

MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of college: Nash College

Date of visit: 1 April 2008

Context

Nash College is an independent specialist college providing residential and day further education for learners with profound and complex learning difficulties/ disabilities. The college is situated in Hayes on the outskirts of Bromley, south London. It is one of a number of schools and colleges run by the Shaftesbury Society. The college's mission statement is *'to provide the best possible education and training for young people who have exceptional learning needs brought about by physical, learning, communication and /or sensory disabilities'*. Nash College has 65 learners of which 64 are funded by the Learning and Skills Council. Forty one of the learners are residential and 24 attend on a daily basis. The staff profile includes a range of multi-disciplinary professionals i.e. speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, nurses, music and art therapists, relaxation and aroma therapists and a student counsellor, psychologist and psychology assistants, specialist epilepsy consultant in addition to Lecturers, learning and care support. The college consults medical, dietary, psychiatric, and other specialists as and when required.

Achievement and standards

What progress has been made with recognising and recording learners' achievements?	Reasonable Progress
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The college has a clear curriculum framework. This provides the staff with comprehensive criteria for baseline assessments. The baselines are detailed and include multi-disciplinary contributions. From the baselines, future recommendations are made. Personalised targets are then set for each learner and these are incorporated into their individual learning programme. The targets are worked on during teaching sessions as well as during the extended curriculum time. At present there is a target log where all members of staff are able to record captured achievements. To further improve their

recording process the college has recently created a new tracking sheet and personalised log file which will be piloted next term.

Each group tutor is responsible for analysing the achievements of their learners' targets. This information is put on the management information system and each term it is collated. The data is analysed to recognise the achievements of different groups such as gender, ethnicity and disability. However, the outcomes from this information have not been examined in detail or used to set improvement targets. The college has acknowledged this in their SAR.

What progress has the college made in promoting equality and diversity throughout the curriculum?	Significant Progress.
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All staff have received detailed training in equality and diversity and this area also forms part of the induction process for new staff. There is a dedicated workforce co-ordinator who is responsible for collating the staff training evaluations. The evaluation summary outcomes have been favourable and the training has been welcomed by staff.

The session plans have detailed information about the learners' needs and the strategies necessary to enable the learners to realise their potential. This includes personalised, specially adapted resources. The teaching and learning observation scheme now has a dedicated section on equality and diversity. For those learners on work placements, the college has a formalised procedure in place to ensure that work placement providers cater for learners' individual needs.

Where appropriate the college has made a concerted effort to ensure that the college literature is accessible to all learners, for example the college has used role play to ensure that the learners understand the race equality statement. They also use symbols and objects of reference to further ensure literature is accessible. The college actively promotes the learners voice in order that they have ownership over their learning programme. However, the college is aware of the need to further develop self-advocacy. This is a direct response to the Mental Capacity Act which came fully into force on 1 October 2007.

Within the new curriculum framework the college has included a development area called, 'Cultural and Spiritual'. Each learner receives a baseline in this

and the outcomes form the recommendations. Personalised targets are then set and worked on. The college also offers discrete cultural and spiritual taught sessions. The college acknowledges that more work is needed to develop further links with other spiritual groups.

Quality of provision

How robust is the college at quality assuring their tutorial system?	Reasonable progress.
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There is a formal tutorial process in place. There is a clear rationale behind what constitutes a good quality tutorial and how it should be conducted. Each curriculum leader is responsible for examining the tutorial report and ensuring that points are successfully actioned. However, the college acknowledges that this needs to be recorded more effectively. All the multi-professional team are involved in the success of the tutorial system. As part of the induction for new staff a training session is provided on how to deliver an effective tutorial. The new member of staff is paired with a more experienced colleague who models good practice.

What progress has the college made in developing the curriculum with clear progression routes?	Significant progress
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The college has a clear curriculum statement which is based on four principles. Underpinning these are curriculum drivers which are driven by *'improving quality of life and build on the strength of the individual'* There are five programme areas: functional skills, creative arts, independence and living, vocational and community access and residential. Within these programme areas skills are effectively worked on. The skills are taken from the following areas: sensory and cognitive, communication, literacy, numeracy, self advocacy, independence through the use of adaptive and specialist technology, expressing and managing emotions, care of self, cultural and spiritual, daily living skills, physical and practical skills, personal and community mobility and readiness for change. These skills are baselined and worked on in every programme area. This ensures that there is a coherent, collective approach to each learner's individual programme. The curriculum is comprehensive and responsive to match individual needs. Learners' progress is regularly assessed and the curriculum modified accordingly. Annually the college reviews its curriculum offer to each

individual. This ensures that the curriculum remains personalised and progressive.

Leadership and management

What progress has the college made in ensuring governors involvement with the monitoring of the college's systems and processes?	Reasonable progress
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The college has made reasonable progress in ensuring that the governors are involved in monitoring the college's systems and processes. All governors have received training to ensure that they fully understand the self-assessment process and the quality improvement cycle and plan. The college has set up three sub-committees with clear terms of reference: quality and development, student support and diversity and operation and policy committees. Each sub committee is responsible for the quality assurance of different aspects of college life. Every governor has been allocated a responsibility within these sub-committees based on experience, expertise and interest. Although these sub-committees have only recently been introduced and success is not yet measurable, early signs indicate that they will have a positive impact. All governors are involved in the self-assessment process. They scrutinise the self assessment report and ensure that its judgements are based on secure evidence.