

# Farleigh Further Education College Frome

Focused monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Independent Specialist College

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## FOCUSED MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

### Context and focus of visit

Farleigh Further Education College Frome is an independent specialist residential college which caters for students with Asperger's Syndrome (AS). All students aim to live, study and work in mainstream situations when they leave. Most of the curricular needs of the students are met through partnerships with local general further education colleges. Training in skills of independence takes place in the residential settings. The college currently has 88 students, of whom 69 are male. At the last inspection in 2007 the college was judged to be good in all areas and has been found to be making reasonable progress in subsequent monitoring visits in 2008 and in 2009.

### Themes

#### Outcomes for students

How much progress has the college made in improving outcomes for students and using data more effectively?	Reasonable progress
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The college's analysis and collation of its achievement data was identified as an area for development at the last inspection. It has made reasonable progress since then. The staff have analysed the success rates by levels of study and by the type of provision, and now have a much clearer picture of these outcomes for students. The analysis of data shows that overall success rates in 2005/2006 were 73%, and by 2007/2008 had risen to 88%. Further analysis by the college shows that students on A-level and GCSE courses achieve less well than those on vocational courses, and that female students achieve significantly better than male students. The college has identified reasons for that gap and has taken steps to rectify the situation. The college plans to work with its partner further education colleges to use value-added measures for the current academic year.

The destinations data show that the great majority of students are actively engaged in further training and, increasingly, are finding employment. The college is planning to revise its management information system in order to capture the progress made by students in developing independence and communication skills that will be of benefit when they leave the college for mainstream settings. The college currently has evidence of these outcomes for individual students, but does not collect the data in a form that can identify trends.

#### Leadership and management

How much progress has been made in using self-assessment and action planning to bring about improvements?	Reasonable progress
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The college self-assessment report and its development plan identify clearly what needs to be done, and how actions will be approached and monitored. The college has made reasonable progress in most of the key areas it has identified. It has increased the number of external work placements available and is planning to develop more internal placements for those not ready for external placements. Partnerships with local colleges have matured and the arrangements for joint observations of teaching and learning have improved. The college is in the process of revising its criteria for the observation of teaching and learning, and is aware that more weighting needs to be given to what students have learnt, so that its overall judgements reflect more accurately the quality of the sessions. The local management agreements with partner colleges have been strengthened to clarify responsibilities. At the start of the academic year, the college acted swiftly to find an alternative partner when one partner college decided, at very short notice, to withdraw its science A-level courses. The college has taken steps to improve the implementation of its equality and diversity policy. The action plan covers all sections of the college life, as well as external activities such as work placements. Students are involved in equality and diversity activities, and the college has further plans for the training of staff so that they have a greater understanding of the policies and how they apply to their work. The college development plan has accurately identified that the staff need to continue to develop performance indicators that better reflect the effectiveness of the college in preparing students for the next stages of their lives.

### Safeguarding

What progress has been made in meeting safeguarding requirements?

Reasonable progress

The college's arrangements were found to be good at the last inspection and it has made reasonable progress in meeting the changing external requirements. Staff across the college have had recent training in child and adult protection procedures. Two members of the senior staff have recently had level 3 training, provided by the local safeguarding partnership board. Plans are well advanced for senior staff to be trained to level 2, and CRB checks are updated every three years. The central register is updated accordingly. The college has developed its training to include wider aspects of safeguarding, with revised anti-bullying policies. Procedures for incident reporting have been simplified. This has resulted in improved accuracy in reporting. The quality of risk assessments on students' care plans has improved. The induction programme for staff and students has been extended and includes a stronger focus on safety. Employers who provide work placements for students have been invited to the college for a meeting that includes coverage of the college's expectations in relation to equality and diversity, and safeguarding. The college has yet to ensure that its e-learning safeguards are being fully implemented. It has plans to train its staff in best practice in relation to the Mental Capacity Act (2005).

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