

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Nash College
Date of visit: 17 October 2006

This feedback contains brief findings from the annual assessment visit. It focuses on the themes explored during the visit and does not attempt to give a comprehensive overview of the college's performance.

Achievement and standards

Target setting was inadequate at the time of the last inspection, has it improved?

- Target setting has improved. Those sampled during the visit clearly indicate that they are individualised and linked to previous assessment information. Targets are sufficiently specific to provide a basis for planning and recognising progress. These improvements are part of the broader review and development of assessment and recording practices.

Recording of learning was also limited and not used sufficiently to inform future planning. How well does the college know whether efforts to improve this have been effective?

- Recording of learning towards short term targets is now well established. Individual learning plans (ILPs) provide a longer term recording of progress and ensure close links with the improved curriculum framework. This is based on good understanding of needs of these learners, given their likely transition routes, for example, the importance of self-advocacy and managing and dealing with change. The development of assessment and planning has been informed by ongoing review and monitoring. This process is continuing. There is still some inconsistency in planning and recording between college and residential staff.

Quality of education and training

At the time of the last inspection staff were observed frequently, however, the evaluations made were not sufficiently accurate. Is the college able to demonstrate improvements in this process, and its impact on the quality of teaching and learning?

- The college has established a range of links with other providers to improve the process, quality and accuracy of staff observations. This includes working with general further education colleges and other independent specialist colleges, Records of observations are evaluative and link closely to performance monitoring and staff development. The college has also invested in further professional development and the recruitment of qualified and experienced staff. Information provided by the college

indicates an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. A peer observation scheme is due to start in the near future.

How well has the college addressed the need to improve specialist expertise in teaching?

- The college has invested in improving staff expertise through its recruitment practice, training of existing staff and its annual staff development programme. In addition, there are regular opportunities for staff to share expertise and the college is now planning to undertake a staff skills audit to further share good practice.

At the last inspection the tutorial system was evaluated to be adequate, and recognised that a more comprehensive approach was being developed. How far has this been implemented and has the college any evidence that is an improvement for students?

- The college has reviewed its tutorial system so that it includes opportunity to reflect on how well students are meeting their targets, provide support for day to day issues and proactively address areas of personal development. It does not yet, however, provide a sufficiently rigorous means by which the tutorial support for an individual student can be monitored.

Leadership and management

Has the college followed recent DfES guidance regarding a centrally held record of staff information regarding safeguarding checks and qualifications?

- The college has a centrally held database of staff checks regarding working with vulnerable adults and children, and their qualifications.

To what extent has the college begun to address the problems that arise from the unsuitable site, including through its strategic development?

- The college, with the Shaftesbury Society, its parent charity, is actively planning for the future. There have been significant improvements in residential accommodation since the last inspection, for example, creation of single occupancy bedrooms. The Shaftesbury Society has made a substantial investment in improving the physical site of the college. They are awaiting installation and construction of improved site access arrangements.