



Fareham College

Better
education
and care

Re-inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

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Provider reference
130693

Introduction

Fareham College was inspected in 2005. 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 health, social care and public services which was found to be less than satisfactory. 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 less than satisfactory health, social care and public services was reinspected on 8th and 9th November 2006

The outcomes of the re-inspection are as follows.

Curriculum/WBL area/CIF aspect	Original grade	Re-inspection grade
Health. social care and public services	4	2

Context

The college has 344 students enrolled in this curriculum area. Of these, 48 students are on public service courses and 296 students study health, care and early years. There are 170 full-time students aged 16-18. The majority of students, 76%, are female and are on level 2 and level 3 courses.

Strengths

- Excellent success rates on BTEC national diploma in early years, NVQ level 3 child care learning and development and BTEC first diploma in health and social care
- Rigorous self-assessment leading to improvement
- Responsive and well structured tutorial programme
- Students' enjoyment of college
- Very good support for students

Areas for improvement

- Success rates on national diploma in public service course
- The academic challenge of a minority of lessons on level 3 courses
- Some staff's recent industrial experience.

Achievement and standards

There have been significant improvements in success rates on the early years and childcare programmes and on the BTEC first diploma in health and social care course. The success rate on the national diploma in early years and on the NVQ level 3 in child care learning and development are well above national rates for 2005/06. The success rate on the BTEC national diploma in public services is below the national average.

Results for students completing their courses in 2006 show that a high percentage received high grades and over 50% of students who completed level 2 courses progressed to level 3 courses within college. The cross college policy on behaviour is enforced rigorously by staff. There has been a very significant improvement in standard of behaviour which is now very good. The introduction of thorough procedures to monitor attendance has already improved attendance and retention.

Quality of provision

An interesting and innovative range of practical activities has been included on public services courses. These include outdoor activity assessments and role play activities with the local police. These developments have increased the relevance and challenge of the courses and have been appreciated by students. Staff are beginning to take account of individual needs within their lesson planning but this is not evident across all lessons. This has resulted in a few students on level 3 programmes not being challenged sufficiently. A minority of lessons do not last for their fully allotted time.

Students enjoy their courses and are supported well by staff in all areas of their learning. Tutorial support is effective. Resources reflecting industry practice support programmes well. Tutorials are structured and planned well. Parents and carers are informed regularly about students' progress. A range of relevant additional courses such as first aid is provided. The range of courses has been developed and now includes an introductory level course in early years. The organisation of work placements has improved. Four dedicated assessors now visit students in the workplace

Leadership and management

The rigorous application of quality assurance systems by departmental and senior managers has led to significant improvements. Performance is reviewed frequently and thoroughly at all levels and decisive action is taken where necessary. Self assessment is effective. Staff morale is good. Although staff are vocationally competent some lack recent industrial experience.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Fareham College
Date of visit: 8 and 9 November 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

Do the outcomes for 2005/06 indicate improved performance in key areas? Do the outcomes indicate an improving trend?

- Results for 2005/06 show further improvement at all levels of course and for all age groups. The overall success rate for students aged 16-18 increased by 7% to 69%. The success rate for students aged 19 or over also rose from 64% in 2004/05 to 69% in 2005/06. The improvement on level 2 courses for students aged 16-18 was particularly impressive with the success rate rising from 58% in 2004/05 to 67% in 2005/06.

How is the analysis of value added used?

- Value added scores improved in 2004/05 and early analysis of the outcomes for 2005/06 indicates this improvement has been sustained. The college has appropriate systems for monitoring value added on academic and vocational courses. All students have a minimum target grade for their course and detailed work is carried out to measure performance against these targets.

Has the improved monitoring of attendance been maintained and has it resulted in sustained improvements?

- The college monitors students' attendance rigorously. Attendance on most courses is good. The college publishes a "league table" of attendance and this is effective in identifying any areas where attendance is low.

Have the high levels of success in the programmes for 14-16 year olds been maintained?

- The success rates on most of the courses for 14 - 16 year olds are very good. On some courses the success rate is 100%. There are now 230 pupils aged 14 – 16 following this very successful programme. The overall success rate in 2005/06 was 92%. Attendance is very good. The progression of students from these courses onto related further education courses or recognised training schemes is outstanding.

Quality of education and training

Has the college made progress in addressing any inconsistencies in assessment, teaching and group tutorials?

- The college monitors the key aspects of its work rigorously and systematically. Good progress has been made in ensuring the quality of teaching and group tutorials is more consistent across departments. The very positive feedback from the comprehensive student survey highlights the positive impact of this work. From discussions with a representative group of students from across the college, there remains some inconsistency in the amount of assessed work set and there are variations in how quickly marked work is returned to students.

Has employer engagement been developed further?

- The college has made good progress in the implementation of its detailed strategy for employer engagement. For example, it has gained a prestigious contract with a government department to provide training in a range of engineering disciplines. A number of employers, for example the police and a sports scientist from a professional football club, now visit the college to provide specialist input into a number of courses. The college also provides language and customer service training for a local hotel chain. Of particular note is the significant number of employers from the beauty and related industries who visit the college to carry out recruitment and selection of beauty therapy students for employment on completion of their courses.
The college responds well to the employment needs of the local area. For example, it has introduced construction courses in order to meet identified need. The college plays a very significant role in contributing to the skills of the current and future workforce.

Has the college evaluated the impact of additional learning support?

- Additional learning support (ALS) provided to students is very good. All full time and substantial part time students receive a thorough initial diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the course and appropriate support is then provided. The college also carries out an appropriate assessment of students' free writing abilities. Students with a wide range of additional learning needs are supported well. Students with dyslexia are supported effectively by trained specialists. The college has been proactive in obtaining specialist equipment to support individual students, for example adapted laptops and digital recorders. Additional learning support is co-ordinated well and is focused clearly on the needs of individual students. Support may be in-class by one of 25 study assistants, on a one-to-one basis in the learning support centre, or both. The take up of ALS is good and rising. The college evaluates the impact of ALS thoroughly. The analysis for 2005/06 demonstrates significantly improved outcomes for those students who accessed ALS over those who declined support.

Are pupils aged 14-16 supported well on their courses?

- Pupils aged 14-16 feel that they are supported well on their courses and are encouraged to do their best by their teachers. They speak articulately and maturely about their achievements and display real enthusiasm for the subjects they are studying. They are very well motivated and enjoy and respond exceptionally well to the challenge of learning in a practical and vocational context. The under 16 co-ordinator supports pupils very well in her role as their personal tutor. Most pupils have realistic and appropriate plans for progression.

How does the college ensure students are provided with effective initial guidance?

- There is very good initial advice and guidance about courses and welfare support provided by staff and Connexions to all applicants to the college. All students are given an in-depth guidance interview, referring to records of achievement and school reports where appropriate. Those who do not achieve the entry requirements for the course they have applied for are provided with further advice and guidance about alternative courses. In consultation with curriculum managers students can change to a different course, at an appropriate level, up to half term. The procedures for this are managed well.

What developments have there been with regard to promoting the “Every Child Matters” outcomes?

- The college has made good progress in developing further the promotion of the five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes of being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, staying safe, and economic well-being. Curriculum areas have contributed well to a detailed self-assessment and position statement on the progress made to date. Most staff have attended briefings on ECM and the outcomes are being promoted through the tutorial programme and through cross college events. The college is now in a strong position to evaluate the impact of these developments. Fareham College promotes strongly a culture of respect and places a strong emphasis on support for the individual. The induction programme included an exciting and innovative project based on respect and anti-bullying. This resulted in the production by students of some posters of outstanding quality to promote the “respect” message around the college. Students report that this event has had a very positive impact on life at college. There is a good range of healthy options in the canteen, although students feel these are expensive. There is also a wide range of sporting activities available. A few students feel that the availability of these is not promoted effectively. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with restricted mobility are supported well. The college seeks to ensure the safety of its students and carries out appropriate checks on staff in accordance with Department for Education and Skills (DfES) requirements. In a recent survey, 94% of students said they feel safe in the college.

Leadership and management

Have leaders and managers been successful in addressing the issues of some inconsistent quality assurance and curriculum management identified in the last inspection? Has the good progress made in monitoring any under-performance been maintained?

- Leaders and managers monitor all key aspects of the college’s work rigorously. As a result they know the college’s strengths and the areas where improvement is needed extremely well. Senior leaders have been very successful in promoting a self-critical culture in the college. They become aware of any areas that are not performing to the expected standard very quickly. Swift and appropriate action is then taken. Challenging targets are set at department, curriculum area and

course level. Progress against these targets is monitored at formal monthly meetings. A system of audit by senior managers has been introduced to the quality assurance procedures and this is enabling managers to focus their attention appropriately on any areas of concern.

Any themes from the pre-visit analysis not explored during the visit:

- All themes were covered

Any other observations from the visit not identified in the pre-visit analysis:

- The provision for pupils aged 14-16 is a strength of the college. These courses enjoy very high status within the college and they are managed extremely effectively. There has been much good curriculum development in order to improve outcomes further. A particularly innovative development is the provision of a BTEC first diploma course in media studies for gifted and talented pupils from a local school.