

MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of college: Homefield College
Date of visit: 28 November 2007

Context

Homefield was established in 1987 and was privately owned until 2003. The organisation became a 'not-for-profit' limited company and from 2006 is now a registered charity with a board of trustees. It caters for learners aged 16-25 years old with complex learning disabilities and/or difficulties including communication difficulties and Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD). There are currently 32 learners funded by the Learning Skills Council (LSC); 20 residential and 12 day. Residential learners are accommodated on the college campus site and in the off campus house. The learners attend the college on two year or three year courses geared to independent living, and social personal and vocational skill development.

Achievement and standards

What progress has been made in the setting of targets for learners' achievements and the monitoring of progress in relation to literacy and numeracy?	Reasonable progress
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Literacy and numeracy skills are now developed more effectively through their successful integration within all curriculum activities. Learners benefit from learning these skills in realistic and meaningful ways, such as whilst out shopping for items or undertaking a vocational activity. Core targets are set for them to achieve which are specific and suitably contextualized. The monitoring of learners' achievements in relation to literacy and numeracy has improved. Spot checks are undertaken by managers on the quality of target setting and the recording of progress. The college recognise that this is an area for further development and there are plans to provide additional support and training for staff. The college has started to analyse differences in levels of achievement between learners according to their different disabilities and minority ethnic groups. There is also a useful analysis of how learners achieve within the different curriculum areas where literacy and

numeracy is embedded. This information has the potential to usefully inform self assessment to identify further improvements.

Quality of provision

Does the college now include sufficient specialist input at pre-admission stage?	Significant progress
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Specialist input into pre-entry assessment is now more systematically obtained. This is firmly embedded into the college's pre-admission procedures. Learners' pre-entry assessment reports contain useful information from the speech and language therapist to identify levels and type of support required, including specialist communication aids.

Has the college improved its evaluation of how well learners' behaviour has improved as a result of staff training and development?	Reasonable progress
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The college evaluates and analyses learners' behaviour closely and records incidents to establish trends, and behaviour plans are continuously updated. Records of incidents show a decline. Staff have developed a better understanding of the best approaches to use to defuse situations which may lead to inappropriate and/or aggressive behaviour. However, incident reports do not contain sufficient detail as to the possible triggers leading up to inappropriate behaviours or provide information about subsequent actions taken. The college recognise that this is an area for development.

Leadership and management

Does the college now evaluate the quality of key teaching and learning processes well enough?	Significant progress
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Quality assurance of key teaching and learning processes involved in individual learner progress is rigorous. Session observation formats, used to help guide new staff undertaking lesson observations, are clearly focused on the learning and progress being made by learners. The summary of the quality of teaching and learning to inform self assessment is very analytical and identifies areas for development successfully. Managers undertake an audit designed to ensure all appropriate documentation is in place in relation

to the individual learner programmes. A detailed quality assurance check is completed which evidences how well teaching and learning processes are being implemented. This is thorough and covers all aspects of individual learner programmes. Staff are given targeted individual support to improve their skills. The useful information provided by these quality checks is not yet sufficiently collated to inform self assessment.

What progress has the college made in ensuring equalities and safeguarding legislation, and good practice is being successfully implemented?	Reasonable progress
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The college has all relevant policies and procedures in place in relation to equalities and safeguarding legislation. They are regularly reviewed. All staff have received training and the college analyses achievements in relation to race, disability and gender effectively. Staff and learner recruitment processes are effectively monitored. The college has yet to develop action plans to ensure full compliance with legislation.