

## MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of college: Fairfield Farm

Date of visit: 12 May 2009

### Context

Fairfield Farm College is an independent specialist college for young people with moderate learning disabilities, offering residential and day provision for learners aged 16–25 years. The college currently provides for 29 residential students and seven day students. All learners have a learning disability and some have associated medical needs and sensory impairments. The complexity of the needs of the learners at the college has increased in recent years. At the previous inspection in 2006 the college was graded satisfactory.

### Achievement and standards

How much progress has been made in developing management information systems (MIS) to monitor learners' progress?	Significant progress
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The college has made significant progress in developing systems to monitor learners' progress. Managers have introduced an MIS which is being adapted to meet their requirements. Staff are able to access the learner records on-line, where progress against targets and incidental learning can be recorded. The college is now better able to record learners' progress towards their targets and their achievements of units on vocational courses. The targets for this academic year have been monitored and action taken to make any necessary adjustments. The college focuses well on developing challenging and meaningful targets for learners. Transition arrangements, both in terms of initial recruitment and preparation for leaving, have significantly improved following the appointment of a full-time member of staff.

### Quality of provision

How much progress has been made by the support management team in developing learners' skills of independence?	Reasonable progress
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Reasonable progress has been made by the support management team in developing systems to enable learners to prepare more effectively for independence. Changes to the support staffing were implemented following a review after the last annual monitoring visit, and changes made to the residential accommodation. The purpose of these changes was to develop a more systematic approach to a

programme of support that enabled learners to develop greater skills of independence in preparation for their progression to the community. The managers have implemented changes in daily living in the houses, so that learners have a much greater role in running them and in managing the finances. All learners are being encouraged to assess for themselves how much support they need, and leavers have meetings that focus on the issues that concern them about moving on. Support staff are being funded to take a teaching course to help them with the planning of their support activities. Early indications are that this focus by the support teams on developing independence is working well.

## Leadership and management

How much progress has been made to the arrangements for the observation of teaching and learning?	Significant progress
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This was an area with insufficient progress at the last monitoring visit. The scheme for observing teaching and learning has now been completely revised and implemented. The college has a planned programme of observations. Schemes of work and lesson plans are now uploaded so that they can be accessed by managers and other members of staff. The completion of the observations is much stronger than the previous scheme, with areas for improvement identified, and action taken. The college has also introduced an observation scheme for the support staff, with the emphasis on developing community living skills and key areas such as health and safety. Since the previous monitoring visit the college has established schemes that will provide a good basis for year-on-year comparisons about teaching and learning.

How much progress has been made in the promotion of race equality through the curriculum?	Insufficient progress
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Although aspects of disability are well promoted and central to the college's work, the college has not made sufficient progress in promoting race equality. This was identified as an area that needed further improvement at the last monitoring visit. The college has made some progress, focusing on projects that have a cultural dimension. However, the teaching staff have not had adequate training on how to promote race equality through the taught curriculum. Aspects of race equality have some coverage through programmes such as citizenship, but the college does not have a systematic approach to promoting this area throughout its work.

Other findings during the visit
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Since the previous inspection the college has appointed a human resources manager and a quality manager. These appointments are enabling the college to operate more strategically, with a more secure basis for its management information. The college has already identified the type of performance indicators which would enable its self-assessment to be more exact in demonstrating improvements over time.

