



South Tyneside College

Better
education
and care

Re-inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

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130555

Introduction

South Tyneside College was inspected in November 2005. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory or better in all areas inspected, except in leadership and management which was found to be less than satisfactory. Ofsted is responsible for re-inspecting all provision that is less than satisfactory within two years of the original inspection. If inadequate areas of learning or aspects of provision remain inadequate following re-inspection, inspectors will continue to monitor progress at annual assessment visits, but the areas will not be re-graded. They will be re-inspected during the full college inspection.

The less than satisfactory aspect was re-inspected on 22 and 23 November 2006. The outcome of the re-inspection is as follows.

| CIF aspect | Original grade | Re-inspection grade |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Leadership and management | 4 | 3 |

Context

Since the beginning of 2002 South Tyneside College has experienced severe financial difficulties. As a consequence of an investigation of unreliable data a £6.5 million budget deficit was identified and the college was placed in recovery by the Learning and Skills Council. The principal and nine governors resigned and 100 staff were made redundant. An interim senior management team concentrated on the financial problems at the exclusion of much routine and important work. This led in November 2005 to a judgment of grade 4 (inadequate) for leadership and management. A new principal was appointed just before the last inspection and there has been much change to senior and middle management in the last year.

Leadership and Management

The new senior management team have led the college well since the last inspection in November 2005. All of the weaknesses identified at that time are being addressed and a number of these aspects are now at least satisfactory. The governors and senior management team have introduced a new mission, strategic and operational plans that have been generally accepted by staff. There has been much work in trying to change the culture of the institution to a more open, consultative and co-operative venture. Management information systems have been strengthened considerably. Governance has improved. A new, experienced clerk has been appointed and governors are now provided with better information on the performance of the college.

Quality assurance has been overhauled well. This has resulted in the introduction of a comprehensive quality handbook. Arrangements for observing teaching and learning have been introduced and much work carried out to train observers and to moderate their judgements. Self assessment is a key component of the quality assurance process. Departmental teams are more involved in this process. Data is generally well used and judgements made using appropriate evidence. Arrangements for validating these reports are well-conceived. However, there is too much variation in the quality of course reviews and self-assessment reports between curriculum areas. The summative document does not contain sufficiently evaluative comment on the quality of teaching and learning and it is very difficult to match the judgements made against the grades awarded to each curriculum area.

A system of performance management has been introduced and all staff have had their first appraisal interview. Arrangements for monitoring progress against targets set in course and departmental action plans are under-developed.

The management of health and safety, which was identified as a serious weakness at the last inspection, has been much strengthened through a new committee which carries out more rigorous monitoring. Accommodation and learning resources have been upgraded taking into account financial constraints and the new ambitious accommodation strategy.

Appropriate action has been taken to ensure that the college complies with Race Relations (Amendment) 2000 legislation. Arrangements to meet the requirements of section 175 of the 2002 Education Act (safeguarding children) and vulnerable adults are robust.