understanding of the implications of developmental delay when planning individual learning plans. Although support for communications is well developed, the provision for literacy and numeracy is unsatisfactory and still in the early stages of development. Work-experience for nine learners is well planned.
20. Support and guidance for learners are satisfactory. Specialist therapeutic interventions are very effective, and enable learners to participate in learning, although teaching staff do not always receive sufficient information about the best approaches to use with individual learners. Not all learners receive the level of individual support required and this limits their progress. The induction programme and tutorial programmes are satisfactory, and links with parents/carers are good. The partnership arrangements with Connexions are satisfactory in providing guidance for learners, and the transition co-ordinator works effectively with outside agencies to find appropriate placements for learners. Personal tutors and key workers work well together to provide personal support and guidance. Arrangements for safeguarding are satisfactory, although the curriculum has not included personal relationships and aspects of sexual health for the past 18 months.

Leadership and management

Inadequate : grade 4

21. Leadership and management are inadequate. There has been significant change in the leadership of the college since the last inspection, and permanent appointments have only recently been made. Changes to the working arrangements of care staff have been effective, particularly in encouraging joint working with education staff. However, there has been insufficient regard for ensuring that the college provides a high quality of education where learners achieve well.
22. The quality assurance framework has serious weaknesses. Recent monitoring of some important aspects of planning has taken place and has resulted in improvements, such as the planning of schemes of work. However, observation of the quality of teaching and learning has not taken place for some time, and evaluation of learners' achievements is insufficient. Little progress has been made in implementing RARPA (Recognition and Recording of Progress and Achievement). College managers do not have an accurate view of the effectiveness of the college, in order to plan strategically and operationally, and monitor progress.
23. The self-assessment report is unsatisfactory. Whilst the report identifies many of the weaknesses, it overstates its strengths due to the lack of rigour in monitoring the quality and effectiveness of the provision. Subsequent action plans, for example to develop a literacy and numeracy strategy and to create accurate and relevant baseline assessments, are not sufficiently advanced to demonstrate improvement in learners' achievements.
24. There is a suitable number of teachers, but the number of education support staff is not sufficient to meet the learners' needs identified in their contracts with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Staff training opportunities are too narrow. Opportunities regarding learners' care and safeguarding are adequate, but there has been too little involving the sharing of good practice in their education.
25. The college's day-to-day operational arrangements are effective. Staff feel supported, especially during the recent changes. There is regular supervision for care and specialist support staff, but the appraisal system for teachers and other class-based staff lapsed two years ago. Staff induction is satisfactory.
26. There are suitable arrangements for safeguarding learners, including rigorous recruitment procedures and training for staff in child protection and the protection of vulnerable adults. The promotion of equality of opportunity is underdeveloped and the college is not fully compliant with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001). An accessibility audit has been undertaken and plans are being implemented to make necessary improvements. However, there has not

been staff training in the promotion of equality and diversity, and there is no monitoring of the effectiveness of the college's policies. The achievements of learners are not analysed in relation to race, disability or gender.

27. The trustees and governing body have a good understanding of the developments within college and contribute well to planning for the long term future of the college. Despite this improvement, they are not adequately fulfilling their important duty to monitor the quality of the provision, including learners' achievements.
28. Financial management is sound. However, given the significant weaknesses in many aspects of its work the college provides inadequate value for money.

Curriculum area inspections

Social and life skills

Inadequate : grade 4

Context

29. The college curriculum provides a range of project-based activities as a vehicle for developing social and life skills. Subjects taught include, numeracy, literacy, information technology and communication, life skills, creative arts and world of work.

STRENGTHS

- good use of voice output communication aids to encourage communication
- good range of activities in the evenings and at weekends

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- lack of baseline assessment
- inadequate planning for teaching and learning
- insufficient promotion of equal opportunities and cultural diversity
- insufficiently coherent individual learning programmes
- poor quality assurance

Achievements and standards

30. Achievements and standards are inadequate. It is not possible to assess learners' progress, as the baseline has not been established. Learners learn to use voice output communication aids to improve significantly their ability to communicate. Many learners enjoy their work and respond positively to teachers and education support assistants. The college has been successful in supporting an increasing number of learners to find suitable accommodation and further learning activities in their home areas when they leave the college.

Quality of provision

31. The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. In the better lessons the activities are appropriately challenging. In the less effective or unsatisfactory lessons, planning does not focus sufficiently on individual learner needs and there are too many whole-group activities. At times, tasks are completed by education support assistants with little meaningful input from learners. Too much time is spent on activities such as cutting, pasting, colouring and copying out words. Literacy and numeracy are not yet embedded. Teachers miss valuable opportunities to link the lesson activities to learners' future lives as adults.

32. The ratio of education support staff to learners is not adequate in some lessons, although support assistants are often well-managed by teachers. Teaching resources are generally good, with a range of equipment such as cameras and videos. In a minority of lessons there is over-reliance on paper-based resources. Equality and diversity are not routinely promoted through the curriculum. Work experience for nine learners is well-planned and involves internal placements, followed by external placements with local supported employment firms.
33. The college does not carry out a baseline assessment to form the basis for a meaningful individual learning plan. Teachers work on different targets so the overall programme for each learner is not coherent. Too little attention is paid to previous attainment and targets set are not always appropriate.
34. Learners have good opportunities to engage in activities in the evenings and at weekends, and the links between care and education staff are becoming stronger. The very effective specialist therapeutic and medical services enable learners to participate in lessons in the college and in activities in the local community. Communication aids are individually matched to learners' needs. Personal tutors and key workers are beginning to work effectively with learners. Learners value the opportunity to take part in the student council.

Leadership and management

35. Leadership and management are not adequate. The teaching team are mutually supportive. The self-assessment report overstates strengths and does not identify some key areas for improvement. An overall strategy to ensure the coherence of the curriculum is yet to be developed. Quality assurance is unsatisfactory. Lesson observations are not routinely carried out and teachers have not been appraised on a regular basis. Teachers value the external training opportunities available to them, but there is little sharing of the good practice that exists. Not all teachers are sufficiently aware of the impact of disability, such as developmental delay, on learning, and the implications of this for lesson planning.