

MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of college: Lufton College

Date of visit: 7 July 2009

Context

Lufton College is an independent specialist residential college. It currently has 111 learners of whom 5 are day learners. Most learners are over 19 years of age. All learners accessing the College have a learning difficulty and some learners have associated medical or sensory impairments. Some learners have more complex needs requiring a range of specialist interventions to enable them to participate, including counselling psychology, speech and language therapy, music therapy, occupational therapy and educational psychology. A range of vocational learning opportunities are available including, business and retail, hospitality and catering, agriculture, horticulture, conservation. The College's mission is to 'prepare learners for the next stage of their lives'. At the previous inspection capacity to improve and quality of provision were found satisfactory but leadership and management were found inadequate. At the reinspection the college had made insufficient progress in leadership and management.

Achievement and standards

How much progress has been made in developing systems to record learners' destinations in relation to their long term goals?	Reasonable progress
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At the last monitoring visit the college had made insufficient progress in developing its systems to record learners' progress and destinations. The base-line for learners is now more robust. It is completed after six weeks of activity-based assessment and embraces all aspects of a learner's experience at the college, including independent living skills. Tutors are better able to evaluate learners' progress towards long-term goals, as the curriculum is now divided into three pathways: independence, employability and community contribution. Learners have a personalised timetable, which is flexible and responsive. The focus on transition has been strengthened, with increased emphasis on work experience and the opportunity to develop skills in

practical contexts. Personalised learner meetings are held three times a year, to encourage learners to identify for themselves what they have achieved and where they want to go next. The information collated before the pre-course assessment has been improved for the 2009-2010 cohort of starters. The college is better able to plan for and record learners' destinations and staff have a much greater knowledge and greater involvement in learners' destinations. It is able to monitor the distance travelled by learners more effectively and staff have a greater understanding of the revised approach. Although it is too soon to evaluate the extent to which actual destinations reflect learners' long-term goals, the revised arrangements provide a firmer basis from which the college can evaluate the effectiveness of its provision in preparing learners for the next stage of their lives.

Quality of provision

How much progress has been made in improving the effectiveness of the observation of teaching and learning scheme?	Significant progress
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At the previous monitoring visit the arrangements for evaluating the quality of teaching did not provide managers with a realistic overview of the quality of teaching and learning. The pro-forma used to observe teaching and learning is now focused more strongly on what learners have learnt during the session. The observations now lead to action plans, which are sent to the line manager and the outcomes discussed with the member of staff who has been observed. Staff are not given a precise date for the observation, but know the time period within which it will take place. Staff find the process supportive and are able to discuss aspects of their teaching more openly. There is more sharing of good practice amongst staff. Teachers have visited other providers and the college is involved in peer reviews and external moderation. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has decreased, and the bar for higher grades has been raised significantly. The college recognises that the revised pro-forma is too detailed and it is to be revised for the forthcoming year.

Leadership and management

How much progress has been made in implementing the equality and diversity and policies?	Reasonable progress
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At the last monitoring visit the college policy was not being adequately implemented and was not adequately promoted through the curriculum. The college has made reasonable progress in addressing this. It has started to look at the whole learner journey from an equalities perspective, starting with applications, marketing and the application form. It has paid greater attention to new learners' possible cultural needs and requirements, when they start in September 09. Staff have had introductory training on equality and diversity in the curriculum, with an emphasis on respecting difference, and have started to include aspects of equality and diversity into lesson planning and schemes of work. However, more needs to be done to make sure this emphasis is explicit in all schemes of work.

Staff make use of a cultural calendar to stimulate discussion and activity, but it is not always clear what the purpose of this is in relation to a wider understanding of discrimination. More training is planned for staff. The learners' charter for learning is in an accessible format, and makes it clear that bullying will not be tolerated. Learners know who to go to if they feel bullied. The college now analyses its data by race and gender and noted the lower qualification success rates of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds in 07-08. Early indications are that these have improved for 08-09. The college does not monitor the effectiveness of actions identified in its single equality scheme, and does not report on this to the governing body. The number of staff who declare a disability is extremely low.