

Treloar College

Inspection report

Provider reference	132980
Published date	June 2008

Contents

Background information	3
Summary of grades awarded	5
Overall judgement	6
Key strengths and areas for improvement	7
Main findings	8

Background information

Inspection judgements

Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 – outstanding*
- *grade 2 – good*
- *grade 3 – satisfactory*
- *grade 4 – inadequate*

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body; and where appropriate the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits or quality monitoring inspection; and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:

- overall effectiveness of the organisation and its capacity to improve further
- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management.

Description of the provider

1. Treloar College is an independent specialist college of further education (FE) located in Alton, Hampshire and offers residential and day provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It specialises in young people aged 16-25 with physical difficulties, many of whom also have communication needs, sensory impairments or learning difficulties. It was established by the Treloar Trust in 1995. The Trust is a registered charity that owns the college and the Treloar School. The school and college are separate legal entities located about three miles apart.
2. The college currently provides for 169 LSC funded learners and two privately funded learners. Of these learners, 107 are male, 141 are white and 11 learners

study on a daily basis. All of the learners have a physical disability, with a wide range of additional disabilities, and 18 are working at pre-entry level. Most are wheelchair users. Learners with more complex needs constitute 58% of the cohort, compared with around 40% at the previous inspection.

3. The college provides vocational and academic courses from levels 1 to 3 and also offers entry and pre-entry level programmes. Treloar College offers level 3 courses in information and communication technology (ICT), media art and photography, and other A and AS level courses are offered through the partner sixth form college. At the time of inspection 26 learners were attending the partner college for all or part of their programme.
4. The college's statement of purpose is: 'Treloar College enables our disabled students and other learners to achieve their potential, develop self-reliance and take responsibility by providing excellent and challenging educational, therapeutic and residential environments'.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Satisfactory: Contributory Grade 3</i>

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

5. Achievement and standards are good. The college has maintained high pass rates on its accredited provision for the past three years and most learners achieve their targets. Destinations are satisfactory. The baseline is comprehensively developed but the college has not monitored learners' individual learning plans on non-accredited provision with sufficient rigour.
6. Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are well planned to meet the needs of learners and the support provided is good. Learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and to direct learning assistants where appropriate. Learning assistants are skilled at supporting learners to use their equipment.
7. The college's response to social and educational inclusion is good. The college's curriculum meets the needs of learners very well. Its breadth and range is outstanding, with a lively enrichment programme and opportunities to progress from pre-entry to level 3. The partnership with the local sixth form college is very effective in widening opportunities for learners to study in mainstream. However, the college has not adequately analysed its participation and achievement rates by different groups and provides too few opportunities for work experience.
8. Support and guidance are outstanding. The interventions provided by the multi-disciplinary therapy team are good, with rigorous assessments and good training for staff. The rehabilitation engineers are particularly effective in designing equipment to assist learners with specific tasks. Careers guidance has improved its scope significantly, with detailed transition plans and stronger links with Connexions.
9. Leadership and management are good. The college has a clear sense of direction in line with national priorities and an outstanding range of partnerships. The focus on improvement is good and the college involves learners in decision-making and listens to their views. The college does not use and analyse its data sufficiently to monitor its overall performance. It has not been sufficiently rigorous in responding to equalities and safeguarding requirements.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

10. The college's capacity to improve is good. It has maintained its high pass rates on accredited provision for the past three years and satisfactorily addressed two of the three key areas for improvement from the previous inspection. It has positioned itself very well in relation to LSC requirements and the local LSC has confidence in the college. The self-assessment report (SAR) is very effective in demonstrating how the college plans and monitors its improvement agenda, but

has not been sufficiently rigorous in identifying some areas for improvement and providing evidence to support its strengths. The use and analysis of data, including equalities data, to monitor performance, requires further development.

The effectiveness of the steps taken by the college to promote improvement since the last inspection

11. The college has taken good steps to improve the quality of its provision. It has adequately addressed two areas identified in the previous inspection report but one area, the provision of external work placements, remains an area for improvement. Pass rates continue to be high but the college has not developed rigorous mechanisms to indicate progress over time. It has improved the grade for the quality of provision, which is now outstanding, but the grades for achievement and standards and for leadership and management have dropped from outstanding to good.

Key strengths

- outstanding partnerships
- high pass rates on accredited qualifications
- good teaching
- outstanding support and guidance
- outstanding range of curriculum choices and enrichment opportunities
- very effective involvement of learners in the college community.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- the insufficient opportunity for external work experience
- the insufficient use and analysis of data to monitor performance
- the insufficient rigour in the implementation of safeguarding arrangements
- the late response to equality and diversity requirements.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

12. Achievement and standards are good. Aggregated pass rates on accredited programmes remain high. They have been consistently high for three years. Most learners take some form of externally accredited qualification. However, the college has not been using value added measures for GCSE and GCE A and AS levels. This is not identified in the SAR. The college has started to implement a distance travelled measure in the provision for literacy and numeracy and plans to introduce further measures for value added and distance travelled across its provision shortly.
13. Learners mainly achieved their individual learning plan (ILP) targets in 2006/07. The baseline is detailed and involves full reports from a range of multi-professionals such as speech and language therapists and physiotherapists, and where needed other professionals are involved, such as an educational psychologist. Learners are actively engaged in target setting across many aspects of college life. However, the progress and achievement of learners on non-accredited provision was not rigorously monitored in 2006/07. The college recognises this and has recently implemented an enhanced internal verification scheme.
14. Learners enjoy living at the college. They make good contributions to their community and develop skills that contribute to their social and economic well-being. They are encouraged to develop skills of advocacy and to direct their assistants. The college has increased the amount of employment related activity it includes in learners' programmes.
15. The destinations of learners are satisfactory. The percentage of leavers progressing to further education over the past three years has steadily increased to around a third. Four leavers progressed to higher education in 2007. The percentage of learners moving to supported living has increased by 5%, and the number returning home to live with parents/carers has increased by 12%. In 2007 no leavers progressed into full- or part-time employment. The SAR does not identify how far these destinations match the destination goals of learners.
16. No significant differences were found in the achievement of learners of black and minority heritage. An annual comparison of performance by gender has not been implemented. Retention and attendance rates are high, in line with other specialist colleges.

Quality of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

17. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Much teaching is good or better with examples of outstanding practice. Most lessons are well planned, address individual requirements and ensure a productive use of learners' time. Learners

are encouraged to be actively involved in the lessons and they know what is expected of them. Clear, personalised learning targets, which build on previous experiences, are in the main successfully used. There is a good working relationship between staff and learners. Mutual respect for each other features strongly. Areas for improvement include the need to improve the match of task requirements to individual need and more effective reinforcement or development of literacy skills.

18. Teaching areas are well resourced and learners' equipment is effectively evaluated by the rehabilitation engineering team, who make innovative modifications or create new equipment where appropriate. The use of assistive technology enhances learning. Teachers are suitably qualified and the college is on track to meet the 2010 targets. Learning assistants are well qualified and many have interests or qualifications that relate to the programmes of learning of the learner they assist. They are mostly given clear direction by teaching staff and provide very effective support.
19. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The curriculum provides clear progression routes from pre-entry level to level 3. The development of learners' skills of independence and learning underpins much of the academic work. The extensive range of enrichment activities includes karaoke evenings, boccia, trips to Tate Modern and residential visits to the Canary Islands. Learners are involved in programme planning. Recently one learner, who was named BBC South Disabled Sports Personality of the Year, represented Great Britain at the National Boccia Championships in Canada.
20. The college is increasingly responsive to external requirements relating to employment and is taking part in a project to increase employers' engagement and develop work related activities. Learners work closely with occupational therapists and are actively encouraged to assess the working environment. However, the college acknowledges that the current opportunities for external work experience are insufficient and is taking steps to increase the number.
21. Support and guidance are outstanding. The specialist therapy and medical support for learners is extensive, with very good training for staff who work with learners and regular updating in fundamentals, such as enabling eating and manual handling. Staff in the partner college are well supported by staff from Treloar College and meet the learners and learning assistants at the start of their programmes in order to clarify requirements. Multi-disciplinary pre-assessments are rigorous and progress is closely monitored by the therapy team. Particularly effective for developing independence of the learners is the rehabilitation engineering section, where individual adjustments are designed and produced. Learners are able to control their environment more effectively as new technology is introduced. They are well supported personally, are able to contribute to their annual reviews, learn to direct staff where appropriate and are encouraged to contribute to safety in the college.
22. Careers guidance staff take responsibility for transition planning and the involvement of Connexions has significantly increased. The assessments for

literacy and numeracy include diagnostic assessments which are used as the basis for supporting learners, and arrangements to support learners in the partner college are now in place.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Contributory grade:

Equality of opportunity

Satisfactory: Grade 3

23. Leadership and management are good. The senior management team provides a clear vision for the college which is supported by the staff. Treloar College has been particularly active in its engagement with national priorities and local initiatives. The range of partnerships, including that with the local sixth form college, is outstanding. The college has restructured so that more senior management time can be spent on responding to the external environment. The college has made good progress in its plans to diversify its provision and has developed partnerships with other FE and specialist colleges and schools, including general further education (GFE) colleges in the south east region and London. As a member of the Local East Hampshire Consortium, it is developing provision for specialised diplomas.
24. The quality improvement arrangements are very effective in monitoring the progress of the college improvement plans. Progress is reported to the quality improvement panel where individual members of staff are accountable for their reports. The management information system (MIS) has improved and data can now be captured more swiftly. However, the college has not used and analysed its data effectively in order to monitor the college's performance over time. Inspectors mostly agreed with the college that much teaching and learning is good or outstanding. The SAR is very effective in demonstrating how the college monitors its planned improvements, but it is less rigorous in monitoring the effectiveness of the college's performance and did not identify all of the areas for improvement.
25. The college's response to equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The college promotes aspects of diversity satisfactorily through the curriculum by identifying relevant topics. The promotion of disability equality is good. Learners are good advocates for disability and challenge stereotypes by their involvement in the local community. However, the college recognises that it has been slow in developing its response to recent equality and diversity legislation. Its joint equalities policy is about to go to governors for approval and the college is in the process of establishing an equality and diversity committee. The annual equality and diversity reports to the governors do not include any gender analysis and do not have specific targets for improvement. The race equality action plan of 2005 has identified actions that need to be taken but the majority of these have not been reported on and the action plan has not been annually updated. The proportion of learners of black and minority ethnic heritage has remained high at around 15% for the past three years, but the proportion of people of black and minority ethnic heritage, or with disabilities, is low on the governing body. Staff from minority ethnic backgrounds exceed that of the local

population but the numbers with a disability are low and both groups are poorly represented at senior levels.

26. Learners' involvement in the life of the college is good and they enjoy their time there. The college is implementing a learner involvement strategy and encourages learners to take an active part in the college community and to participate in forums and committees.
27. Learners are involved in planning activities such as the enrichment programme. They are confident that they will be listened to and know who to go to if they want to make a complaint. They complete learner surveys critically and evaluatively.
28. The college has not been sufficiently rigorous in its implementation of safeguarding requirements. Staff have received training and are vetted but governors have not received adequate training. The college has yet to resolve an on-going safety issue about the relative ease of access by potential intruders to residential accommodation. These issues are not identified in the SAR.
29. Governors' involvement in the life of the college is high and they visit different sections of the college to engage in discussions with staff and learners. Accommodation is satisfactory and improving. Staff are appropriately qualified but insufficient numbers of staff in the residences sometimes limit learners' capacity to complete activities in a timely manner. Financial management is good and the college provides good value for money.