



RNIB College Loughborough

Better
education
and care

Re-inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

Published
TBC

Introduction

RNIB Vocational College was inspected in March 2004. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory or better in all areas inspected, except in literacy, numeracy, communication and Braille, and independent living skills and mobility which were both found to be unsatisfactory. The overall leadership and management of the college were also judged to be unsatisfactory. Ofsted is responsible for re-inspecting all provision that is less than satisfactory within two years of the original inspection. If inadequate areas of learning or aspects of provision remain inadequate following re-inspection, inspectors will continue to monitor progress at annual assessment visits, but the areas will not be re-graded. They will be re-inspected during the full college inspection.

The unsatisfactory areas of the curriculum and the overall leadership and management of the college were re-inspected on 7-8 March 2006. The outcomes of the re-inspection are as follows.

| Curriculum/Common Inspection Framework aspect | Original grade | Re-inspection grade |
|---|----------------|---------------------|
| Leadership and management | 4 | 3 |

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new senior management team, including the quality improvement manager and the assistant principal (programmes), has been in place since January 2005. The team have gained the support of college staff and college governors. Morale in the college is good.

Quality assurance of the Loughborough College (LC) partnership by RNIB College Loughborough (RNIB) has been improved. The quality assurance arrangements of the partnership are clearly stated in a document signed by the quality managers of both colleges. These improved arrangements include evaluation of learners' experiences at LC as well as an annual cycle of teaching observations, which include monitoring of equality and diversity,

joint attendance at relevant meetings and sharing of relevant staff development opportunities. These arrangements are in the early stages of implementation and, as such, they have not yet been evaluated and revised over time.

Within RNIB Loughborough the number of role models from minority ethnic groups has increased particularly in the delivery of personal care. Recruitment from minority ethnic groups has been improved through working with local faith and other community groups. The diversity manager from the local authority has been recruited to the governing body.

Changes in the management structure of the college, with an increased emphasis on curriculum and quality management, have resulted in curriculum cohesion at a senior level in the college. The curriculum management team has effectively supported new curriculum developments across the college particularly in independent living skills and the embedding of literacy, numeracy and communication.

Formal communication between RNIB and LC has improved. The assistant principal ensures that team leaders and course leaders at LC are aware of the individual needs of RNIB learners who are enrolled in their classes. This is enhanced by the involvement of RNIB learning support assistants who provide support to learners in lessons at LC, as well as attending team meetings at LC. Joint training for team leaders has further supported the improved formal communication between the two colleges.

The self-assessment report is satisfactory. Self-assessment involves teams across the college and governors. It is rigorous and has completed one cycle. Team leaders value the increased involvement of staff in the process. This has enabled teams to reflect on practice in their areas. Senior managers are aware that the report is too descriptive rather than analytical, and have plans to improve this. In particular, there is too little evaluation of learners' experiences, especially in relation to their retention and achievement, and the quality of teaching and learning. This is acknowledged by the college as part of the ongoing development of a culture of critical self-assessment.

Governors make an effective contribution to the life of the college. They monitor college developments and appropriately challenge and question reports presented by senior managers and the RNIB.

| Curriculum/Common Inspection Framework aspect | Original grade | Re-inspection grade |
|---|----------------|---------------------|
| Literacy, numeracy, communication and Braille | 4 | 3 |

Context

All learners are assessed on entry to the college and are offered literacy, numeracy, communication and Braille provision, according to their needs. The college has begun to embed these subjects across all curriculum areas, through its Skills for Life strategy. Learners are offered adult national tests at level 1 and level 2, in addition to key skills assessment. The college is also introducing entry level qualifications.

Strengths

- *Very good success in English Speaking Board examinations*
- *Good teaching of Braille and Braille technology*
- *Good embedding of literacy, numeracy and communication across the curriculum.*

Areas for improvement

- *Recording of progress towards learners' targets*
- *Evaluation of improvements on achievements and the quality of provision*
- *Development of ESOL provision.*

Achievement and standards

Learners develop communication skills well and are very successful in English Speaking Board examinations. The college has introduced further externally accredited qualifications in Skills for Life and the majority of students are still

working towards successful completion of these courses. Learners are actively engaged in lessons. They work effectively independently, in pairs and in groups, and, in so doing, build their confidence and improve their social skills. In addition, learners use their literacy and numeracy skills in practical and informal situations within the college, for example, with the new table menus. However, the recording and evaluation of progress against targets is underdeveloped and does not accurately reflect the achievements or further support required by the learner.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for literacy, numeracy and communication overall. It is good for Braille and Braille technology. Teachers use a wide range of learning activities with clear differentiated tasks to challenge learners at all levels. Literacy, numeracy and communication have been embedded effectively across all curriculum areas. Additional support staff are managed well to support the learners effectively. The assessment of learners' work is thorough and learners are encouraged to self mark and assess how well they have done. Written recording of progress against targets, however, is inconsistent. The college has identified the need to improve its ESOL provision. Staff have undertaken core curriculum training and a team member has been given responsibility for this area of provision. Braille resources are good; ICT resources for literacy and numeracy are adequate.

Leadership and management

The college has made a successful start in implementing its strategy and action plan for literacy, numeracy and communication. The college is aware that it needs to develop this further, especially through the evaluation of its strategy on the progress that learners make. There is a newly identified manager for literacy and numeracy, although as yet there are insufficiently clear responsibilities and targets for this post.

| Curriculum/Common Inspection Framework aspect | Original grade | Re-inspection grade |
|---|----------------|---------------------|
| Independent living skills and mobility | 4 | 3 |

Context

Learners attend independent living skills (ILS) programmes in food preparation including budgeting and shopping. Personal care and laundry skills are developed by key workers in the residences. Mobility training is provided for learners who need it. A range of evening and weekend social and sporting activities allows learners to extend their experience and learning.

Strengths

- *Good development of learners' social skills and confidence*
- *Good teaching of food and hygiene*
- *Good personal support for learners.*

Areas for improvement

- *Insufficient integration of college and residential programmes*
- *Low take-up of extended curriculum opportunities*
- *Insufficiently developed systems to record learners' progress.*

Achievement and standards

Learners make good progress in social skills and confidence. Their confidence in their mobility skills increases. They begin to cook simple meals for themselves and friends, and they make progress in doing their personal laundry independently. Target setting has improved and is now satisfactory. There is a new computerised system for all staff at both colleges to record progress against targets. However, the design of the system makes it hard to identify clearly the overall progress that learners are making. Targets for some learners are not updated often enough on the system to be available to all staff. The lack of inclusion of care plan targets in learners' individual learning plans restricts the opportunities for achieving these targets.

Quality of provision

Practical teaching of cookery skills and craft subjects is good. Lessons are well structured to challenge learners at different levels and to develop their

literacy and numeracy skills. Programmes generally meet learners' needs with new accreditation for ILS and a wide programme of activities is offered in the extended curriculum. However, the main ILS programme is only in its third week. Not all staff have been trained to develop learners' skills sufficiently in the residences. There is insufficient reinforcement for mobility training. Attendance at many evening and weekend events is low. Baseline assessment for the new independent living skills programme is not yet satisfactory. Personal support for learners from all staff is good.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Responsibility for ILS and mobility is now appropriately located with the senior manager of further education and higher education programmes. Experienced staff have recently been charged with developing the ILS programme. Teaching observations are detailed but generously graded in some cases. The quality improvement plan identifies most important issues for improvement. The self-assessment report is accurately graded but progress on implementing some elements of the post inspection action plan has been slow. Equality and diversity issues are satisfactorily incorporated into teaching programmes and the extended curriculum.