



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards
in Education

Nash College

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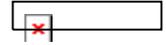
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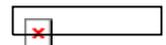
Basic information about the college



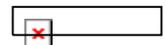
Name of college:	Nash College
Type of college:	Independent residential specialist college
Director:	
Principal:	Caroline Coles (Interim Principal)
Address of college:	Croydon Road Hayes Bromley BR2 7AG
Telephone number:	020 8315 4800
Fax number:	020 8462 0347
Chair of governors:	Bob Harvey
Reference number*:	Shaftesbury Society number: 221948 Registered in England number: 38751
Name of reporting inspector:	Susan Preece HMI
Dates of inspection:	22-26 March 2004

**charity or registered business number of the company running the college*

Part A: Summary



Information about the college



Nash College is an independent specialist college providing further education (FE) and training for residential and day students. The college is one of five schools and colleges which are run by the Shaftesbury Society, a Christian charity founded in 1844 that offers a continuum of care and education. Nash College, which is situated on the outskirts of the London Borough of Bromley, welcomes residents and students from all faiths, denominations and backgrounds.

The 64 students, most of whom are over the age of 19, have learning difficulties ranging from moderate to severe and complex. Many students also have severe physical disabilities and communication difficulties. Present students have a range of disabilities, such as Downs Syndrome, cerebral palsy and epilepsy. Over half of all students have high dependency care needs.

Students come from many areas of the country to attend the college, although most come from the

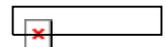
London area and the Southeast of England. Currently there are 64 students; 39 are residential students, many of whom return home at weekends, and 25 are day students. There are 28 female students; 3 are aged 16 plus and 25 are aged 19 plus. Of the 36 male students, 3 are aged 16 plus and 33 are aged 19 plus. Overall, 61 students are fully funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and 3 students are in receipt of joint funding from LSC and social services and/or health authorities. The college maintains data on ethnicity; currently 36% of students are from minority ethnic groups.

The educational and residential accommodation is situated mostly in the main building. Most students live in the main building of the college. Other residential accommodation includes the 'Hangout flat' on the main site which accommodates four students, and a house in the community accommodates a further three students. There are four porta-cabins on the site which provide additional administration and teaching accommodation.

Students also have access to a range of outreach services which include ophthalmology, audio screening, a dietician and medical specialists to advice on issues related to cerebral palsy. Individual programmes are designed for each student. These programmes are delivered through four levels: interactive levels 1 and 2, foundation level and pre-vocational level.

The main aim of the college is to meet the needs of young people who have a great many difficulties and help them take their place in society and live a meaningful life. The philosophy of the college is based on Christian principles. The college believes in the dignity of the individual and of the individual's right to be in charge of as much of their own life as possible.

How effective is the college?



The overall quality of provision is inadequate. The curriculum areas of social skills and life skills and pre-vocational skills are unsatisfactory. The area of literacy, numeracy and communication is satisfactory. Students make good progress in developing their confidence and communication skills but it is not possible to accurately identify achievements for many students. Activities and programmes are insufficient to match the needs of a small minority of the more able students. A good range of specialist communication resources are used effectively to support learning. The standard of residential provision is adequate, overall. Care for students is satisfactory and personal support is good.

The college's key strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

Key strengths

- good achievement in communication skills

- good promotion of opportunities to make choices

- effective therapy support

- the new senior management team's action to restore stability in time of change.

What should be improved

- poor teaching

- the quality of individual learning plans

- the curriculum framework

- the initial assessment

- the recognition of students' adult status

- attention to health and safety issues

- the training of care staff

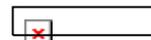
- rigour of quality assurance arrangements

- the response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) Part 4 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

- weak governance.

Further aspects of provision requiring improvement are identified in the sections on individual subjects and courses in the full report.

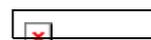
Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5)

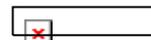
Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Social and life skills	Unsatisfactory: There is much poor teaching which is characterised by inadequate initial assessment, poor target setting, limited recording of progress and ineffective management of learning support assistants. There are inadequate resources for students to practice social and life skills in realistic contexts. Good development of communication skills enables most students to make realistic choices and develop their confidence.
Pre-vocational skills	Unsatisfactory: Inadequate initial assessment limits the accurate identification of students' achievements. Individual learning plans are not used effectively to monitor and record progress. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching; some accommodation is unsuitable and does not enable students to learn effectively. Most students develop good communication skills and make significant gains in self-confidence.
Literacy, numeracy and communication	Satisfactory: Literacy, numeracy and communication provision is satisfactory overall and the development of students' communication skills is good. Speech and language therapy support successfully informs effective planning to meet students' individual communication needs. Literacy and numeracy are not integrated sufficiently into all aspects of the curriculum. The learning of the more able students is not adequately extended and there is insufficient use of resources that are appropriate to students' age.

How well is the college led and managed?



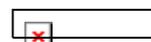
Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have not been adequately addressed. There has been a lack of critical oversight and strategic direction by the Shaftesbury Society. The college has experienced considerable upheaval during the past few years and the resultant changes instigated a period of instability in the leadership and management of the college. Recent actions to restore operational stability are effective and communication among the staff is good. The curriculum lacks cohesion and students' individual learning programmes are inadequate. Quality assurance procedures are unsatisfactory; outcomes are not systematically evaluated by senior managers or governors to ensure the promotion of a culture of continuous improvement. Self-assessment is not sufficiently rigorous or evaluative. Management information systems do not provide sufficient data to adequately evaluate teaching and learning. Governance of the college provision is weak. Procedures to monitor health and safety incidents are insufficiently rigorous. Financial management is satisfactory. The college currently provides unsatisfactory value for money.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



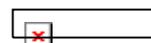
The college's response to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory, overall. The aims and values of the Shaftesbury Society are to promote effective care for all members of the community. The college attracts students from a wide and diverse background. Nash College is located on a steep incline and this is not suitable for people with mobility problems. All teaching and residential accommodation is fully accessible for people who use wheelchairs. Students' achievements are celebrated effectively and regular social events successfully promote awareness of a range of cultures. However, there is limited promotion of equal opportunities across the curriculum. Students' literacy and numeracy needs are adequately identified but achievements in key skills are not regularly monitored. The college has yet to put into place its anticipatory duties in relation to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and its obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Monitoring of gender and ethnicity shows an equal balance between male and female students and that 36% of students are from minority ethnic groups. This is high for an independent specialist college.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



The guidance and support provided to students are satisfactory. Initial assessment of students' physical, medical and communication needs is good. The results are used effectively to implement a comprehensive programme of support for individual students. The speech and language therapy team and education staff successfully work together to implement students' individual programmes. A wide range of medical and complementary therapies support learning. In addition, there are visits from a comprehensive range of specialists. Initial assessment to plan for the future development of students' independent learning skills is inadequate. In-class support is inconsistent and varies in quality from being passive to over-directive. Monthly tutorial reviews are insufficiently evaluative and the outcomes are not used successfully to establish clear targets for progress. The local Connexions personal advisor works effectively with staff and most students. Induction and transition arrangements are satisfactory and the majority of students are adequately prepared for entering and leaving the college. There are limited opportunities for students to participate in a range of leisure activities.

Students' view of the college



Students' views about the college were taken into account and a summary of their main comments is presented below:

What students like about the college

- everything

- cookery

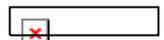
- staff

- going out for meals
- using computers
- making friends
- going to the pub
- food.

What they feel could be improved

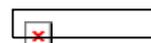
- more choice of food
- the chance to go swimming
- the opportunity to go horse riding
- having to sleep in a different area of the college at the weekends
- having name badges with photos
- staff having respect for students' choice of radio channels.

Other information

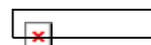


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the inspection. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post inspection action plan and submit it to the local LSC. The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC is responsible for ensuring that the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) receives the college's post inspection action plan within the stipulated two months.

Part B: The college as a whole



Achievement and standards



1. Students are taught in mixed groups. There are no differences in standards between the provision for students aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 plus. At the end of their programme, most students transfer to community-based residential provision or return home. Many also attend day care services and adult education provision. A few students progress onto general FE colleges and in a small minority of cases, move to other specialist residential colleges.

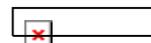
2. Students' achievements are unsatisfactory overall. Students develop good communications skills, become more confident and increase their ability to make decisions. Most students do not make sufficient progress with pre-vocational skills and social and life skills. Their access to a comprehensive range of national awards is limited. Student achievements are based on the targets set in their individual learning plans. However, these plans do not consistently identify or prioritise small steps of learning to enable students to develop the skills they require.

3. Students' achievements in communication skills include the effective use of a range of communication aids to support learning, including symbol books, switching technology and voice output communication aids. Small steps of learning include using two words or symbols together where the student would previously have only used a single one. One student has made such significant progress with her voice output communication aids over a period of one term that she is now able to greet her family for the first time. Students regularly ask for what they want and make realistic choices, they gain in social confidence and learn to take turns responding and listening to each other. Students are encouraged to express their views and wishes for change; this is particularly successful through the use of the student union.

4. Students celebrate their achievements weekly at whole college events, where those who have made the most significant progress are recognised as star achievers. Other opportunities to celebrate students' achievements include displays of their work, Nash College termly newsletters and annual open day events. A minority of students are successful in achieving nationally recognised awards, for example, in the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) vocational award certificate in catering. Others achieve well as they work towards the general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) in art. Four students exhibited their artwork publicly at the Tower of London Chapel.

5. Retention rates are high, averaging above 95% over the past three years, in line with other specialist colleges. Punctuality to lessons is poor in many cases. During the week of inspection, the student attendance rate was lower than usual at 84%. This was due to illness and medical appointments.

Quality of teaching, training and learning



6. The quality of teaching and learning in social skills and life skills and pre-vocational areas is unsatisfactory. Most lessons observed in communication were good and satisfactory in literacy and numeracy. Further sessions, which include group tutorials, extra-curricular and residential activities and lessons in the general FE colleges, contribute to the judgments relating to teaching and learning. Poor teaching is characterised by limited planning, inadequate assessment processes and insufficient recording of student achievement. For example, in a lesson that explored various family relationships, planning was inadequate and activities were not matched to students' individual abilities. A significant proportion of the class became bored and lost interest in the teacher-dominated discussion. The identification of learning goals is imprecise. In many cases, students' individual learning plans are not fully incorporated within the context of the lesson or across the extended curriculum. Learning support assistants are not effectively deployed to assist students with their learning. In the least successful lessons, students are over-directed, are passive recipients and are not sufficiently encouraged to become actively involved in the intended activity.

7. In the best lessons, teaching has a clear focus on practical activities which are set in realistic contexts. In these lessons, teachers were effective in gaining students' interest, motivating them to learn and encouraging them to review their own progress. For example, in a performing arts lesson, preparations for a joint drama production of the 'green goose' enabled Nash College students to develop confidence, extend their team working skills and enhance their communication as they worked alongside their general FE peers at Bromley College. In the successful lessons, coherent links are established between individual learning plans, what is to be learned in the lesson and the activities undertaken. Most teaching, support and care staff effectively use a good range of communication strategies. For example, in a communication lesson, a student took the register by 'eye pointing' to members of the group and the outcome was successfully recorded on a photographic register.

8. Many poorer lessons have an inappropriate focus on whole group activities and do not take sufficient account of students' personal learning objectives. In a significant number of lessons, activities lacked relevance and were repetitive. For example, in a whole group lesson to make flavoured chocolates for an Easter gift there was too much emphasis on the demonstration and students were not adequately involved in the practical activity. The teachers' records indicated that most students had only just recently completed the same activity. The rigorous review of lessons, to evaluate the impact of the teaching on students' learning, is inadequate. Many lessons are taught with insufficient reference to meeting the targets identified in the students' individual learning plans.

9. The majority of teaching staff have teaching qualifications but very few have specialist qualifications for teaching students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. None of the 13 education support assistants has appropriate qualifications for their role. The college has insufficient care staff, particularly at night. There are 11 care staff currently undertaking qualifications required by the National Care Standards Commission, although, none has yet completed these. No senior care staff have achieved the appropriate national vocational qualifications (NVQs) level 2, 3 or 4. The college has a satisfactory in-house staff development programme, including training on Makaton signs and symbols, moving and handling, and supporting students with eating and drinking and their complex communication needs. The six-month staff induction programme has recently been improved and is now successful in introducing new staff to the college environment, key policies and procedures, disability awareness and the overall needs of students.

10. Some of the accommodation and resources are not appropriate to support the development of students' independence skills. The flats are poorly decorated and inadequately furnished. For example, book shelves are at the wrong height for students in wheelchairs and one of the bathrooms is cluttered and inappropriately used to store cleaning equipment and materials. There is little specialist equipment to support independence, such as adapted small kitchen items like a cradle for

a kettle. Students who reside in a house in the community, and those in the flats, must return each weekend to live on the main college site due to the insufficient availability of care staff. These students lose valuable opportunities for developing independence skills in the context of their regular living environments. The college does not have adequate facilities for sports and safe outdoor activities. The on-site college café does not provide a good learning environment. It is in a poor state of decoration and lacks basic facilities; for example, there is no appropriate place to wash the dishes. Classrooms in the main building are adequate, brightly decorated and include satisfactory access to information communication technology (ICT) resources. There is a comprehensive well-planned strategy for improving ICT equipment. Some teaching and learning resources, such as books, reference materials and software, are not age-appropriate for the needs of young adults.

11. Insufficient attention is paid to health and safety issues. Individual risk assessments are not completed regularly, they lack appropriate dates and only three indicate the date of the next re-assessment. Risk assessments have not been undertaken for the night care environment. Health and safety checks on work placements are regularly conducted and are satisfactory. Some staff do not have a full understanding of specific health and safety issues. For example, wheelchair batteries were being recharged next to an electric cooker, which is in breach of fire regulations.

12. The assessment and monitoring of students' progress is unsatisfactory. Initial assessment is inadequate. Potential students are invited for a one-day assessment to the college but there is no overnight assessment of residential students' care needs as part of this initial visit. Later, as part of the induction to the college, residential students spend time in the accommodation. However, this opportunity does not involve adequate assessment and target setting to identify the skills that students will need in order to develop to maximise their independence. During the initial one day assessment there is effective involvement from a range of specialist staff, including a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist. The speech and language therapy assessment is particularly valuable and informs the communication profile which is developed during students' first term at college. There is inadequate baseline assessment of pre-vocational and social and life skills so that targets can be set and progress can be measured.

13. Diagnostic assessment of students' literacy and numeracy is underdeveloped and does not identify the most important areas for learning. The recently introduced college database has begun to record students' attainments; however, this does not yet effectively demonstrate students' progress. Monitoring of progress in lessons is not regular and teachers' records do not provide a sufficiently clear picture of students' achievements. Staff use log books to record what the students have done, although these often miss areas of learning which have been targeted for improvement. There is poor assessment of students' learning in the extended curriculum and in the residences. Review reports provide useful information about what activities students have experienced but contain limited information about the progress made in learning.

14. Care, education and training programmes are insufficiently integrated and do not take sufficient account of students' individual needs. Overall, the curriculum is inadequate to meet the future needs of students and it does not always have a sufficiently adult focus. In one example, inappropriate software, incorporating the use of nursery rhymes, was used as part of a lesson. The recently revised individual learning plans do not identify challenging targets, nor do they have sufficient focus on skills development related to independent living. Although key skills are identified on curriculum modules, the main focus is on the development of literacy, numeracy and communication skills. Care plans are unsatisfactory and do not include specific targets related to individual learning plans. The sharing of students' targets with care staff, through their participation in a weekly 'learning for living' day, is satisfactory. In addition, successful use is made of contact books for communication between college and student residences or home. The curriculum framework is inadequate for the complex needs of the students.

15. A minority of students are encouraged to experience work-related activities according to their needs and abilities. Opportunities for work placements are satisfactory and are available within the college setting or, in a small number of cases, in the community. However, such opportunities for those students with more complex needs are poor. There are inadequate opportunities for students to learn in the community. A few students attend local colleges for link courses such as cookery, health studies and performing arts. Some students attend other external courses, such as a rebound

therapy and horse riding, but these are offered on a rota basis. Enrichment activities are limited. Students visit local cinemas, cafes and other community facilities but the frequency of these visits is poor. Evening community visits during the week are restricted due to the availability of trained drivers.

16. Arrangements for supporting transition are satisfactory. The Connexions advisor attends the college for individual interviews with the more able students in the term prior to their leaving. The advisor also attends the transition review and advocates on behalf of the student. However, there is inadequate support for the less able students. Good support from the transition co-ordinator aids all students to make choices about their future. This is not formally linked across the students' curriculum. Transition plans are underdeveloped.

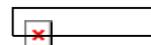
17. Support and guidance for students are satisfactory. The specialist multidisciplinary team includes speech and language therapists, a physiotherapist, an occupational therapist, a specialist counsellor, an aromatherapist, a music therapist and a trainee art therapist. These specialists, along with access to relaxation and sensory integration opportunities, provide effective support for students' complex needs and advice and guidance to other staff. In addition, the college offers the services of other specialists such as an ophthalmologist, a dietician, an audiologist and specialist nurses to advise care staff on continence and tissue viability. Initial assessment for students' physical, medical and communication needs is good. The results are used effectively to implement a comprehensive programme of individual student support. Clear advice and guidance about students' communication needs are effectively provided for all staff. The specialist therapy staff are well qualified and have a good understanding of the needs of individual students and the practical implications of their disabilities.

18. Support from specialist staff is enhanced by effective liaison between the therapy team members to assess and resolve students' support needs. For example, the occupational therapist works with the speech and language therapist and the information technology (IT) staff to enable students with cerebral palsy to communicate using electronic switches. Re-assessment is regularly undertaken when new tasks are introduced. In art and horticulture, equipment has been adapted by the occupational therapist to enable students to participate in activities more effectively. For example, modifications include adapted handles on gardening tools and changes in the height and angle of the table in the art room. Effective help is provided by the physiotherapy team to ensure that all staff understand their contributions and they monitor staff effectively to ensure that therapy plans are carried out correctly. Members of the therapy team attend all course team meetings to ensure good communication.

19. The speech and language therapists provide helpful advice to enhance students' communication skills. They have created a valuable and comprehensive base of good quality resources and guidance materials. The speech and language therapy team have a good knowledge of the range of communication aids to support learning and there is a well-established policy and procedure for the effective implementation of strategies in this area. For example, one student is currently receiving ten hours of speech and language support each week while he is successfully learning to use his voice output communication aid. The level and nature of the support is modified in response to ongoing assessments of individual needs. The speech and language therapists monitor that communication strategies are being implemented correctly in lessons. As appropriate, students have well-produced communication books and use them to good effect. The therapy team has successfully set up resource files for each level of course. This includes a well-structured communications curriculum, with lesson plans and associated symbols and resources. They also contain detailed records of individual students' communication development.

20. Induction for new students is satisfactory. The induction is adequately planned over the first term with specific lesson plans. Students meet relevant staff over a number of weeks. The induction module includes activities to support and reinforce learning. The tutorial process is underdeveloped. Individual tutorials are held formally once a term and the more able students assess their own progress against the targets on their individual learning plans. However, the tutorial reviews are insufficiently evaluative and the outcomes are not used effectively to establish clear targets for progress.

Leadership and management



21. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Progress to address weaknesses identified in the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. The Shaftesbury Society has not been critically overseeing the college over a significant period of time. In the past, strategic aims have not been appropriately established and consequently short-term planning has led to re-active responses. The college has experienced considerable upheaval during the past few years and the resultant changes led to a period of instability in the leadership and management of the college. The position of director of education for the Shaftesbury Society has now been filled and a new interim principal has been in post since January 2004. Recent actions to restore smooth day-to-day management and operational stability are good.

22. The college's emphasis on dignity, courtesy and respect for all students is regularly reinforced. Staff are committed to bringing about improvement and enjoy the new sense of vigour within the college. The interim principal and senior management team promote the college vision and values but these are not yet sufficiently embedded into all areas of work in the college. New staff teams, systems and procedures are not yet fully understood by all staff. Communication among the staff is good. The cycle of meetings is purposeful and focused. Regular, well-documented staff meetings promote effective team building. The new management team involve staff appropriately in areas such as strategic planning and the process of self-assessment, but these developments are at an early stage. Procedures to communicate with parents and external agencies are comprehensive. The Nash College newsletter is effective in communicating students' achievements to a wider audience.

23. Operational management of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There is much unsatisfactory teaching with inadequate target setting for students' achievements. In most curriculum areas, the analysis of data relating to students' progress is imprecise and the resulting information does not accurately inform future planning. Leadership and management of two of the three curricular areas are unsatisfactory. Procedures for the review of the curriculum do not result in sufficient improvement to ensure programmes meet the needs and interests of the students. The recent introduction of a management information system assists in the monitoring of individual students' programmes but, at present, does not adequately track students' progress against their individual learning plan targets. The management of a wide and appropriate range of therapies is good and effectively supports students in their learning.

24. Quality assurance procedures are unsatisfactory and are not monitored or reviewed systematically by senior managers or governors. Overall, the process of self-assessment lacks rigour. Self-assessment of the curriculum areas is inadequate and does not lead to a cycle of continuous improvement. Quality assurance arrangements do not include all aspects of the students' experiences. The quality and rigour of lesson observations are insufficient to bring about adequate improvements in teaching and learning. The interim principal and management team have recognised deficiencies, including the overall educational purpose for each student and the effective deployment of support staff; there are plans to improve these areas. Arrangements for monitoring the quality of the provision in general FE colleges and external providers are inadequate; sub-contracting agreements are not in place.

25. The students' union is active in promoting the views of students within the college. The senior management team have responded to students' requests and have brought about improvements. For example, the snooker table has been re-instated and an electronic games console and massage cushions have been purchased to improve the comfort of some students.

26. Procedures for staff development and appraisal are satisfactory and effectively follow the Shaftesbury Society's procedures. The supervision of staff is regular and meets the requirements of the National Care Standards. The quality and effects of staff development in

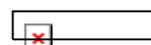
promoting students' achievements are not adequately reviewed. Slow progress has been made towards meeting the standards required for care staff qualifications. The commitment of the new management in the redeployment of staff to fully utilise their skills and the reduction of staff sickness rates have been very effective.

27. The college's response to the SENDA is inadequate. Governors have not fulfilled their anticipatory duties to monitor issues related to disability and there has been no training for staff. The comprehensive college policy does not include actions to respond to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The range of procedures to promote and evaluate equality of opportunity and diversity in the college policy are inadequate. Students are not given appropriate information about equality of opportunity. Issues relating to the promotion of advocacy and sexual health are not well promoted. There is insufficient focus in curriculum planning and teaching to ensure effective promotion of equality and diversity issues. The college's response to bullying and harassment is good and the complaints procedure for students is satisfactory. Comprehensive procedures for adult and child protection issues are now well established. The necessary procedures for the ongoing monitoring and analysis of accidents and incidents are not sufficiently rigorous.

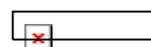
28. The oversight of the strategic direction of the college by governors is poor. The monitoring of the quality of the provision by governors is limited. Governors do not effectively monitor their own performance as part of the self-assessment process. New guidance procedures and training by the Shaftesbury Society are currently being prepared. Governors are committed to supporting the needs of students at the college but they do not understand sufficiently post-compulsory education and the common inspection framework. A student representative is successfully involved in a sub-committee of the governing body.

29. Formal mechanisms for reviewing individual students' programmes and contracts with the LSC are limited. Effective structures are now in place for managing finances. Best-value principles are satisfactorily implemented for purchasing goods and services. Overall, the college does not provide satisfactory value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Social and life skills



Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**.

Strengths

- good promotion of opportunities to make choices

- effective development of communication skills.

Weaknesses

- poor target setting and recording of progress

- much poor teaching

- inadequate resources for practising social and life skills

- ineffective deployment of learning support assistants.

Scope of provision

30. Social and life skills are an integral part of all students' educational programmes, including the extended curriculum. The main focus is on independent living skills, self-help and self-advocacy skills. The development of the students' communication skills is prioritised. All programmes are individualised and achievements are recognised through college certification. Most of the residential students live in the main college accommodation. As their personal and social skills improve, some students are encouraged to transfer to living in the flats or in the community house away from the college campus. Students have access to extended activities where the learning of personal and social skills can be put into real life context.

Achievement and standards

31. Achievements in social and life skills are unsatisfactory. At the start of the programme, there is no effective initial recording of the social and life skills students have previously acquired. The accurate identification of standards achieved in social and life skills are not easily determined because individual and whole group targets are not sufficiently specific; most are too general. Students make good progress in the development of communication skills; most are confident users of communication aids and alternative forms of communication, including Makaton, communication books, switches and voice output communication aids. In a lesson looking at lifestyles and health issues, students successfully used their communication aids to express their findings from a survey that they had recently conducted into teaching and care staff lifestyles. The students were able to make appropriate, enthusiastic and spontaneous responses to the teacher's questions.

Quality of education and training

32. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. No lessons were judged to be better than satisfactory and a significant number were judged to be unsatisfactory. There is an over-emphasis on whole group teaching. Many lessons involve inappropriate teaching and learning activities and learning goals are too general. These do not enable students to develop and explore the social and life skills they will require in their future lives as adults. In the more effective lessons, time is taken to prepare students for the planned activity. Students are made aware of the tasks within the activity and individual learning targets are clearly highlighted. A successful focus of all teaching is to promote opportunities for students to make choices. In a 'learning for leisure' lesson, students were successfully made aware of their individual targets. These related to correctly communicating their choice of activity by using agreed responses to indicate 'stop' or 'more'.

33. The use of IT in lessons is limited, but where it is used it is effective in promoting teaching and learning. In an art class studying portraiture, students took part in a quiz to identify the facial features of staff and students. The teacher had programmed the interactive white board so that all the class

could view the projected facial images simultaneously. In the unsatisfactory lessons, the focus of lesson plans is on whole group rather than individualised activities to complete tasks, such as baking bread or cakes or planting seeds. Teachers do not adequately analyse their teaching to identify future improvements. Poor management of learning support assistants leads to some assistants being passive whilst others are too directive. This interferes with the process of teaching and learning and does not allow students to learn by making mistakes. In some lessons, students become disengaged for periods of time whilst waiting their turn for the teacher's attention.

34. Staff to student ratios within classes are good. There are inadequate resources for the teaching of skills to promote the development of a supported independent lifestyle. In a 'learning for living' class, students were involved effectively in preparing and eating their breakfast. However, this activity was carried out in their base room which did not have suitable food-preparation or dining facilities. Those students who are resident in the Addington Road house and the flats are hindered in the practice of self-care and home-care skills in a realistic home environment. Over each weekend, they are required to move into accommodation at the main college site. Learning resources in a minority of classes are too child-focused. On occasions, there is inappropriate use of language which does not sufficiently reinforce the adult status of the students, for example 'sweetie', 'boy', and 'love'. Most teachers have teaching qualifications but few have specialist qualifications for teaching this student group.

35. There is no effective initial assessment of the social and life skills students have acquired prior to entry to the college. The initial assessment, prior to entry, results in the identification of general targets to cover all aspects of learning. There is inadequate monitoring of students' progress. Systems to identify, monitor and track individual learning achievements over short time periods are limited. Small incremental steps of learning are not effectively established.

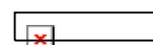
36. There is no formal structured personal and social skills curriculum. Logbooks are used to link classroom activities with activities within the residential provision. The quality of information and recording in the logbooks is variable. Students do not have sufficient access to the local community and the range of enrichment activities in the residential houses is limited. Arrangements for induction and supporting transition are satisfactory.

37. Support and guidance for students are satisfactory. Personal support is good. The comprehensive induction procedure enables students to settle well into college life. Attendance is monitored effectively but procedures to evaluate trends in punctuality are poor. Teachers and learning support assistants know the students well and are committed to helping students to progress. The college counsellor and residential care staff provide good advice for personal issues. There is a good range of therapeutic support and advice. The management of students' behaviour is effective.

Leadership and management

38. Leadership and management of the personal and social curriculum are unsatisfactory. There is no strategic or operational planning for the development of a personal and social curriculum. Staff development is identified during appraisal and supervision. Staff value the training opportunities available to them. Training has not yet impacted effectively on the quality of teaching and learning. Training to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues is not yet in place. The self-assessment report is insufficiently critical and did not recognise weaknesses that were identified by inspectors.

Pre-vocational skills



Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**.

Strengths

- significant gains in students' self-confidence
- good support for developing communication skills.

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment
- poor monitoring and recording of progress
- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- unsuitable accommodation for catering programmes
- inadequate curriculum framework.

Scope of provision

39. Pre-vocational skills include horticulture, art and design, cookery, ICT, music, dance and drama. All students take part in some aspect of the pre-vocational curriculum. The college offers accreditation in National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC) horticulture and LCCI catering and business administration. Most students do not seek accreditation but participate in programmes to extend their personal experience of gardening and cooking. Students can take part in work experience, although almost all of it takes place on site. Local general FE colleges provide the opportunity for eight students to attend classes in cookery and drama. Communication skills are integrated and practised throughout the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

40. Recording of achievement for most students is unsatisfactory. The accurate identification and measurement of students' achievements is not possible. Targets in the students' individual learning plans and in lesson plans are not consistently recorded. Students within some pre-vocational lessons demonstrate increases in social confidence and develop skills of turn-taking and listening to others, but these are not always adequately recorded. Communication skills are effectively developed alongside the individual acquisition of some practical skills. However, the more able students are not always given the opportunity to achieve more challenging learning goals through the provision of tasks which would extend their learning and prepare them adequately for their future lives. There are limited opportunities for students to practice their skills in the community.

Quality of education and training

41. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching; most lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In most lessons, good communication is promoted and supported using speech, communication aids and Makaton. However, the beginning of many classes is taken up by too much time being spent on inappropriate activities such as counting, which is out of the context of the lesson. Too great an emphasis is placed on trying to develop formal literacy skills for students for whom this is not appropriate. Some inappropriate paper-based activities means that students are attempting tasks that are irrelevant to their needs, for example, tracing over their names on handouts, playing games and making posters rather than developing practical skills.

42. In the satisfactory, lessons literacy and numeracy are properly integrated into the subject activity. Lesson planning is variable in quality. Lesson plans do not relate sufficiently to the students' individual learning plans. There is too much whole-group teaching and little evidence of teaching that is planned to meet the particular needs of individual students. There is too much classroom-based activity that results in students not being actively involved in their learning. The focus of many lessons is dominated by teachers' activity, leaving little time for students to develop their skills. For some students, teaching lacks challenge and they are repeating skills already learned. For example, in a horticulture lesson, students were sowing seeds when teacher records demonstrated that this activity had been completed successfully on numerous occasions in the past.

43. In the better lessons, students are well supported by teachers and learning assistants to extend and develop their learning. In a drama class, students were actively engaged in a drama production with full-time students from a local general FE college. They were highly motivated, working hard to improve their own performance and increase their self-confidence. Opportunities for learning in some classes are reduced due to poor punctuality and attendance.

44. In many lessons, inadequate resources have an adverse impact on teaching and learning. In catering, the accommodation and equipment are unsatisfactory. For example the work surfaces are situated at an inappropriate height for the learners, there is insufficient storage space and the rooms are drab. Throughout the college, there is some use of materials and equipment that are inappropriate for the ages of students. ICT is not used extensively or effectively. The college site is not fit for purpose; for example, students with mobility difficulties have problems in using many parts of the site as it is on a steep incline.

45. Initial assessment is insufficiently rigorous and does not provide a suitable starting point on which to develop an individual learning plan. Many of the targets used in the individual learning plans are based on the subjects offered rather than on the individual students' needs.

46. The systems to monitor and record students' progress against their individual learning plans are not sufficiently developed. Staff record progress at the end of lessons, and some other college activities, using log books. However, the records of progress are often insufficiently detailed. These records describe what the student has been doing in lessons but do not clearly record what the student has learned.

47. Tutorials are held once a term for most students. Most students assess their own progress against their individual targets, which are then revised in the individual learning plans. The tutorial process is not developed sufficiently well to identify suitable targets or provide useful information on progress for the reviews. Programmes are intended to develop students' skills to communicate effectively and to live as independently as possible in their future lives. However, the curriculum is inappropriate for those who are more able. Too many students are following a prescribed curriculum, rather than having their individual needs met. Students' programmes are determined by subject modules, some of which are based on external awarding body requirements, rather than what the students need to learn in order to live a more independent and fulfilling life.

48. Most teaching and learning activities take place in the college. There are few opportunities for students to make use of local shops and facilities to improve and extend their existing skills and develop new ones. Most work experience or life skills opportunities are provided on site. Only one

student per term is involved in work experience in the community. There is limited promotion of equality and diversity issues within the curriculum. In a more successful lesson relating to other cultures, activities were based on sensory approaches which extended the students' awareness of other cultures. Students were able to smell and taste food and touch fabrics and artefacts in order to gain an awareness of other cultures.

49. The staff provide good support for students and enable them to take an active part in their programmes and to develop their interpersonal skills. In the unsatisfactory lessons, staff were too directive and completed tasks which had been set for students. For example in some practical activities, staff did not allow sufficient time for students to attempt tasks before intervening and completing for them. Behaviour management is unobtrusive and mostly effective. There are limited opportunities for local students who are leaving to attend local general FE colleges and few opportunities to have tasters in day service provision.

Leadership and management

50. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Strategic planning is underdeveloped. There is no clear and comprehensive curriculum framework. The individual needs of students are not effectively met. The arrangements for review and evaluation of the curriculum are insufficient. The self-assessment report lacks rigour. Systems have been established to monitor and assess the quality of teaching and learning through regular observations, although this process has yet to bring about significant improvement. There is ineffective monitoring of the quality of the students' experiences. The feedback from regular teaching observations and supervision is having little impact on students' achievements. The requirements of the SENDA have not yet been disseminated. No SENDA training has taken place.

Literacy, numeracy and communications



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**.

Strengths

- good achievements in communication skills

- effective planning to meet individuals' communication needs

- successful speech and language therapy support.

Weaknesses

- insufficient challenge for the more able students in literacy and numeracy

- insufficient use of age-appropriate resources

- ineffective monitoring of literacy and numeracy.

Scope of provision

51. All students have individual learning plans with medium-term and long-term targets in literacy, numeracy and communication skills. Students do not follow any accreditation courses. Literacy and communication targets are integrated throughout curriculum areas. Numeracy is not fully integrated within the education or extended curriculum. Communication is also taught in discrete sessions. Many activities have sensory and therapeutic elements that promote the development of communication and interactive skills. These activities take place within small groups with high levels of support.

Achievement and standards

52. Students make good achievements in communication skills. For the less able students, appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of communication skills. Individual targets are devised and achieved. Students become more confident in articulating their needs, and in interacting with others. For example, one student was beginning to do things independently in class, such as choosing which items she was going to find in the cookery room, which were needed for a recipe. She was also starting to let staff know when she needed to use the bathroom. All students have medium-term aims which are well monitored by tutors and teaching teams. These effectively promote independence and progression. End of term reports describe progress made towards long-term aims and how therapy intervention has helped. Individual learning plans do not adequately identify medium-term aims for students in literacy and numeracy and are not based on an initial assessment of the students' requirements for increasing their independence.

Quality of education and training

53. The quality of teaching and learning is good in communication skills. Most lessons are planned well and provide appropriate activities for students to interact with staff and other students. In one lesson, students were required to respond to questions about the day's activities; one student had to find out information about the lunch menu and another student went outside to report back to the group about the weather conditions. In discrete communication lessons, staff are deployed effectively to support students in their learning. At the beginning of lessons, students are reminded about their targets and how they can be achieved. This introduction also helps staff to provide focused support to promote learning. At the end of the session, students are helped effectively to identify their achievements.

54. In many lessons where literacy and numeracy targets are integrated, there is insufficient challenge for the more able students. Literacy and numeracy are not appropriately embedded into meaningful and relevant activities. Medium-term targets are used to direct activities within lessons out of context; for example, in a significant number of lessons students in groups are asked to count up to ten without any relevance to the activity they were about to undertake. In a horticulture lesson, students used handouts to identify the sequence of tasks required to sow seeds rather than this being carried out during the exercise.

55. There is insufficient use of age-appropriate resources. There is a significant amount of teaching materials, books, objects of reference and computer software programmes which provide insufficient adult focus. For example, when students touch symbols on a computer touch screen they activate nursery rhymes, toys are used as objects of reference and books are used which are designed for children. Communication aids and resources are effectively assessed and provided for use in college and in the residential and home setting. Teaching materials are appropriately adapted to meet the individual needs and abilities of students. Symbols and Makaton signing are used extensively to promote learning. There is adequate information learning technology (ILT) in the ICT

room, although it is not used extensively across subject areas.

56. Ongoing review and assessment during the first term by the speech therapist and teaching staff ensures that targets accurately reflect students' needs and relate effectively to their long term aims. For example, a medium-term aim identified for a student was to give a single clap on hand or knee to indicate 'yes'. This relates very well to the longer-term aim of increasing the student's own involvement and influence on their life. In literacy and numeracy, pre-entry and initial assessments do not provide sufficient baseline information for accurate targets to be devised. Initial targets for students in the first term are based on information from their previous school. Systems to accurately monitor achievements and progress of these skills in the extended curriculum are inadequate. Students' log books are used for parents and residential staff to record progress against medium-term aims in literacy and communication skills. However, these do not provide accurate information about attainments. Most recording is descriptive and refers mainly to what activities a student has been doing in the residences as opposed to what the student has learned.

57. Opportunities for students to practise literacy and numeracy skills in independence skills training within residences and in pre-vocational and personal and social skills development are inadequate. Most students have few opportunities to learn independence skills in real living and working environments. Literacy and numeracy skills are often practised out of context within unrealistic learning environments, for example, students preparing breakfast in a base room and students washing crockery in a plastic washing-up bowl within a classroom.

58. Speech and language therapy are successful in promoting the development of communication skills. Speech and language therapists work closely with teaching staff to set medium-term targets for students to achieve. These targets are monitored effectively and their implementation within lessons are monitored and evaluated regularly. Speech and language therapists observe lessons regularly and provide guidance to staff who work with students about the strategies and methods used to promote learning. They contribute effectively to the review process and meet with parents to discuss progress.

Leadership and management

59. Leadership and management of literacy and numeracy and communication skills are satisfactory overall. The monitoring and quality of communication skills development are good. However, literacy and numeracy targets are insufficiently monitored across all curriculum areas.

60. Quality assurance to improve overall teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy is underdeveloped. Lesson observations to evaluate overall staff performance in relation to teaching and learning are yet to be effectively implemented. Managers devise development plans for their curriculum areas but these do not as yet feed into the recently established quality assurance cycle. There is no formal mechanism to monitor the developments that have been identified. There is no formal curriculum review to identify gaps in provision to meet the needs of the students. The self-assessment process is not sufficiently rigorous or evaluative. There is limited promotion of equality and diversity across the curriculum.