

# Beaumont College

## Inspection report

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Unique reference number: 131840

Name of lead inspector: Susan Preece HMI

Last day of inspection: 10 December 2009

Type of provider: Independent specialist college

Address: Slyne Road  
Lancaster  
LA2 6AP

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## Information about the provider

1. Beaumont College, which is run by the national charity Scope, was founded in 1977 and is located on the northern edge of the city of Lancaster. Beaumont offers both residential and non-residential programmes for young people with Cerebral Palsy and associated disabilities and/or learning difficulties. The college has 89 learners, all of whom are aged over 19. There are 48 male learners and 41 females. Eighty seven of the learners are funded by the Learning and Skills Council; one is funded by Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) Welsh Assembly Government and the other one by social services. Four learners are of minority ethnic heritage. Approximately one-third of the learners attend on a day basis. In recent years the college has experienced a growth in referrals for learners with more complex needs and associated challenging behaviour.
  
2. The main teaching and residential accommodation is located on one site. The curriculum framework is individualised for each learner; 31 are working on entry level 1 programmes and the remaining learners are working at pre-entry level. The college offers a range of external awards. Beaumont College aims 'to give its students confidence in living as independent young adults; help them to acquire the skills they need to determine their own lifestyles; meaningful preparation for the next phase of their lives as young adults; support in achieving an appropriate post-college destination; and provide services which are in line with Scope's vision and mission'.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	89 full-time learners

## Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Grade 1
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	1
Quality of provision	1
Leadership and management	1
Safeguarding	1
Equality and diversity	1

## Overall effectiveness

3. The college has outstanding success in raising learners' self-esteem and confidence and promoting self-advocacy. Learners make exceptional progress towards their original long-term goals and in a range of national awards. They develop highly effective communication and personal skills, and are enabled to participate actively as valuable members of the wider community. Excellent use of alternative and augmentative communication systems gives learners the ability to make choices and express their opinions. Target setting is rigorous and well informed by the outcomes of thorough transdisciplinary assessments. Teaching is outstanding. Tutors skilfully use a wide range of strategies to motivate, challenge and raise learners' aspirations. The highly innovative and inclusive curriculum has a strong focus on disability arts. Learners benefit from the excellent partnerships with local schools, colleges and national arts organisations. Arrangements for care, guidance and support are outstanding. Transition planning is highly effective. Inspirational and committed leadership from senior managers and governors has ensured that outstanding progress has been made since the last inspection. The promotion of safeguarding, equality and diversity permeates all activities in the college. The college should make sure that information on the performance of learner groups is analysed and evaluated more fully in the annual report to governors. While improvements have ensured that accommodation for learning is mostly very good, the college should implement plans to redevelop the campus as swiftly as possible. The college provides outstanding value for money.

## Main findings

- Learners make exceptional progress. Outcomes are outstanding and highly focused on meeting individual need. The college is very successful in raising the self-esteem and confidence of learners and promoting self-advocacy. Young people develop highly effective communication and personal skills and are enabled to participate actively as valuable members of the wider community.
- A rigorous analysis of destination data clearly demonstrates that learners make excellent progress in achieving their long-term goals and in a range of national awards from pre-entry level to level 2. Excellent use of alternative and augmentative communication systems gives learners the ability to make choices and express their opinions.
- The promotion of safeguarding is outstanding. The college has created a highly effective learning environment underpinned by rigorous safeguarding practices. A well-developed culture of informed risk taking and comprehensive, well-monitored risk assessments ensure that these vulnerable learners can participate in a range of practical and community-based activities.
- The promotion of individual learning is outstanding. Highly qualified teaching staff and specialist therapists work very well together. They use a highly effective transdisciplinary approach to minimise barriers to learning and set high standards of achievement. The promotion of communication, social interaction and independence in lessons is particularly effective.
- Teaching is of a very high standard. Teachers skilfully use a wide range of strategies to engage, challenge and raise learners' aspirations. Comprehensive lesson planning ensures an excellent focus on matching learners' individual needs. Staff promotion of learner interaction in lessons is exceptional.
- Assessment processes are outstanding. The transdisciplinary approach leads to rigorous, well-used initial and baseline assessment. Comprehensive person-centred plans ensure that all learner programmes are highly individualised. Individual learner goals and targets are very specific, challenging and clearly linked to long-term aims.
- The highly innovative and inclusive curriculum has a strong and relevant focus on disability arts. A wide range of practical activities motivates learners to succeed and to improve their Skills for Life. Excellent opportunities are created for learners to progress between levels of courses.
- Excellent partnerships with local schools, colleges and arts organisations benefit learners by providing increased opportunities for social interaction and participation in the community. These links also provide highly effective support and training for staff.
- Arrangements for care, guidance and support are outstanding. Individual behaviour support plans are highly effective and encourage learners to identify and address their own difficulties and take increased responsibility for themselves. Transition planning is highly effective.

- Inspirational and committed leadership from senior managers and governors has ensured that outstanding progress has been made since the last inspection. All of the areas for improvement identified then have been addressed; most are now strengths of the college.
- The college's arrangements to help learners to develop the skills and have the opportunity to express their choices and opinions are exceptional. For example, the student union and the 'Powerful Voice' project ensure that learners are able to influence the quality of college services and raise awareness of the needs of disabled young people in the wider community.
- The promotion of equality and diversity permeates all activities in the college. Meticulous analysis and evaluation of learners' performance identifies those at risk of underachieving and removes barriers to learning. Governors and managers have ensured that appropriate policies and procedures are in place. Annual reports to the board monitor staff employment well, but information on the performance of individual and groups of learners is more limited.
- The college provides outstanding value for money. Sound financial management and rigorous monitoring of resources and programmes for learners has secured excellent use of public funds. Wise investment has improved accommodation for learning; however, more needs to be done to redevelop the whole campus.

### What does Beaumont College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that management information on the performance of individual and different groups of learners is analysed and evaluated more fully in the annual report to governors on equality and diversity.
- Implement plans for the redevelopment of its campus as swiftly as possible to reflect the college's strategic ambition to become a centre of excellence.

## Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

### What learners like:

- performing arts activities such as music, dance, theatre and film making
- spending a lot of time in the community, such as Dukes Barn theatre
- opportunities to do work experience
- performing gigs in the pink wheelchair band
- taking part in environmental art activities
- 'Powerful Voices' blog
- really positive staff and the excellent support available if needed
- being treated like adults and made to feel they can do the things they never thought possible
- lots of freedom to do exercise and get fit
- making their own timetable after the first year
- the personal development sessions, such as working at a local hospital radio.

### What learners would like to see improved:

- more space to increase the number of residential learners
- more exhibition space to display work
- better computers with wireless connection at the Gatehouse residence
- more accessible audio-visual equipment in the common room
- wider range of food options on the college menu
- a bigger sized lift in the west wing of the college
- more electric doors to make access easier
- more hoist tracking so that learners can move about easier – but they are very aware that some ceilings are too low for this.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 1

4. Beaumont College has outstanding capacity to improve. It has a successful track record of meeting challenging targets. Excellent progress has been made in addressing all of the areas for improvement from the last inspection, most of which are now strengths. A clear strategic direction for the college to become a centre of excellence has been established. Leaders have implemented a management restructure that has increased levels of accountability. Arrangements for quality improvement and self-assessment are rigorous and support year-on-year improvements. Governors know the college very well and are committed to its success. Sound financial management has improved the position of the college. Support from Scope is ensuring that the college has the plans in place to secure its future.

### Outcomes for learners

Grade 1

5. Outcomes for learners are outstanding. Learners make exceptional progress during their time at college. High standards, focused on individual need, have been maintained over time and are rising. The framework for recognising and recording progress and achievement is very well applied and effectively used so that the college can have confidence in the processes and outcomes for a range of skills and achievements. Target setting is rigorous and well informed by the outcomes of thorough transdisciplinary assessments. Individual goals and targets are very specific, challenging and clearly linked to long-term aims. Recording of progress against targets is regular and highly effective in recognising achievement.
6. All learners are enabled to make choices that inform future living and learning situations; they gain significantly improved levels of independence during their time at college. Beaumont is very successful in raising the self-esteem and confidence of learners and promoting self-advocacy. Young people develop highly effective communication and personal skills and are enabled to participate actively as valuable members of the wider community. Excellent use of alternative and augmentative communication systems gives learners the ability to make choices and express their opinions. Learners with complex physical needs develop the skills to direct their enablers. Learners enjoy their work and are very proud of their achievements. Those with challenging behaviours make significant gains in managing and controlling their conduct and learn how to behave appropriately in a variety of settings and activities.
7. A rigorous analysis of destination data clearly demonstrates that learners make excellent progress in achieving their destination goals. The majority progress to further education or training. The college has had recent success in helping a small minority of leavers to access sheltered employment. Learners make very good progress in a range of national awards from pre-entry level to level 2. As a result of the college's evaluation of learner destination data, a need was

identified for the young people to be able to continue to pursue the interests and skills they had developed while attending college. The innovative Scope 'Inclusion North West' project now provides domiciliary care and support for people in their community.

8. Learners' work is celebrated very well through tutorials, high-quality displays of their work, arts festivals and theatre productions. Community engagement is excellent as identified by self-assessment. For example, several learners have exhibited their work at the Tate Art Gallery in Liverpool and this has significantly raised their self-esteem. The strong focus on promoting achievement through creative and performing arts increases learners' motivation, enjoyment and understanding of a healthy and safe lifestyle. Attendance is good at 98%.

## The quality of provision

Grade 1

9. The quality of provision is outstanding. Outstanding teaching, training and assessment support learning. Rigorous transdisciplinary assessment processes successfully inform the detailed person-centred learning plans. The college has an excellent approach to engaging individuals in their own learning. Learner targets and lesson goals are very clear and specific, and are used very well in lessons. Highly qualified teaching staff and specialist therapists work well together using an outstanding transdisciplinary approach to minimise barriers to learning and promote achievement. Highly effective intensive interaction engages those with more complex needs in developing their communication and making small, but highly relevant, steps in learning. The use of information, communication and learning technology (ICLT) and adaptive technology is particularly effective in reducing barriers to the curriculum. The promotion of communication and independence in lessons is particularly effective and is based on comprehensive assessments of learners' needs and abilities. Teachers provide very clear guidance for learning support workers and direct their work well. Most learning support is highly effective and appropriate. However, a minority of support workers do not adequately follow the directions provided for them.
10. Teaching is of a very high standard; teachers skilfully use a wide range of strategies to engage, challenge and raise learners' aspirations. A culture of valuing and celebrating diversity is evident in lesson planning. Staff maximise the opportunity to promote equality and diversity and the use of intensive interaction with less able learners is highly successful in developing their communication. Skills for Life, behaviour and therapy targets are embedded fully within lessons. Behaviour management is excellent. The college's rigorous approach to the observation of lessons leads to increasingly high standards in teaching and learning.
11. The curriculum is highly innovative and inclusive and has a strong and relevant focus on disability arts. This encourages high levels of individual participation and achievement in national awards. Learning in performing and creative arts subjects is undertaken through a range of highly innovative projects which are negotiated between the learner, creative partners and tutor according to



personal interests and abilities. To reinforce the learning and to increase confidence, learners have access to electronic and recorded versions of their work to remind them of what they have achieved. Skills for Life are fully integrated into lessons. A third of all learners are working towards accreditation in functional skills English, maths and/or information and communications technology (ICT). Excellent opportunities are created for learners to progress between levels of courses. Access to a range of national awards and work experience placements has significantly improved. As valuable support for transition, learners are encouraged to undertake courses at the local adult college. There is a highly effective complaints system; the college encourages the view that complaining is a right.

12. Excellent partnerships with local schools, colleges and arts organisations benefit learners by providing increased opportunities for social interaction and participation in the community. These partnerships also contribute to the highly effective support and training for staff. Learners are closely involved and make good contributions to their local community and beyond. For example, the fourth Beaumont Arts Festival showcased 36 new learner projects and attracted 350 visitors, demonstrating well-established links with arts and educational organisations in the North West. The festival has led to greater local community interest in the abilities of people with complex needs.
13. Learners are successfully encouraged to become involved in young people's disability organisations in the North West, such as the 'Powerful Voices' network. Learners designed their own website and blog and held several events across the North West to consult with other young people and link into their networks. As a result they influenced the local authority on transport issues, and gave feedback to the local authority on transition issues, highlighting what could be improved locally and nationally for young disabled people. Based on their own experiences, learners are advising the the local National Health Service on how to work with young people who have complex needs.
14. Arrangements for care, guidance and support are outstanding. Learners benefit from exceptionally high levels of support from the transdisciplinary team especially across the extended curriculum. Highly effective collaboration has led to the college receiving a range of awards for its support services and invitations to share best practice among other organisations. Individual behaviour support plans successfully encourage the learners to identify and address their own difficulties. Transition planning is highly effective; learner views were gathered and well used for a valuable transition workshop. 'Moving On' plans are developed and agreed from a very early stage in each learner's programme.

## Leadership and management

Grade 1

15. Leadership and management are outstanding. Outstanding leadership has established a clear strategic direction. The curriculum is reviewed regularly to meet local needs and respond to changing national priorities. A supportive culture of promoting high aspirations and expectations for staff and learners is

- successfully promoted. Managers and other staff set ambitious targets for learners and services and the college achieves the majority of its goals.
16. Inspirational leadership from senior managers has ensured that the college has made outstanding progress since the previous inspection. Comprehensive and very effective arrangements for self-assessment and quality improvement are embedded across the college. Rigorous arrangements for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and extensive opportunities for professional development, peer support and coaching have improved standards. Leaders have implemented a management restructure that has increased levels of accountability. Managers make particularly good use of the wide range of easily accessible management information to monitor the quality of the curriculum and to inform decision-making processes. Robust performance management, detailed audit and regular staff supervision ensure that actions in improvement plans are implemented and targets are met. The college benchmarks the quality of its provision through membership of a successful regional specialist college peer review group.
  17. Highly effective strategies ensure that learners develop the skills needed to be able to express their opinions about the services the college provides for them. For example, the student union provides them with a regular forum to hold managers to account. Governors and managers make considerable effort to consult with parents, carers and stakeholders to improve provision.
  18. Governors have an outstanding range of skills, local knowledge and experience that they use exceptionally well to set the direction for the college and to monitor performance. They are extremely committed to the future success of the college and share the aspirations for high standards promoted by staff. Governors are particularly well informed about the quality of the experience provided for learners and provide good challenge to senior managers. Links between the college's board and the parent charity, Scope, are clearly defined and effective in supporting and challenging senior managers. Nominated governors, in collaboration with senior managers, successfully ensure that legislative responsibilities for safeguarding, equalities, and health and safety are met.
  19. The college has outstanding safeguarding practices. Policies and procedures meet current guidelines and are regularly reviewed. Comprehensive and well-monitored risk-assessments of individual learners result in the provision of services that meet the needs of vulnerable learners. These arrangements are supported by established links with external agencies and thorough procedures for appointing, vetting and training staff. Safeguarding training for learners helps them to stay safe. This includes how to deal with bullying and harassment and internet safety. Where there are concerns, reporting mechanisms are robust and effective. Governors receive regular reports on safeguarding and health and safety. The college provides a safe and welcoming environment for learners, staff and visitors.

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20. Equality and inclusion are at the heart of all aspects of the college's operations. Managers meticulously analyse learners' performance to identify gaps in achievement and remove barriers to learning. Equality and diversity are promoted extremely well through the curriculum. Outstanding assessment of the individual needs of learners ensures that all are able to participate fully. For example, innovative use of walking harnesses and standing frames allows learners to participate in dance, performance and fine art lessons. Policies and procedures are up-to-date, impact assessments are carried out, and the college is developing a single equalities scheme. A new manager for equality and diversity has been appointed recently and the membership of the equalities groups has been strengthened to ensure that there is wider representation from college managers. Around a fifth of college staff have a disability, providing good role models for learners. The annual report to governors monitors staff employment issues well but does not contain sufficient information on the performance of individual and different groups of learners.
21. The college provides outstanding value for money. It works exceptionally well to secure substantial amounts of additional funding from donations and involvement in innovative projects that significantly enhance the resources for learners. Forensic monitoring of the programmes and costs of provision for individual learners ensures excellent use of public funds. Sound financial management and actions to improve staff deployment and procurement have improved the financial position of the college. The college, with support from Scope, has prioritised investment in college accommodation wisely to improve the learning environment. Plans are being produced to redevelop the entire campus to address structural problems which cause some learners difficulties and to ensure that accommodation meets the college's ambition to be a centre of excellence.

## Information about the inspection

22. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by the provider's Vice-Principal, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local Learning and Skills Council and/or other funding bodies, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
23. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the college. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF)**  
**Beaumont College**

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; 16-18 Learner responsive: FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; 19+ responsive: FE full- and part-time courses; Employer responsive: Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners					
Full-time learners	89			89	
Part-time learners					
Overall effectiveness	1			1	
Capacity to improve	1				
Outcomes for learners	1			1	
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	1				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	1				
How well do learners progress?	1				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	1				
How safe do learners feel?	1				
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	1				
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	1				
Quality of provision	1			1	
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	1				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	1				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	1				
Leadership and management	1			1	
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	1				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	1				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	1				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	1				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	1				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	1				

\*where applicable to the type of provision

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