

RE-INSPECTION MONITORING OF FARLEIGH FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection Monitoring

The overall provision in the curriculum area of literacy, numeracy, communication and independent living skills is now **satisfactory**.

Leadership and management are now **good**.

Background

Farleigh Further Education College was inspected in July 2003. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory or better in all areas inspected, except in literacy, numeracy communication and independent living skills, and leadership and management, which were found to be unsatisfactory.

Ofsted and the ALI have particular duties in relation to colleges where their inspection report indicates that individual curriculum and/or work-based learning (WBL) areas are unsatisfactory or very weak or where leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory leadership and management, or less than satisfactory provision in solely WBL, inspectors from Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the less than satisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that previously less than satisfactory areas of provision, or leadership and management, are now satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Where leadership and management are satisfactory, but there is curriculum provision that is less than satisfactory, there will be no monitoring visits. All less than satisfactory provision will be re-inspected, normally during one week, within two years of the original inspection.

If, after approximately 24 months, the college has not made sufficient progress to justify a judgement that the curriculum or WBL area or leadership and management are satisfactory, the original grade for the area that continues to be unsatisfactory will remain on the college's record until the next full inspection within the cycle. Ofsted will inform the local LSC that provision remains unsatisfactory and the reasons why.

Date of the Re-Inspection Monitoring Visits

In accordance with the above procedures, re-inspection monitoring visits of literacy, numeracy, communication and independent living skills, and leadership and management took place on 29-30 March 2004, 6-7 July 2004, 30 November to 1 December 2004, 9-10 February 2005, and 14-16 June 2005.

Literacy, numeracy, communication and independent living skills

In the July 2003 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- effective support for literacy and numeracy
- key skills well integrated into vocational programmes at the GFE college
- good development of social skills, communication skills and confidence
- effective initial assessment of independent living skills
- effective communication with parents and carers in all aspects of students' work
- good personal support for students.

Weaknesses

- poor initial assessment for literacy and numeracy
- lack of strategy for literacy and numeracy provision
- lack of qualified and experienced staff
- inadequate target setting
- poor monitoring of progress in independent living skills
- poor residential accommodation
- insufficient compliance with schedule and purchase orders for some students.

Following the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the above weaknesses and that overall provision in this area is now **satisfactory**.

Initial assessment in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. All students have been assessed for literacy and numeracy, with 45% of students being assessed at entry level. Over a third improved at least one level, with 30% reaching level 1. Since September 2004, there have been 22 students taking OCR entry level national tests in numeracy, and so far 40% have achieved certificates, with a third progressing onto level 1. There is an internal referral process, whereby staff are able to refer students for additional support to develop specific aspects of their programme which is in need of improvement.

Target setting identified within individual learning plans (ILPs) is at the early stages of development. The process of target setting is effective, with collaboration between staff ensuring that targets are being achieved and new targets set in a systematic way. However, there is insufficient emphasis given to identifying specific targets for personal, social and independent living skills development. Learning targets for these aspects of the student's programme are not sufficiently or effectively integrated within all curriculum activities.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All students assessed at entry level have discrete lessons to give additional support for literacy and numeracy. These drop-in lessons are effective in reducing the student's anxieties in following courses at GFE colleges. Independent living skills are practised by students within residences. Training within residences is successful in ensuring students learn a range of skills needed for them to move into more independent living accommodation during their time at the college or when moving on to the next stage in their lives.

Resources available to students are good. Networked IT facilities has improved the planning of lessons and the recording and monitoring of achievement. The resource centre has developed into a major focus for literacy and numeracy provision and the room within a local partner GFE college provides a useful base for students to access support. Residential accommodation has also improved since the last inspection and is now of a good standard.

Staff qualifications and experience are satisfactory. The skills for life and IT coordinators are effective in their roles and in developing literacy, numeracy and IT across the whole organisation. The use of self-assessment by staff to determine their IT competency enables the college to provide appropriate training, which is highly effective in raising standards. Additionally, the city and guilds 7302 qualification undertaken by learning support staff is particularly useful in improving skills and in the sharing of good practice. Support staff know the students well and are skillful at providing good support to students accessing courses within general FE.

There is an effective strategy for literacy and numeracy. The skills for life and IT coordinators have clear roles and responsibilities in developing and promoting literacy, numeracy and communication development across the whole organisation. Initial assessment, the devising of ILPs, and the monitoring of learners' progress are now established processes to which all staff contribute.

There is compliance with schedule and purchase orders (now individual learner schedules) for all students. There is a clear link between the needs of learners and the support offered. The college carefully monitors the individual learner schedules, showing decreasing support needs over time as learners develop independent living skills.

Leadership and management

Inspectors made the following judgment of leadership and management in the July 2003 inspection, which is recorded in Part A of the inspection report.

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The mission is well understood by the staff and partners, but there is no strategic plan for Farleigh Sixth Form College (FSFC). The majority of students achieve satisfactory standards on their courses in partner colleges. All teaching is done by staff in GFE colleges and is generally very good to satisfactory, however, a substantial amount of teaching is graded satisfactory. The residential accommodation is not satisfactory and does not meet the needs of the client group. The quality assurance arrangements are unsatisfactory, in particular the monitoring of the sub-contracted provision in partner colleges. There is insufficient observation of teaching. Staff development is not satisfactory. Financial management is satisfactory, but the monitoring of provision against the schedule and purchase orders is unsatisfactory, and the college does not provide value for money.

Following the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the weaknesses and that leadership and management are now **good**.

The new strategic plan for 2005-08 is comprehensive and challenging. The eleven strategic aims clearly state the financial, curriculum, information technology, health and safety, equality and diversity and quality improvement measures to take the college forward over the next three years. The strategic objectives underpinning the strategic aims are clearly stated. The working arrangements with the Priory healthcare group have been developed and improved. Senior managers appreciate the more rigorous strategic oversight and supervision of the college by the Priory group. The principal has informal, daily contact by telephone with the Executive Director of Education. Formal reporting to the Priory group is

by a detailed monthly Principal's report. An advisory body with representatives from the Priory group has been established and meets each term. The main focus of the advisory body is students' welfare and support. Representatives on the advisory board represent local community groups.

Quality assurance is good. The quality assurance file is a robust document that contains the annual management and quality outrun cycles as well as a quality policy that identifies responsibilities for ensuring quality at all levels of the organisation. Clear quality standards are listed under relevant headings. Senior managers are actively involved in the monthly review of quality initiatives, amending procedures, policies and practices in order to improve aspects of service delivery at the college. The newly developed appraisal cycle is due for completion by the end of June 2005. The outcomes from appraisals will form the basis of the 2005/06 training plan. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning have been developed. However, these are in the early stages of implementation and it is too soon to judge the impact of the new strategies on the quality of teaching and learning. The self-assessment report is rigorous, supported by a detailed action plan with judgements against the new common inspection framework.

The management information system (MIS) now in place effectively records elements of a student's programme in relation to the individual learner schedules (ILS). Students are actively involved in assessing their entitlements each half term. All staff have access to the MIS, and staff training is being delivered to support the development of basic computer skills. The MIS system is used to record key data to inform the analysis of student progress and achievements, as well as strategic and operational planning.

The college's response to equality and diversity legislation is very good. The college is fully compliant with legislation. The strategic plan identifies improved procedures for monitoring equality and diversity issues, including their promotion within curriculum activities and the implementation of relevant policies. Monitoring of equal opportunities targets is incorporated into the quality assurance cycle. The college has achieved all targets in relation to SENDA and completed all recommendations contained within the audit of provision. Equal opportunities issues are fully embedded into the day-to-day activities of the college. ILPs identify issues relating to individual students, and levels of staff awareness are continually challenged. Surveys are implemented which question staff about their confidence in challenging sexism or racism as they arise in their contact with students. Staff supervision records identify action points to address equal opportunities issues. There is a steering committee recently set up to help promote equality and diversity issues in extra curricular student activities.

Staff training and development are comprehensive, with staff having qualifications appropriate to their job role. Support staff are trained in accordance with legislation in relation to equality and diversity and child protection procedures. Staff have received training in literacy and numeracy skills development.

Curriculum management has improved and literacy and numeracy provision and independent living skills provision are now satisfactory. Resources are now good, and residential and teaching accommodation have improved significantly since the last inspection.

There will be no further monitoring visits to the college because there are no remaining unsatisfactory areas.