

# Nash College

## Inspection report

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Unique reference number: 131924

Name of lead inspector: Diane Stacey HMI

Last day of inspection: 15 October 2009

Type of provider: Independent Specialist College

Address: Croydon Road  
Hayes  
Bromley  
BR2 7AG

Telephone number: 020 8315 4802

## Information about the provider

1. Nash College is an independent specialist college that currently provides further education, funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), to 63 learners aged 19 to 25, of whom 35 are residential and 28 attend daily. Of these, 36 are male and 21 are from minority ethnic groups. The college, situated in Hayes on the outskirts of the London Borough of Bromley, provides for learners with severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities and complex needs. The college is registered as a care home with nursing and is part of Livability, a large UK-based charity.
2. The provision at Nash College centres on its developmental curricular framework, which includes Skills for Life, within four programme areas: functional skills; personal and social development; vocational and community access; and the residential programme.
3. The college employs a multi-disciplinary staff team of education, care, nursing and therapists, including speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and psychological services.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	63 full-time learners

## Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	2

## Overall effectiveness

- The college's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The college has shown that it has satisfactory capacity to improve the outcomes for learners and the quality of provision. Its leadership and management are satisfactory, as are its procedures for ensuring that learners are safe. The college's promotion of equality and diversity is good. The college has still to fully address three areas for improvement found at the last inspection: the unsuitability of the college site, target setting, and the recording of learners' progress.

## Main findings

- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Unusually for this sector, around a third of the learners are from different racial and minority ethnic backgrounds. However, the college has been less successful in analysing its information about the performance of different groups of learners.
- Senior managers and governors provide a clear direction for the college, based on national priorities and the changing and increasingly complex needs of the learners.
- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Learners enjoy their time at college and make good progress in developing their communication skills. Systems to demonstrate how well learners have progressed overall and over time are not robust.

- Learners adequately gain the confidence to participate in work experience within the college but too few learners have opportunities to gain work-related skills with external employers.
- Learners feel safe and well cared for. They understand the security and safety arrangements around the college and within their residential units.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers are broadly skilled in communication techniques for the more able learners. The use of intensive interaction techniques is less effective with the learners with more complex needs. Teaching staff do not always strictly follow health and safety guidelines within the classroom.
- The way staff use technology in classrooms is satisfactory. There is some use of assistive technology, but access to information technology for use by individual learners is insufficient.
- The college offers a good range of relevant subjects. However, planning for individual provision is not sufficiently detailed. Learners are grouped by ability but little differentiation takes place in sessions. Enrichment activities are good in the evenings and at weekends, but insufficient to meet learners' needs during lunchtimes.
- The college works well with its wide-ranging partners. Learners benefit from additional input from specialists such as dieticians and continence specialists. Shared teaching and learning in performing arts with mainstream schools enhances learning.
- Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Multi-disciplinary programmes provide very effective individualised support for learners.
- The college has updated its procedures for the safeguarding of learners in line with government requirements, but some of the guidance details in the policy are not sufficiently clear and need amending.
- The college has improved the facilities in the college, responding to learner feedback, but the college site continues to be unsatisfactory for learners' increasingly complex needs. The governors and senior staff have worked with the LSC to find alternative accommodation but have not been successful, and because of this value for money is inadequate.

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

- Continue to make every effort to find an alternative to the current site that better meets learners' needs, particularly in promoting their independence.
- Revise safeguarding guidance for staff so that the procedures following possible abuse are absolutely clear.
- Monitor activities in the classroom to ensure teachers and support staff consistently follow health and safety guidelines.
- Work with staff to improve their skills to effectively use and practise appropriate intensive interaction with the most complex learners so that all learners have the opportunity to achieve their potential.

- Provide more communication aids and laptop computers to assist learners in developing their communication and independence skills.
- Provide further training for staff so that they understand how to plan and deliver individualised learning and improve their skills in negotiating and recording short and long-term targets for learners.
- Improve planning and delivery of lunchtime enrichment activities to support and stimulate learners to engage in the social and wider aspects of college life.
- Establish performance measures that can be used to demonstrate the progress of learners over time, on a comparative annual basis.
- Introduce more rigour into the collation and analysis of data about different groups of learners and staff, so that the college can identify and act upon any shortfalls in performance between different groups of learners.

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

##### What learners like:

- learning to be more independent
- the good support from the staff and feeling well looked after
- knowing who to speak to if there is a problem
- knowing the fire drill if there is a fire
- feeling very safe with the security arrangements around the campus
- the food
- the college being a good and fun place to learn.

##### What learners would like to see improved:

- more work experience
- more computers around the college
- more trips to the hydrotherapy pool
- the food at lunchtimes, as sometimes it's good, but at other times it's not
- having more 'time out' in some lessons
- opportunities to get out of wheelchairs more in some lessons.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement Grade 3

5. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory and learners continue to make good progress with communication skills. The multi-disciplinary assessments and therapeutic interventions, a key strength at the last inspection, have been developed still further. Self-assessment is used satisfactorily by managers and staff to identify some of the college's strengths and weaknesses. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate in its grading but does not provide sufficient evidence of the impact of activities described. The quality improvement plan is used well by the senior staff for implementing change. Governance arrangements are satisfactory and sub-committees are used effectively to monitor the college's performance. The college gathers and responds well to the views of learners and has recently developed a formal learner involvement strategy. However, target setting, the recording of learners' progress, and the unsuitability of the site remain areas for improvement from previous inspections.

### Outcomes for learners Grade 3

6. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory, with learners enjoying their time at college and making good progress in developing their communication skills. The tracking of learners' progress in relation to the achievement of individual targets is satisfactory. Improvements in their literacy and numeracy skills are not always clearly recorded. Termly and annual reviews record progress of learners in detail but do not include a clear summary of learners' overall progress. A recently revised individual learning plan aims to record termly targets and achievements, including any incidental learning.
7. Learners adequately gain the confidence to participate in work experience within the college setting but too few learners have opportunities to gain work-related skills with external employers. Destinations of learners are satisfactory. Of the 24 learners who left last year, 41% moved into supported or fully supported residential living provision while the rest returned home and undertook day activities of some kind, including attending day centre provision and adult education centres.
8. Learners feel safe and well cared for. They understand the security and safety arrangements around the college.

### The quality of provision Grade 3

9. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Initial and baseline assessments are adequately linked to individual learning plans and inform session planning. Course targets vary in quality and are sometimes not sufficiently challenging for learners. The detailed planning from pre-entry to baseline and core targets provides an adequate framework for individual learning. However, while

learners are grouped by similar ability, they are not given different tasks to meet their individual needs. Objects of reference are used satisfactorily to assist learning and aid communication for learners with the most complex needs. Good use is made of relevant teaching materials and staff raise awareness of equality and diversity in most sessions. Appropriate health and safety practices within practical teaching sessions were not always strictly adhered to. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to embed literacy and numeracy in learning sessions.

10. Learners enjoy their sessions and teachers are broadly skilled in using appropriate communication techniques for the more able learners. However, teaching and support staff have insufficient skills and a poor understanding of when and how to use intensive interaction techniques with learners who have the most complex needs. Morning tutorial sessions are not always effective in providing learners with a formal structure for the day and a means to evaluate learning.
11. Satisfactory use is made of technology in the classroom. One well-equipped computer suite and other classrooms containing computers are very accessible during formal teaching time, but learners have access to only a limited range of portable and assistive technology. The quality of specialist software is good for learners whose needs are more complex, but not so good for those who are more able.
12. The range of subjects is good and individual planning provides a robust framework for learners to achieve their potential relevant to their goals. Extended curriculum activities during evenings and weekends are satisfactory but lunchtime enrichment activities are underdeveloped.
13. The college has a well-coordinated plan for the work it does with its partners. A wide variety of collaborative partners include local schools, youth groups, community clubs, the NHS trust, the local authority, the Learning Disability Partnership Board, health service professionals and adult education providers. While there are satisfactory arrangements for work experience on the college site, the college needs to expand the use of its links with local employers to provide more opportunities for learners to gain external work experience.
14. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners receive high levels of care appropriate to their individual need. Multi-disciplinary therapies provide very effective individualised support for learners. Transition arrangements have improved and learners participate in a satisfactory programme of activities to help them to plan for their future.

## Leadership and management

Grade 3

15. The senior management team, mostly relatively new in post and led by the Principal, provide clear leadership. Strategic planning to implement the college's mission and values is thorough. Staff have responded appropriately to the national 'Learning for Living and Work' strategy and are preparing for changes

- in foundation learning. The introduction a year ago of a fundamentally different approach to teaching and learning has been challenging for staff, and is not yet consistently understood. Much is new, and not all has yet had time to have an impact on learners' progress.
16. Governance arrangements continue to develop, and are satisfactory. Sub-committees are used effectively to monitor the implementation of the quality implementation plan. A student representative regularly presents a paper from the students' union to the full governing body.
  17. The overall arrangements for safeguarding are satisfactory. Policies and procedures for young people and vulnerable adults have been updated in line with national requirements and the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are routinely updated. The college implements the requirements of the legislation relating to mental capacity and deprivation of liberty. However, the detail of the safeguarding policy needs further clarification in places to ensure that the procedures in the event of suspected abuse are absolutely clear and understood fully by all staff.
  18. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The rates of participation by learners from different races and minority ethnic backgrounds are unusually high at around a third. The proportion of staff from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than that of the local population. The college has worked hard to foster a culture which values difference. Within the college, some 26 different languages are spoken, and it has developed a policy that encourages the use of these languages in situations where they support learners. The college has made progress in appointing staff with disabilities. The college recognises that it has been slow in providing guidance for staff in relation to personal and sexual relationships, and a policy is currently being developed. The college implements its policies to prevent discrimination well, and is developing a single policy. It is not sufficiently rigorous in analysing its data in relation to the application, participation and outcomes for different groups of learners in order to identify any shortfalls in performance.
  19. The college's quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory and take account of the views of stakeholders. The self-assessment report, although broadly accurate in its grading, does not adequately identify the impact of actions taken. The quality improvement plan is a very effective tool for improvement, and is monitored on a termly basis. Senior staff use it well for implementing planned improvements, although many have yet to be fully implemented. The college regards the observation of teaching and learning as an important tool in its quality assurance. The quality of teaching and learning has not improved overall since the last inspection, but the process of observation is more rigorous and managers recognise that more training is needed for teachers to become consistently skilled in meeting their expectations.
  20. The college has only recently developed its formal learners' involvement strategy, but the involvement of learners in the life of the college has been



satisfactory. The college has a students' union and a student reports to the governing body. The staff are alert to indications from learners that the facilities need improvement, and respond to these effectively. The summer works programme was prioritised following discussions and feedback from learners.

21. Value for money is inadequate. The college has increased the number and range of staff specialisms in response to the increasingly complex needs of the learners. Staff have good access to mandatory and updating training, but managers recognise that more needs to be done in relation to the changing curriculum and key issues such as intensive interaction. Learners do not have sufficient access to communication aids and personal laptops to enable them to become independent. Despite significant work with the LSC, the college has not been able to relocate. The college continues to upgrade its facilities, such as accessible bathrooms, but the site is not suitable for learners with such complex needs and limits significantly the extent to which they can develop their skills of independence.

## Information about the inspection

22. Two 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 LSC 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 and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners had recently completed on behalf of the college. They also observed learning sessions. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

<p>Record of Main Findings (RMF)</p> <p>Nash College</p> <p>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</p>
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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	63			63	
Full-time learners					
Overall effectiveness	3			3	
Capacity to improve	3				
Outcomes for learners	3			3	
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3				
How well do learners progress?	3				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	3				
How safe do learners feel?	3				
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	3				
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	3				
Quality of provision	3			3	
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3				
Leadership and management	3			3	
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	3				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	4				

\*where applicable to the type of provision

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester, M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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