



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



landmarks

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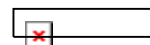
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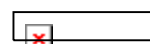
Basic information about the college



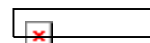
Name of college:	Landmarks
Type of college:	Specialist, Independent, Day
Principal:	Victor Hartwell
Address of college:	Upper Mill Farm Creswell Worksop Nottinghamshire S80 4HP
Telephone number:	01909 724724
Fax number:	01909 724725
Chair of governors:	Ivan Annibal
Reference number*:	Company Registration No: 3039522 Registered Charity No: 10475571
Name of reporting inspector:	Joyce Deere
Dates of inspection:	16 - 20 May 2005

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

Part A: Summary



Information about the college

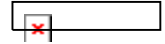


Landmarks is a specialist day college located in Creswell, north east Derbyshire. The surrounding area is rural, and of outstanding natural beauty and specific scientific interest. It is situated on the borders of Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire. Founded in 1995, Landmarks is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. The main base of the college is a 20 acre working farm, with purpose-built workshops. The college also has lease arrangements for additional facilities and accommodation with a local further education (FE) college and an adjacent farm. The college provides education and training for 72 students of whom 14 are full-time and funded directly by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Forty-two students attend on a part-time basis as part of collaborative arrangements with local general FE colleges, 11 are funded by social services and five are privately funded. All 14 students funded by LSC have moderate learning difficulties and some have additional behavioural and emotional difficulties. Of the 14 directly funded by the LSC 13 are male and one is female. Six students are aged over 19 and none are from a black and minority ethnic background.

The farm facilities at Landmarks include a wide range of traditional farm animals and many smaller

domestic animals, birds and poultry. Programmes offered are primarily land based with traditional crafts. In addition, students' programmes include literacy, numeracy and communication, information and communication technology, independent living skills and personal, leisure and social development options.

How effective is the college?



Provision for land based activities is satisfactory. The standards of work and achievement of externally accredited certification at entry levels 2 and 3 are good in this area. However, provision for literacy, numeracy and communication is unsatisfactory and for independent living skills it is very weak. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The overall quality of provision is inadequate.

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

Key strengths

- achievements in land based provision

- the focus on practical activity as the basis for learning

- support of the trustees during a period of significant external difficulties

- individual support for students.

What should be improved

- provision for independent living skills and for literacy, numeracy and communication

- the rigour and effectiveness of assessment and monitoring

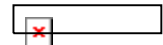
- specialist support and contribution to the curriculum

- the management of the curriculum

- the effectiveness of quality assurance arrangements
- strategies to enable students to manage their own behaviour
- meeting statutory requirements.

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

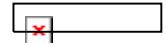
Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



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)

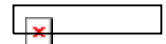
Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Land-based subjects	Satisfactory: Achievements are good, and teaching and learning has a good focus on the use of realistic and practical tasks. Personal support for students is good. The less effective teaching and learning failed to meet the individual needs of all students, and the accommodation is currently unsatisfactory. Targets are not used effectively to raise students' expectations and the self-assessment is not used to improve the quality of provision.
Literacy, numeracy and communications (including ICT)	Unsatisfactory: ICT lessons are well used to develop communication skills and all students have access to good ICT facilities. Rates of achievement are slow in literacy and numeracy and the provision is not effectively integrated. Staff do not have sufficient expertise to encourage students to develop their skills and assessment and monitoring of achievement is ineffective. The provision is inadequately managed.
Independent living and leisure skills	Very Poor: Much of the teaching is unsatisfactory. Members of staff do not all have sufficient specialist knowledge to meet the diverse needs of the students. Resources for developing and practising independent living skills are inadequate, and students' progress is not rigorously monitored. The management of the provision is inadequate.

How well is the college led and managed?



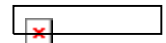
Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is a shared ethos in the college focused on the welfare of students. Members of staff are well supported, and appraisal processes are satisfactory. Communications between the principal, staff and students are good. Trustees are committed and provide good ongoing support to maintain the provision at a time of significant difficulties over accommodation. Strategic oversight overview, curriculum planning, the monitoring of systems and the implementation and review of policies and procedures are unsatisfactory. Some of the temporary accommodation has not been adequately risk assessed, and aspects of health and safety are not satisfactory. Quality assurance and self-assessment are ineffective. The college is not compliant with recent equal opportunities legislation, and student protection and safeguarding arrangements are unsatisfactory. Financial management is satisfactory overall but aspects of the students' programmes are not provided in line with specifications contained within LSC individual learner schedules.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



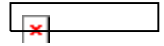
Landmark's approach to social and educational inclusion is unsatisfactory. Landmarks provides for students with moderate learning difficulties, and, increasingly, with behavioural and/or communication difficulties. Some students travel considerable distances to attend the provision and are particularly attracted by the land based activities. Currently, only one student is female and none is from a minority ethnic background. The proportion of the local population from minority ethnic backgrounds is below three per cent. Many students benefit from the practical approach to learning, but the staff do not all currently have the expertise to meet the needs of students with emotional and behavioural needs, and the most able students are not always on programmes that are sufficiently challenging. Provision for the development of literacy and numeracy is unsatisfactory. The college has recently revised its equalities policies, but is not yet compliant with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, or the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001. Members of staff have had very little training about equality and diversity and how to apply these to the curriculum. Awareness of these issues is low. The college has a complaints procedure and a policy for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA), but has not satisfactorily implemented this, or its draft child protection policy. It does not yet meet the safeguarding requirements under Section 175 of the 2002 Education Act, which came into force in June 2004.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Individual personal support for students is satisfactory. Members of staff know the students well and provide informal support as required. The arrangements for students' induction and the provision of careers advice and guidance are satisfactory. In many lessons support workers provide sufficient and effective support to students. Specialist input and support to meet the more complex needs of students are inadequate, and formal tutorial arrangements are insufficient. Behaviour management is inadequate, with insufficient emphasis on encouraging students to manage their own behaviour.

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

- very supportive and friendly staff

- the animals

- working together

- working on the computers

- doing own projects

- gardening, pottery and animal care.

What they feel could be improved

- more time out

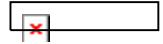
- more time to make things

- CDs and music they like

- faster computers

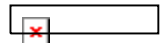
- improved buildings.

Other information

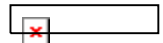


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the inspection. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post inspection action plan and submit it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The college's action plan must show what action 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 should send to Ofsted only action plans from colleges that have been judged inadequate or have been awarded a grade 4 or 5 for curriculum provision, work-based learning and/or leadership and management.

Part B: The college as a whole

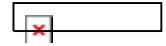


Achievement and standards



1. All the students study in mixed age groups. There are no differences between the quality of provision for those aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 and above. Standards of work are good in land based provision. Students develop good practical skills, and become more confident through group work. However students make limited gains in literacy and numeracy and are often quickly bored in independent living skills.
2. The achievement of external accreditation in land based provision is good. In 2003/04 eight students achieved a full award at entry level 2 or 3 in landbased subjects and some have achieved units at level one. Students make slow progress in achieving units of accreditation in literacy and numeracy. Students' success is celebrated in formal recognition ceremonies that are attended by trustees.
3. Rates of progression on leaving are satisfactory. Of the 12 leavers who left between 2002 and 2004, five progressed to part-time FE provision, four to part-time employment within voluntary projects, one to day care, one to a residential home and one continued at Landmarks, funded by social services.
4. Rates of retention are good and in line with other specialist colleges. During the week of inspection rates of attendance and punctuality were also good.
5. It is not possible fully to determine and evaluate the progress made by students during their time at the colleges as the recording does not take sufficient account of students' starting points.

Quality of teaching, training and learning



6. The best teaching and learning takes place in a practical context, in which students are encouraged to develop practical skills as well as other personal and social skills. This was most evident in land based provision, where half of the lessons observed were good. Teachers used realistic working environments and encouraged students to work as teams to develop social skills. Similarly in ceramics and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) students produced good work whilst at the same time being encouraged to develop their personal skills. However, common to all areas of the curriculum was the lack of challenge for more able students, and in many of the unsatisfactory lessons members of staff did not demonstrate sufficient understanding of how learning difficulties affect students' capacity to learn. Whole class teaching was used too often, demonstrations were sometimes too hurried, and tasks were not sufficiently individualised. The use of the curriculum to develop literacy and numeracy skills is still in the early stages of development.

7. The number of staff with qualifications in teaching and in support work has increased over the past two years, and is now satisfactory. Some 75% of teaching staff have a certificate in education and 62% of care staff have a learning support certificate. One senior tutor has recently achieved a level 4 qualification in advice and guidance and has a counselling qualification. However, only one member of staff has an advanced level specialist qualification relating to disability, and few staff have literacy and numeracy qualifications above basic levels. Staff vocational qualifications and / or experience are satisfactory for land based and craft provision.

8. Landmarks faces difficulties with the three sites it currently uses. The current arrangements are temporary, pending the outcome of a legal dispute. The classroom accommodation is sometimes cramped at the main site, and the building leased from the local FE college is shortly to be sold. It is likely that alternative accommodation will be available for lease, but currently the rooms used are in need of refurbishment and students do not use the college refectory as part of their learning. The adjacent farm premises, currently leased, have significant shortcomings. The students often walk along a public road with no pavement in order to reach the farm, and the accommodation has not been adapted adequately for use by students with disabilities. The college is considering routinely transporting the students as a way of avoiding having to use the road. The poor general maintenance on both farm sites presents potential hazards for students, and there is low awareness of health and safety issues. Risk assessments are insufficiently rigorous. Trustees are aware that health and safety issues have to be addressed, and have plans to carry out further risk assessments.

9. Teaching resources are satisfactory in most areas. Members of staff have adequate materials and resources. The selection of farm animals are calm and respond well to being handled and students are able to access local nature reserves and conservation areas. A significant improvement in resources has been in the provision of ICT facilities. Students have greater access to ICT and more are now using ICT as part of their learning programmes. However, facilities for independent living skills are inadequate, and the requirements as set out on the individual learners' schedules are not met.

10. Arrangements for the assessment of students' ability are not satisfactory. Landmarks does not have any guidelines or policy documents related to assessment. The pre-entry assessment is not rigorous. Previous records are scrutinised, but the requirements as set out for students in the individual learner schedules do not always take account of previous learning and support levels. Neither the pre-entry nor the initial assessments includes specialist assessments such as speech and language therapy or psychological reports, even where potential students have autistic spectrum disorder and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties. Initial subject assessments are carried out during the first term and contribute to the baseline assessment are carried out during first term. These are generally satisfactory, with contributions from all subject areas. However, the initial assessment for literacy, numeracy and communication is underdeveloped, with insufficient

availability of specialist assessment in speech and language development or dyslexia.

11. Target-setting has improved, and some revised independent learning plans and provisional personal learning programmes recently produced, are more focused, with realistic targets. However, in much of the provision too many targets are very general and not always sufficiently challenging. Small steps of progress are not identified. In land based provision targets are not negotiated frequently enough, and the recording of progress in independent living skills is based on work covered rather than skills developed. In literacy, numeracy and communications, opportunities to develop and record skills through practical activities are often missed, and progress is not effectively monitored. Student involvement in the regular evaluation of their own progress is in the early stages of development.

12. Procedures for internal verification are satisfactory for much of the accredited provision. In land based subjects the assessment is frequent, and often imaginative. Sampling of portfolios is rigorous, but assessor observation takes place only once a year. The college acknowledges that the internal verification system for independent living skills has not been satisfactory. External verifier reports are satisfactory.

13. The focus on practical activity as the basis for learning continues to be strength, particularly in land based and craft provision. Despite the difficulties over accommodation and reduced provision at the main site, Landmarks continues to offer provision that includes larger farm animals. Provision for ICT has improved significantly, and all students are able to use ICT during the week.

14. Although the land based activities and crafts are satisfactory, the curriculum as a whole lacks coherence, and does not always match the needs of students. There is a lack of clarity about the main purpose of the provision for many students. Landmarks aims to use practical activities to develop independent living skills, as well as literacy, numeracy and communications skills, but this is still in the early stages of implementation. There is no senior member of staff to co-ordinate the curriculum. The Skills for Life policy is very recent, and members of staff have not had sufficient training in its implementation across the curriculum. The college does not provide a comprehensive programme for independent living skills, and insufficient attention is paid to core skills in travelling, and in using the local community effectively. The approach to behaviour management is too narrow, with insufficient emphasis on students developing strategies to manage their own behaviour.

15. The farm provides informal work experience, but those students whose goals include possible employment do not routinely have any external work placement. The opportunity to structure students' programme so that internal work experience is more akin to actual working life has not been taken. The transition programme for students who are due to leave involves outside visits to other providers, and more opportunity to discuss possible options, although it does not have a formal scheme of work. Landmarks does not provide a scheduled programme of enrichment activities, as part of the curriculum. However, members of staff arrange visits and involve students in fund-raising activities. These include, for example, visits to galleries and exhibitions, and taking part in walks to raise money for a charity related to the survivors of the recent tsunami disaster.

16. Personal support for students is satisfactory. Members of staff know the students well and provide informal support to deal with personal issues and problems. Students have a personal tutor to go to about any concern they may have. There is a member of staff with an advice and guidance qualification who can provide additional support to individual students if required. Regular informal communication takes place between tutors and parents about issues and concerns. However, formal tutorial support is insufficient and conducted irregularly.

17. Student induction is satisfactory. Prospective students are able to visit the college prior to starting to undertake taster days. These enable students to sample activities and to get to know staff so that initial entry into the college is easier for the student to manage. Students follow an induction programme which is supervised by their personal tutors. They ensure students have been given appropriate information which includes health and safety, and complaints procedures.

18. In the majority of lessons support workers provide effective support, and the ratios of support

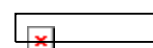
staff to individual students are sufficient. However, in a significant number of lessons support workers are not sufficiently involved and do not effectively support the process of teaching and learning. Better lesson plans identify individual support needs and behavioural strategies to implement with individual students. Support workers have been observed formally during lessons by a senior tutor. The senior tutor's comments are recorded in observation records. These comments are mostly positive and the staff action plan focuses mostly on training needs of the support worker. Little attention is paid to how improvements can be made to the support staffs' performance in the promotion of learning during the lesson.

19. Since the last inspection, careers advice and guidance has improved. Links with Connexions personal advisors are satisfactory. The local Connexions adviser provides additional support and careers advice to students in their final year at the college. Software and careers advice and guidance materials are available to students.

20. Specialist support is inadequate. Students with communication difficulties do not have sufficient support from speech and language therapists. Members of staff do not have the necessary skills or training to support students in developing their communication skills, and there is no strategy or plans to ensure students' needs are being met. There is no member of staff with expertise or training to deal with, or identify specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

21. Behaviour management is inadequate. Behaviour plans are varied in quality. The majority of plans provide basic guidance to staff about possible antecedents to incidents which may occur, and strategies and approaches to use. However members of staff do not all have the necessary expertise in behaviour management and there is little input from external agencies or professionals in the development of behaviour plans. Plans are not effectively reviewed, updated or monitored. Incidents deemed to be a cause for concern are inconsistently recorded by staff and written comments made within incident reports are inappropriate and do not demonstrate a good understanding of student behaviours. Comments also indicate that actions taken by staff are not dealt with in accordance with guidelines provided within behaviour plans. Appropriate actions are not taken and there is no collation of information to analyse patterns of behaviour. Interventions made by staff are reactive and students are not actively encouraged to become involved in their own behaviour management.

Leadership and management



22. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is a shared ethos in the college, which is focused on the welfare of students. Communication systems are good between the principal, senior tutors and staff. There are regular team, curriculum and health and safety meetings held to discuss relevant issues. Members of staff also communicate informally during the college day and work effectively in resolving issues that need immediate action. The principal has secured their ongoing commitment during a period of instability. Whilst agreements have been reached to help maintain provision, the college's ability to plan long term rests largely on the outcome of a legal dispute with regard to the lease of the present site. The principal's attention has been focused on resolving issues of tenancy and some operational day-to-day functions are managed by senior members of staff. This has encouraged more staff involvement in the running of the organisation. However, strategic overview, curriculum planning, the monitoring of systems and the review and implementation of policies and procedures are unsatisfactory.

23. Planning and monitoring are underdeveloped. Self-assessment is not rigorous. Although the self-assessment report describes progress made against identified actions since the last inspection report, it does not identify sufficiently areas for improvement. Members of staff are involved in self-assessment through the production of programme evaluation documents for each subject area. These identify strengths and weaknesses and appropriate actions to remedy weaknesses. This useful information is not collated and used in the development of the self-assessment report, and it

is not clear how actions are completed, weaknesses remedies or target dates for achievement monitored. Student views are collated and show high satisfaction rates. However views about provision are not sufficiently captured from parents, carers and external agencies. The action plan stemming from the SAR identifies actions required to remedy weaknesses, most of which relate to areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report, with insufficient focus on current issues in the college. Whilst improvements have been made to ICT provision for example, other important targets have not been achieved and await review in July 2005. The most recent development plan review provides some useful information and describes future developments with partner general FE colleges and options for partnership work with other local providers. However the lack of coherence between the self-assessment report and development plans makes the effective monitoring of targets and objectives difficult.

24. Quality assurance processes are comprehensive but are ineffective in providing information to improve the quality of provision. Although the quality assurance policy clearly sets out the processes involved in quality assurance, the implementation of these is inconsistent. Policies and procedures are insufficiently reviewed and updated and the lesson observation scheme is ineffective. Lesson observation records conducted by landmarks are not graded, action plans do not reflect areas for development identified within lesson observation records, and action has not always been taken to improve teaching and learning practices. One partner college observes lessons for their students accessing provision through franchise arrangements, mainly in practical curriculum activities. The frequency by which lesson observations are carried out is insufficient to base overall judgements about the quality of teaching and learning accurately. One partner general FE college undertakes lesson observations according to its own college schedules and has not conducted lesson observations in this current academic year. This is not sufficient for Landmarks to assure the quality of its provision.

25. Staff appraisal is satisfactory and effective in identifying individual staff training needs to inform the staff development plan. Members of staff are provided with opportunities for development and training and the staff development programme in place takes into account staff training needs. There are strategic gaps in the training plan, however, and although planned for July 2005, staff have not had sufficient training in student protection or behaviour management.

26. The day to day running of the college is satisfactory overall, however management and co-ordination of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Provision made for the development of independence skills is limited, and the integration of literacy and numeracy across curriculum activities is ineffective. Students have insufficient structured internal or external work experience opportunities. Tutors are given responsibility for curriculum activities and meet regularly to discuss individual students' programmes, but there is little evidence that links between curriculum areas and programmes are managed effectively. There are good links with local general FE colleges. Formal arrangements are in place and the college benefits from additional accommodation provided by the local college and from the potential progression routes for students.

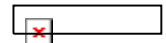
27. The college's response to statutory requirements is too slow. An equal opportunities policy has recently been updated but has not been implemented. There is no policy in place in relation to SENDA, the Race Relation (Amendment) Act, or student protection, and members of staff have received insufficient training to meet statutory requirements. An audit of provision has not been arranged to ensure compliance with SENDA regulations. Equality and diversity issues are rarely overtly addressed in the curriculum. The college's arrangements for safeguarding are underdeveloped. There is no formal procedure for incident reporting and a lack of clarity about when incidents should be reported to external funding agencies such as the LSC. Incidents are largely dealt with internally and not systematically recorded to establish if there are any patterns or trends, leading to appropriate actions and improvements to practices. The harassment policy is inadequate and refers to equal opportunities legislation which is out of date.

28. The trustees are committed to the college and provide ongoing support to the principal. They have worked hard to ensure its continuation whilst the dispute with regard to the tenancy of the college site has taken place. Trustees receive information about the college through reports provided by the principal which are discussed at regular meetings. They also make regular visits and attend social events organised by the college. Membership of the board has been recently strengthened by

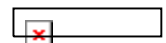
the inclusion of a parent trustee whose brief is to monitor the health and safety aspects of provision. Trustees are involved in the annual review of policies and procedures but recognise that this process needs to be improved. They have not ensured that the college meets its legislative obligations under recent equalities and student protection legislation.

29. Financial management is satisfactory overall. Members of staff are provided with adequate resources to perform their job roles. However the appropriateness of some accommodation is unsatisfactory with insufficient space, and health and safety issues to be remedied. There are also some shortcomings in terms of specialist support. The college has reserved funds to assist in the relocation or refurbishment of accommodation once the legal situation is resolved. However there are insufficient formal procedures to monitor support levels or to ensure adherence to the requirements stated within LSC Individual Learner Schedules. The college does not provide value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Land-based subjects



Overall provision in this area is **Satisfactory** (Grade 3).

Strengths

- good achievement in national awards

- good use realistic practical tasks in teaching and learning

- a sufficient and suitable selection of large and small animals for teaching purposes

- good personal support for students.

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of targets to raise expectation of students

- unsatisfactory accommodation for land based subjects

- insufficient focus on meeting the individual needs of students

- insufficient use of self assessment processes to improve the quality of provision.

Scope of provision

30. Students attend daily for two or three years and work towards units of full accreditation at entry levels and at level 1 in land based subjects. Units offered include horse care, animal care, horticulture, floristry, agriculture and conservation. Teaching takes place at the main site, Upper Mill Farm and at a local farm approximately 15 minutes walk away. Fourteen students are enrolled on courses at the time of inspection. All but one of the students are male.

Achievement and standards

31. Achievement rates of unit and full certificate accreditation have improved and are high. In 2003/04 eight students achieved full certification in skills for working life qualifications at either entry level 2 or 3. The remaining students all achieved a good range of individual units. More capable students progress to take units at level 1. Retention rates are high as expected for a specialist college. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Students gain useful practical skills in land based subjects such as growing vegetables, handling quiet animals and mowing grass. In conservation lessons they undertake substantial projects in the community such as building stiles and stone walls in a local nature reserve. Most develop confidence effectively and increase their ability to work independently as well as in small groups or pairs. However too little recording of skill development and gains in confidence is undertaken and students do not always receive formal recognition of the improvements they make.

Quality of education and training

32. Teaching and learning are at least satisfactory and half of teaching observed was good. Teachers use realistic tasks set in a working environment to promote effective learning and students gain a real sense of achievement in many lessons. Students propagate and grow vegetables including potatoes, beans and cabbage in plots they have prepared. They also help care for a range of large and small animals including undertaking feeding and health care checks. In the best lessons teachers, working closely with learning support assistants, use small group work effectively to encourage team work and develop social skills. In practical lessons students work as a team to undertake routine cleaning of animal houses and each takes responsibility on a daily basis for several different groups of animals.

33. In less effective lessons teachers do not focus sufficiently on meeting the needs of all students and allow periods of unproductive time for individual students. A few more capable students are not stretched to practise skills to a higher level and lose interest. Less capable students become passive with too little support from learning support assistants. Demonstrations of different skills are often too hurried and unclear.

34. Staff are competent and practised in vocational skills although most do not hold vocational qualifications. A few are currently undertaking vocationally related staff development activities. The quality of resources varies. There are sufficient suitable animals available for teaching purposes including large and small species. ICT equipment is used increasingly in teaching to good effect. External physical resources such as the use of a local nature reserve and conservation area provide ideal environments for student projects. However, accommodation at the local farm is unsatisfactory with poor access to many areas, low levels of maintenance and much uneven ground. Animal care

facilities at Upper Mill farm are cramped. Aspects of health and safety are given insufficient priority. For example, students wear inappropriate jewellery such as bracelets and earrings during practical lessons in animal and horse care. Risk assessments are either too general or insufficiently rigorous.

35. Assessment is frequent and often imaginative in design. Video footage and digital photographs are used increasingly to provide evidence of practical competence. Computer-based assessment methods encourage the use of ICT. Whilst subject-specific targets are set each term to monitor progress, these are often undemanding and insufficiently individualised to raise the expectation from each student. Internal verification of portfolios is effective with a comprehensive sampling strategy. Feedback to assessors generally results in improved practice. Formal internal verification of practical assessments is too infrequent and less effective.

36. Units of qualification are offered in a broad range of land based subjects including horse care, horticulture, floristry, animal care and conservation at both entry and level 1. Qualification aims are generally well matched to students' aspirations and they make careful choices of subjects to study with their personal tutors at the start of each year. Limited opportunities exist for experience of vocational areas outside of the college environment. Only a very few students undertake work experience and teaching, except for in conservation, rarely includes a wider land based context than the college environment.

37. Students receive prompt and sensitive support to help with personal issues. Tutors know students well and hold detailed information about their needs and backgrounds. Tutorials remain largely informal except for a more formal termly review.

Leadership and management

38. Curriculum leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff work closely together and communicate well through regular meetings. Record keeping is generally thorough. A strong team spirit is engendered within the land based subjects and individual staff use their initiative to make improvements such as helping to purchase suitable animals for teaching. An atmosphere of mutual respect exists between staff and students, but there has been insufficient training in relation to equality of opportunity. Quality assurance procedures are limited. Programme evaluations are completed annually however they are generally insufficiently self critical and objectives identified are often of an operational nature. Their use in forming a self assessment of the curriculum area and in the college's strategic planning as a whole is underdeveloped. Action plans created following evaluations focus insufficiently on improving the quality of provision.

Literacy, numeracy and communications (including ICT)

Overall provision in this area is **Unsatisfactory** (Grade 4).

Strengths

- good development of communication skills through ICT

- good access to ICT.

Weaknesses

- slow rates of achievement in literacy, numeracy and communications

- ineffective integration of literacy, numeracy and communication

- insufficient staff expertise

- underdeveloped assessment and monitoring of achievement

- inadequate management of the provision.

Scope of provision

39. The college offers discrete and integrated provision in literacy, numeracy and communication. The provision ranges from entry level 1 to entry level 3. All students undertake OCN entry-level units. Teaching is delivered in discrete half hour slots and through student programmes as part of an integrated approach. Students are provided with a minimum of two hours literacy and numeracy each week with an additional ½ hour for entry-level 1. Students may also take units related to literacy and numeracy as part of the skills for working life programme. All students take ICT and have the opportunity to take entry level units in word processing, understanding computers and desk top publishing accredited through OCN.

Achievement and standards

40. Achievement of national qualifications in literacy, numeracy and communication is slow. At the time of the inspection none of the students had achieved a full award in literacy or numeracy, although many would be capable of doing so. Students often take a full year to achieve a thirty hour unit. Where provision is integrated and students develop and apply skills through practical activities, the achievements are not pulled together to provide an overview of progress in developing literacy, numeracy and communication skills. For example, where students achieve units of accreditation in speaking and listening skills through a 'Skills for Working Life' programme, these are not co-ordinated with the aims for students in the discrete classes, and it is not possible to evaluate overall progress.

41. Attendance during the week of inspection was good.

Quality of education and training

42. The better aspects of teaching and learning are in those sections of the lessons where teachers encourage active learning and participation and provide opportunities for students to make choices and decisions and develop their skills. In ICT lessons students develop communication skills well and are willing to express ideas, opinions and ask for support in an appropriate manner. In one good ICT lesson students discussed their work openly and with a sense of pride. One student showed a display of his past work, pointing out how he used pictures taken from software programmes to show his interests.

43. In many lessons, literacy, numeracy and communications are not well integrated or adequately developed. The planning does not encourage the development of those skills in a coherent way. Although students may have objectives related to speaking and listening, for example, it is not always clear how these are to be developed in the lesson, or how they relate to work or to

involvement in the community. Opportunities to develop skills through naturally occurring events or activities are often not taken. Where planned or incidental learning does take place it is not sufficiently recorded or shared. Vocational staff record achievement at the end of lessons and activities on a weekly basis, but there is no consistent process by which information can be shared and pulled together. In unsatisfactory lessons the development of literacy and numeracy and communication skills for individuals is under-developed, opportunities for development are not taken, and the most able students are not sufficiently challenged.

44. A significant development since the previous inspection has been the improved provision of ICT equipment and facilities. All students are able to use ICT as part of their learning during the week, although not all teachers use it routinely. In lessons in ICT teachers have expertise in their subject areas and a sound understanding of the learning needs of the students. Students on an animal care course are encouraged to develop independent approaches to recording and presenting work. One female student extends her learning by bringing in research undertaken at home to enhance her college work, another male student demonstrated the power point presentation he had created to illustrate a project on the care of sheep. During ICT lessons there was effective use of suitable communication software to help students develop their skills. Technical support assistants were well used to help students.

45. The majority of teachers within the vocational and independent living skills curriculum do not have the experience or expertise to identify appropriate targets from the broad communication objectives selected by personal tutors. Training remains underdeveloped. Three teachers and five learning support assistants have gained level 2 qualifications to support the delivery of basic skills, and one senior teacher has a level three equivalent award.

46. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped, and do not provide sufficiently well-focused literacy and numeracy targets. The initial assessment indicates broad levels of ability, and does not accurately reflect students' specific learning needs. No dyslexia assessment is available. Previous experience and attainment are not taken sufficiently into account. The 'personal objectives' developed by personal tutors, are very broad, and recording and monitoring of progress are insufficiently detailed. Sometimes the recording relates to behavioural objectives and does not identify incremental progress. In annual progress reports, teachers tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative, often focusing on the difficulties that students have rather than any progress they have made. There are plans to introduce a college intranet to support the speedy recording of achievement against individual objectives, including those for literacy and numeracy.

47. The curriculum for the development of literacy and numeracy is in the early stages of its development across the college. In practical areas individual members of staff have sometimes developed a good understanding of how their subjects can be used to develop these skills, but the information about how to build on the skills that a student has already, and which specific skills need attention first is not available. Discrete ICT provision is effective, although few other teachers routinely use ICT to develop literacy and numeracy.

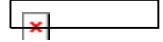
48. Students have effective individual personal support and enjoy their time at the college. However, the college does not provide any specialist speech and language or behaviour management support, although four students have autistic spectrum disorders, and many have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Leadership and management

49. The leadership and management of the integrated literacy, numeracy and communication curriculum is inadequate. Strategic planning is not effective. No member of staff has the time allocated and /or experience to develop the provision across all areas of the curriculum effectively. The introduction of the college literacy and numeracy strategy has not yet had any significant impact on students. Literacy and numeracy provision is viewed as an add-on by some staff rather than a fully integral part of the lesson. Analysis of data relating to progress and achievement is not centrally held, and all future planning is undertaken in isolation by separate areas. The self-assessment report did not identify the key weaknesses in this area. Members of staff have not had any recent training in

equality and diversity or in recent safeguarding regulatory requirements.

Independent living and leisure skills



Overall provision in this area is **Very Poor** (Grade 5).

Strengths

- no key strengths.

Weaknesses

- much poor teaching
- insufficient specialist knowledge and understanding of the diverse needs of students
- inadequate resources for practising independent living skills
- insufficiently rigorous recording of students' progress
- ineffective management of the curriculum.

Scope of provision

50. Independent living and leisure skills form an integral part of all of the students' programmes. The curriculum aims to promote students' awareness of themselves and other others by promoting self-esteem, confidence, assertiveness and creativity. Activities include using the local community, leisure activities such as swimming, music and dance, floristry, practical skills for everyday living and personal hygiene. Independent living skills are accredited through the local open college network.

Achievement and standards

51. The development of students' independent living and leisure skills is unsatisfactory. The independent living and leisure skills that each student has developed at their previous placement are not acknowledged or further developed. Students are proud of their achievements and take pleasure in showing artefacts made in ceramics and photographs of themselves taking part in a range of practical activities such as laying slabs outside a conservatory.

Quality of education and training

52. Half of the teaching observed was unsatisfactory, poor or very weak. In these classes teachers and learning support assistants have insufficient specialist knowledge and understanding of the diverse needs of students, and are not sufficiently aware of the impact of students learning difficulties and disabilities on the process of teaching and learning. There is overemphasis on whole group teaching. Formal identification of individual student learning goals in relation to independent living and leisure skills is inadequate. The sharing of targets with students in classes in relation to independent living and leisure skills is not routinely undertaken. Teaching is insufficiently challenging with inappropriate teaching and learning activities. Within independent living and leisure classes teachers do not routinely make connections to the wider curriculum offered at Landmarks, to students' current home lives or to their future lives as adults in the wider community. However staff know the students well and in the majority of lessons there is a good rapport with humour used by teachers and students to good effect.

53. In the more effective lessons teachers were ambitious for the students and time was taken to prepare students for the planned activity. Students were made aware of the tasks within the activity and individual learning targets were reinforced. In a ceramics lesson students were encouraged to link a butterfly design with making a box from ceramic tiles whilst considering their own personal goals, for example making choices or communicating in an appropriate manner.

54. Staff student ratios are sufficient and in a significant minority of lessons high. Workshops for activities linked to leisure such as woodwork, floristry and ceramics offer realistic studio/workshop environments. There are inadequate resources for the teaching of the practical aspects of independent living skills. Facilities for food preparation are limited to kettles and microwaves in the block of rooms used for parts of this programme. Insufficient routine use is made of a fully equipped kitchen at the sector college site. The local community is insufficiently used as a learning resource for road safety awareness, social sight training and general social interaction. When visiting a local café students were not encouraged to engage in appropriate social conversation with each other or with café staff. Teachers and learning support assistants have or are working towards a range of teaching related qualifications.

55. The main recording of the outcomes of learning consists of work covered rather than skills developed. This issue was identified in the previous inspection report. Systems to monitor and track learning achievements over short periods are limited. Small incremental steps of learning are not established. It is difficult to measure and track individual progress. The analysis of whole group activities, in the majority of lessons is inadequate. Where students have been encouraged to take part in self-assessment of their learning, comments are usually limited to likes and dislikes. The college acknowledges that internal verification for the accredited units has been insufficient this year due to staff absence.

56. The independent living skills curriculum does not meet the needs of a significant number of students as identified in their individual learner schedules. A student who was judged as being capable of making a mug of tea, using a microwave oven and using a toaster by his school, a year prior to attending Landmarks, was assessed by the college as requiring a programme which included making hot drinks and simple snacks using a toaster and microwave as part of his independent living skills programme. Much of the craft provision is satisfactory, and student benefit from the practical nature of the tasks.

57. Members of staff have regular contact with the students and know them well. However the informal pastoral system identified at the last inspection still exists. Teachers take a 'common sense' approach to behaviour management and are not supported by an informed professional behavioural input that ensures consistent effective behaviour management. Students with emotional and behavioural difficulties are not encouraged to develop strategies to manage their own behaviour, so that they can decrease their dependence on support staff. The student handbook is overcrowded with symbolic information that serves little purpose, since most students can at least read social sight signs. The handbook does not identify independent living skills as a key component of the Landmarks curriculum.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management of the independent living and leisure skills curriculum are unsatisfactory. There is no strategic or operational planning for the development of the curriculum area. Staff development is identified during appraisal, and staff value the training opportunities available to them. However, the staff development programme does not provide a clear strategic direction. For example there has been little training on how to encourage students to manage their own behaviour. As yet training has not had a positive impact upon improving 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 comprehensive and critical and did not identify key curriculum weaknesses.

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