

Inspecting provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those with special educational needs post-16

with guidance on self-evaluation

October 2002

E-publication

HMI 996

© Crown copyright 2002

© **Crown copyright 2002**

Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

Telephone 020 7421 6800

Web site: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Document reference number: HMI 996

Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	4
<u>Common requirements</u>	9
<u>1. Standards and achievement</u>	10
<u>1.1 Evaluating standards and achievement</u>	10
<u>1.2 Analysis of learners' work</u>	12
<u>1.3 Communicating with learners</u>	17
<u>1.4 Lesson observation</u>	18
<u>2. Teaching and learning</u>	22
<u>2.1 Evaluating teaching and learning</u>	22
<u>2.2 Lesson observation</u>	23
<u>2.3 Other evidence on teaching and learning</u>	26
<u>3. Other factors affecting quality</u>	28
<u>4 Writing the report</u>	32

Introduction

This booklet aims to help inspectors and staff in colleges to evaluate standards and quality in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and for those in schools to help pupils with special educational needs (SEN) for provision post-16. It complements the *Handbook for Inspecting Secondary Schools* (1999), the supplement *Inspecting School Sixth Forms* (2001) and the *Handbook for Inspecting Colleges* (2001). It replaces the earlier guidance *Inspecting Subjects and Aspects 11–18* (1999).

This guidance focuses on issues specific to students with LDD and pupils with SEN. General guidance is in the *Handbooks*. Use both to get a complete picture of the inspection or evaluation process.

This booklet focuses on evaluating standards and achievement, teaching and learning, and other factors that affect what is achieved. It outlines how to use learners' work and question them, the specific points to look for in lessons and how to draw evaluations together to form a coherent view of the provision.

Examples are provided of evidence and evaluations from college and school sixth form inspections, with commentaries to give further explanation. These examples are included without any reference to context, and will not necessarily illustrate all of the features that inspectors will need to consider. The booklets in the series show different ways of recording and reporting evidence and findings; they do not prescribe or endorse any particular method or approach.

Inspectors and senior staff in schools and colleges may need to evaluate several subjects and refer to more than one booklet. It may be helpful to refer to the guidance booklet in this series for literacy and numeracy. You can download any of the subject guidance booklets from Ofsted's web site at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Our Inspection Helpline team, on 020 7421 6680 for schools and 020 7421 6703 for colleges, will respond to your questions. Alternatively, you can e-mail collegeinspection@ofsted.gov.uk or schoolinspection@ofsted.gov.uk.

Ofsted's remit for this sector is the inspection of education for students aged 16–19, other than work-based education. In schools, this is the sixth form provision. In colleges, the 16–19 age group will not be so clearly identifiable; classes are likely to include older learners and, in some cases, they will have a majority of older learners. Some learners may attend specialist colleges on either a day or a residential basis. Learners in residential colleges are most likely to be in similar age groups to colleges but will experience education and care provision across the extended curriculum. In practice, inspectors and college staff will evaluate the standards and quality in these classes regardless of the age of the learners.

This booklet concentrates on the most commonly found courses for students and pupils with LDD/SEN aged 16–19 years. However, the principles illustrated in this guidance can be applied more widely. We hope this publication is helpful to you.

Context of provision for students with LDD/SEN

Provision for learners with LDD/SEN may take the form of individual support in specific subject or college-based courses. Alternatively, a discrete programme will be designed to match the needs, interests and abilities of a group of learners. In some provision, for example, in specialist colleges, learners follow an individual programme of activities. All learners should be placed on appropriate courses following extensive pre-entry and initial assessment leading to the identification of individual learning goals upon which individual learning plans are based.

While learners may vary in the range and extent of their difficulty and/or disability, individually they will require personalised programmes that allow them to learn and make progress in realistic, adult learning environments with clear routes to another level of further education provision, training for employment or more independent living.

The various groups of learners with LDD/SEN have been defined in a series of reports.^{1 2 3 4} The groups include those with:

- general learning difficulties
- severe learning difficulties
- sensory impairment – hearing and visual
- communication disorders – autism and speech and language
- specific learning difficulties – dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia
- mental health issues
- medical disabilities – physical disabilities and epilepsy
- profound and multiple learning difficulties (sometimes known as complex difficulties) with or without challenging behaviour
- passivity due to fear, uncertainty, low self-esteem or lack of motivation.

¹ *Inclusive Learning: Report of the Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities Committee*, Professor John Tomlinson, Further Education Funding Council, 1996.

² *Freedom to Learn: Basic Skills for Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities*, DfEE, May 2000.

³ *A Fresh Start: Improving Literacy and Numeracy*, Sir Claus Moser, DfEE, 1999.

⁴ *Access for All – Guidance on Making the Adult Learning and Numeracy Core Curricula Accessible*, Learning Skills and Development Agency, March 2002.

Provision in schools

- Sixth forms with provision for learners with special educational needs (SEN) are required to meet individual need as outlined in the Education Act 1998 and the Code of Practice for learners with SEN.
- Pupils are described as learners with either statements of SEN or with special educational needs identified in the Code of Practice.
- Individual plans are described as individual education plans (IEPs).
- Provision for learners will be integrated into mainstream classes with additional support staff attached as necessary.
- For the learners with more complex needs, provision may be in maintained special schools, non-maintained special schools, independent special schools with approval by the Secretary of State for Education or independent special schools. Such provision may be day or residential or a combination of both. In the case of residential provision, additional inspection will be carried out by the Care Standards Commission.
- There is a requirement on schools to take note of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the associated Code of Practice for schools.

Provision in further education

- Colleges of further education, sixth form colleges and independent specialist colleges are required to make appropriate provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to meet individual need as outlined in the Learning and Skills Act 2000, and to provide individual programmes that promote inclusive learning and increased participation.
- Learners are described as learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Individual plans are described as individual learning plans (ILPs).
- Provision for learners may be in mainstream courses with additional support and in discrete LDD programmes to promote independent learning and living.
- Most learners will have their individual needs met in colleges of further education or in work-based learning provision. For learners with more complex needs, provision may be in independent specialist colleges or in local authority specialist colleges for specific disability groups. Such provision may be for day or residential learners, or a combination of both. In the case of residential provision, additional inspection may be carried out by the Care Standards Commission depending on the category and status of the residential provision under the Care Standards Act 2000.
- All providers are required to take note of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the associated Code of Practice for Colleges.

Throughout this booklet students and pupils are referred to as learners.

Evaluating provision for learners with LDD/SEN

This booklet contains examples of practice in a range of situations with learners from some of the groups identified above. All evaluation should be built on the following principles, and specific requirements for each individual can be measured through their application.

Within their individual programmes of activities, learners should experience:

- development of literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge which for some learners will be at pre-language level
- development of communication skills including the use of information and communications technology
- development of independent life skills in real, adult situations including health, leisure and fitness
- development of individual interests, skills and talents through courses at appropriate levels from pre-vocational taster courses to GCSE and GCE advanced-level courses

-
- development of personal and social skills including citizenship
 - situations to help them understand and manage their disability or learning difficulty.

Learners will require different amounts of these activities depending on their abilities and likely destinations after school or college.

The majority of learners can achieve in all aspects of their learning over time and with appropriate support. However, some will make small but significant steps in achievement. Evaluation of such progress is a complex task and is likely to need more than one method of gathering evidence. A composite approach is needed in which evaluation should take into account:

- the views of learners, their parents, carers and advocates
- detailed discussions with teachers, support workers and care staff
- the scrutiny of records including policy, course provision and individual assessments and care/learning plans
- the tracking of individual provision from contractual agreement to transition arrangements.

Common requirements

All inspectors share the responsibility for determining whether a school or college is effective for all its learners, whatever their educational needs or personal circumstances. As part of this responsibility, ensure that you have a good understanding of the key characteristics of the institution and its learners. Evaluate the achievement of different groups of learners and judge how effectively their needs and aspirations are met and any initiatives or courses aimed specifically at these groups of learners. Take account of recruitment patterns, retention rates and attendance patterns for programmes and courses for different groups of learners. Consider the individual goals and targets set for learners within different groups and the progress they make towards achieving them.

You should be aware of the responsibilities and duties of schools and colleges regarding equal opportunities, in particular those defined in the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. These Acts and related codes of practice underpin national policies on inclusion, on raising achievement and on the important role schools and colleges have in fostering better personal, community and race relations, and in addressing and preventing racism.⁵

As well as being thoroughly familiar with subject-specific requirements, be alert to the unique contribution that each subject makes to the wider educational development of learners. Assess how well the curriculum and teaching in discrete and supported provision for learners with LDD/SEN enables all learners to develop literacy and numeracy and key skills, and how successfully their programme contributes to personal, social, health and citizenship education, and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Judge how effectively the provision of individual programmes helps prepare learners aged 16–19 for adult life in a culturally and ethnically diverse society.

⁵ See annex *Issues for Inspection Arising from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson Report)* in *Evaluating Educational Inclusion*, Ofsted, 2000, p13.

1. Standards and achievement

1.1 Evaluating standards and achievement

From the previous inspection report, find out what you can about standards and achievement at that time. This will give you a point of comparison with the latest position, but do not forget that there is a trail of performance data, year by year. Analyse and interpret the performance data available for learners who have recently completed the course(s). Draw on the school's *Pre-Inspection Context and School Indicator* (PICS), the college's *Performance Report* and, in the case of independent specialist colleges, summaries of achievement, retention and destination data for student cohorts over three years.

Analyse the most recent results provided by the school or college and any value-added or distance-travelled information available. When numbers are small, exercise caution in making comparisons with national data or, for example, evaluating trends. For further guidance on interpreting performance data and analysing value added, refer to *Inspecting School Sixth Forms*, the *Handbook for Inspecting Colleges* and the *National Summary Data Report for Secondary Schools*.

Where you can, form a view about the standards achieved by different groups of learners. For example, there may be data that enable you to compare how male and female learners or different ethnic groups are doing, or how well 16–19-year-old learners achieve in relation to older learners.

Make full use of other information which has a bearing on standards and achievement, including success in completing courses, targets and their achievement, and other measures of success, including learners' progress compared with their baseline assessments.

You should interpret, in particular:

- trends in results
- comparisons with other subjects and courses
- distributions of grades, particularly the occurrence of high grades
- value-added information
- the relative performance of male and female learners
- the performance of minorities and different ethnic groups
- the performance of learners on discrete courses and those supported on mainstream courses
- trends in the popularity of courses

-
- drop-out or retention rates
 - learners' destinations, where data are available.

On the basis of the performance data and other pre-inspection evidence, form hypotheses about the standards achieved, whether they are as high as they should be and possible explanations. Follow up your hypotheses through observation and analysis of learners' work and communicating with them. Direct inspection evidence tells you about the standards at which the current learners are working and whether they are being sufficiently stretched to achieve as well as they should. If the current standards are at odds with what the performance data suggest, you must find out why and explain the differences carefully.

There are significant implications for the judging of achievement and attainment for this complex group of learners.

Meaning of achievement and attainment for learners with LDD/SEN

You will need to judge both the attainment and achievement of learners. In judging achievement, evidence should be collated to measure individual progress in lessons and over time. It is necessary to gather evidence from several sources to make judgements on achievement. Attainment will be judged against national standards and scales. National standards will cover the full ability range from pre-entry skill to advanced level.

The individuality and complexity of each learner's needs is of paramount consideration. These learners may be found in any class, at any level, in a school sixth form, a sixth form college, a general college of further education, a special school or a specialist college. Wherever they are taught, in whatever grouping, the principles of inspection and judgement of achievement and attainment remain the same. All judgements should be based on the requirement that individual needs should be met and that all learners should have the opportunity to achieve as much as they can.

To assess standards and achievements for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, there is a need to:

- be clear about the range and complexity of the needs of learners with difficulties and/or disabilities. Bear in mind that the range includes learners studying at all levels of the curriculum
- collect a range of evidence to assess the quality of initial assessments, ILPs and records of progress. Judgements rely heavily on evidence from records
- investigate the progress made by individual learners over at least a 12-month period and longer if possible
- confer with teaching staff to establish the prior attainment of learners

-
- be cautious about categorising groups of learners too rigidly. Remember that these learners are part of a continuum of LDD/SEN and many professionals will have their own ways of defining this group
 - remember each individual has strengths and some learners will demonstrate skills at different levels. It is necessary to judge how well teachers meet the challenges presented by learners and help them to achieve
 - discuss with teachers any lesson observations to evaluate the impact of intervention
 - be flexible where learners have regressive or degenerative conditions.

1.2 Analysis of learners' work

At the beginning of an inspection, it is important to make clear to the college or the school what work you will need to see. Ask to see work for the full range of attainment of the learners concerned. Records of their assessments will confirm whether the work selected is a representative sample.

Example 1: review of the annual report as a summary of the learners' achievements, together with the year's related targets and records, in a special school

Scrutiny of records for Maria who has severe learning difficulties and is in the Leavers Group

Records include:

- annual report
- yearly planning/reviews
- targets and key skills.

Use of records and evidence

- ◇ The staff's discussion is convincing. They know Maria very well and show they have chosen appropriate targets for her.
- ◇ The annual report is a summary document of the year's work and Maria's achievements, and is for her parents and advocates.
- ◇ The planning and recording document is for staff. It is a more detailed account of work to be covered, targets for Maria and evaluation of both.
- ◇ Comments in the planning and review document show that teaching is directly and productively influenced by these ongoing records.

Planning

- ◇ Comments show that staff are looking for, and recording, the minute detail in Maria's responses and using them as indicators of achievement.
- ◇ Lesson planning indicates that ongoing assessment and recording informs the next stage of the learner's individual programme.
- ◇ Staff discussion shows that other professionals are productively involved in setting Maria's targets.

Design

- ◇ Everything in the annual report derives from the planning and review booklet, which shows how the details make up the comprehensive account presented in the report.
- ◇ The staff discussion shows that daily recording sheets are used to underpin the comments in the planning and review document.
- ◇ A secure school system of planning, recording, summarising and re-planning is evident from the documents and staff discussion.
- ◇ The planning and review document is comprehensive and, for example, would allow a professional unfamiliar with Maria to work with her easily.
- ◇ The annual report has some levelling ('P' scales and some linked to the adult pre-entry curriculum) which helps build up a picture of changes over time.

Interpretation

- ◇ The annual report is accessible to parents as it combines a record of what Maria has done

during the year with an evaluation of how she has responded to it.

- ◇ *The annual report contains photographs as additional evidence, and for parents' enjoyment.*
- ◇ *The scoring against national standards, for example, 'P' scales or adult pre-entry curriculum gives consistency to Maria's assessment and adds to the validity of the picture.*
- ◇ *The planning and review document gives a comprehensive summary of the development of Maria's skills and is very useful to staff for further planning.*

Commentary

These records, together with the staff's account, are convincing. The staff's account of the development of Maria's skills is further backed up by both anecdotal and additional evidence, such as photographs. The records themselves show clearly how targets are set for Maria, based on developing her current skills, and how the various levels of recording used track changes over time. The annual summary report convincingly brings together Maria's achievement in the work covered with comprehensive evidence of her success. **This represents very good achievement.**

Example 2: the important link between a learner's needs, as expressed in his ILP, and how they are met in class/subject teaching in the sixth form college

Scrutiny of records for John who has a physical disability and receives personal care and other support while studying AS English in the college

Records include:

- *ILP*
- *three terms' individual plans and review documents*
- *advanced planning sheets*
- *daily recording sheets*
- *photographic evidence.*

Use of records and evidence

- ◇ *The teacher shows she understands the system and uses it consistently.*
- ◇ *The materials show that the records are updated regularly.*
- ◇ *The planning shows that teaching for John is based on both his personal needs and curricular objectives.*

Planning

- ◇ *There is a multidisciplinary approach to target-setting which ensures all of John's needs are addressed.*
- ◇ *The targets are well considered and decisions are made as to whether they should be continued, extended or replaced by new ones.*

Design

- ◇ *Planning and recording systems are well established.*
- ◇ *Planning and recording allows John's strengths to be built upon systematically and*

incrementally.

- ◇ *Targets are purposeful and useful to the learner.*
- ◇ *Advanced planning sheets show how John's personal needs are met through the teaching of a broad and balanced individual programme.*
- ◇ *Periodic reviews of John's targets are backed up by daily recording sheets.*

Interpretation

- ◇ *The structure and 'scoring' on the daily record sheets makes John's achievements immediately evident as sheets are compared with one another and attached to the ILP.*
- ◇ *The records illustrate the development of John's skills from needs to strengths, and this picture builds up consistently term by term.*

Commentary

The teacher's description of the system, and of John's needs and achievements, is convincing. She clearly knows him well and, in collaboration with other professionals, selects suitable targets for him. The college's planning system is well established. Plans show how this student's personal learning needs are met through a well-considered individual programme. Records of the development of John's skills are easily read and assimilated, and show that he makes good progress in the targets set for him. **This represents good achievement.**

Example 3: a plan to change a learner's behaviour, and the records kept to record this over time; discrete course in a general college of further education

Scrutiny of records for Michelle

Records include:

- *behaviour programme*
- *summary records relating to changes in behaviour*
- *daily behaviour recording sheet.*

Use of records and evidence

- ◇ *The teacher gives a clear picture of Michelle's difficulties, showing she knows her very well.*
- ◇ *Charts are used both to record changes over time and to identify other aspects of behaviour for improvement in due course.*
- ◇ *Charts are updated frequently and give clear information about changes that might need to be made to the behaviour programme.*

Planning

- ◇ *The teacher shows that she has prioritised certain behaviours for change, for Michelle's own sake and for others.*
- ◇ *The daily recording system allows all staff to contribute to Michelle's records.*
- ◇ *Changes are made to Michelle's behaviour programme as a result of interpretation of her summary records.*

- ◇ *The behaviour programme is well defined. The target behaviours and procedures for Michelle's management are very clearly laid down.*
- ◇ *The format of the summary records is exceptionally clear.*
- ◇ *The weekly summary sheets are underpinned by daily record sheets, from which the summaries are compiled.*

Interpretation

- ◇ *The weekly summary records are clearly understandable. Readers can see at a glance the rate of occurrence of Michelle's target behaviours on a weekly basis.*
- ◇ *Decrease in the incidence of the target behaviours is immediately evident. This represents excellent achievement in this particular aspect.*

Commentary

These records, together with the teacher's account, are convincing. The teacher's description of Michelle's improvement is backed up further by additional evidence, such as photographs. The records themselves show excellent improvement in the incidence of target behaviours, to the point of them being extinguished in the long-term. It takes a minimal amount of time to interpret the summary records, and they are unambiguous. Additional daily record sheets confirm how the teacher compiles the summary records and ensures that all staff are involved, and all incidents of the given behaviours are taken into account in the compilation of the summary records. **This represents excellent achievement in these aspects of Michelle's behaviour.**

Example 4: a teacher describes how staff have supported considerable change over time with Aktar, a student at a specialist residential college

Use of records and evidence

- ◇ *The teacher shows he has a clear understanding of Aktar's strengths and limitations, and has used this knowledge to bring about positive change.*
- ◇ *The teacher gives a clear account of the increasingly challenging aims for Aktar.*

Planning

- ◇ *Initial assessment tests were personalised for Aktar, indicating that finding out more about him as an individual was central to the college's purpose rather than just an 'exercise'.*
- ◇ *The aims for Aktar were well considered, built on his increasing skills and supported their steady development.*

Interpretation

- ◇ *The teacher gives a clear description of what Aktar could and could not do when he came to college. He provides a good resume of Aktar's current skills, which show significant improvement over the last two years. This represents very good achievement.*

Commentary

The teacher gives a fluent, detailed description, showing he knows Aktar very well. He is able to answer all questions with further details, which adds to the conviction of

his account of Aktar's skills when he first arrived in college. First hand, observed evidence of Aktar as he is now indicates that there has been much desirable change. **This represents very good achievement.**

1.3 Communicating with learners

Where appropriate, learners should be included in discussions. However, the dignity of non-verbal learners should be maintained in all communications. It may be necessary to use alternative forms of communication including:

- interpreters
- ICT
- augmentative aids.

Prompts for discussions with learners

When communicating with learners with LDD/SEN, the following key principles apply in all discussions.

- Check that discussion is appropriate with both the teacher and learner.
- Check that the learner does not have visual or hearing impairment. If there is sensory impairment, use signage or another effective method of communication.
- Always be guided by the teaching and support staff. An interpreter may be necessary.
- Be very clear with your questions and give focused attention and eye contact to the learner.
- Be ready to ask the same question in a number of different ways.
- The process may be much slower than your own usual communication process. Be patient and be guided by the pace of the learner.

These questions can be asked in groups or one-to-one discussions with carers/tutors present. There is no particular emphasis or order to the questions. Some questions you may choose to ask include:

- Why did you choose this particular course?
- Were you given an induction when you started?
- Do you attend regularly and arrive on time?
- How effective is the teaching on the course?
- Can you get additional help if you need it? If so, from where?

-
- ❑ What progress have you made while on this course? How do you know?
 - ❑ Does anyone monitor the quality of this course?
 - ❑ Have you ever been asked your opinion about the course/college/school?
 - ❑ What are your plans when you have finished this course?
 - ❑ What do you like about this course?
 - ❑ What do you think could be improved on this course?
 - ❑ What do you like about the college/school?
 - ❑ What could be improved in the college/school?

1.4 Lesson observation

Standards are judged through reviewing individual learner's attainments in the range of evidence collected, including lesson or session observations, that reflects the full range of provision for learners with LDD/SEN. Attainment can be measured against national standards for the range of subjects studied by learners. Additionally, specific achievement can be measured through a range of materials, including the:

- 'P' scales (pre-entry, national curriculum scales) for schools⁶
- pre-entry curriculum framework for adults⁷
- national standards for literacy and numeracy for adults^{8 9 10}
- national standards for pre-entry for adults (to be published).¹¹

⁶ *Supporting the Target Setting Process: Guidance for Effective Target Setting for Pupils with Special Educational Needs*, DfEE, March 2001.

⁷ *Adult Pre-Entry Curriculum Framework for Literacy and Numeracy*, Learning and Skills Development Agency, March 2002.

⁸ *Adult Literacy Core Curriculum Including Spoken Communication*, Basic Skills Agency, 2001.

⁹ *Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum*, Basic Skills Agency, 2001.

¹⁰ *National Standards for Literacy and Numeracy for Adults*, QCA, 2000.

¹¹ *National Standards for Pre-Entry Curriculum for Adults*, QCA, in progress.

Example 5: evidence from lesson observation and the analysis of files from 16–19-year-old learners with hearing impairments and associated learning difficulties. They are following an accredited programme in a college of further education.

Individual student files are well maintained and up to date. Responsibility for the upkeep of the files is undertaken by teachers and support workers. Reference to ILPs, discussions with learners, teaching and support staff together with the observation of individual learners in class makes it possible to put into context the work seen in students' files.

The files contain samples of students' worksheets, together with photographic evidence, witness statements of achievement completed by teachers, support workers and work placement supervisors. Symbols are used on learners' work to indicate achievement, but there is little evidence of written feedback on individual progress from teaching staff captured in the files.

The files are supplemented by students' individual diaries of activity which are completed in the last 15 minutes of each day by teachers and support workers. Some learners take these out of college to share with parents/carers who are also invited to make daily entries of how learners reinforce and extend their learning outside college.

Most learners are attaining well against the criteria laid out in their ILPs. However, not all learners are making effective progress against specific targets in their ILPs. Some plans do not fully capture the progress and achievement of individual learners.

[Attainment satisfactory (4)]

Commentary

The student files demonstrate in most cases good evidence of individual student achievement and attainment. A wide range of methods are used to capture student progress and some effort is made to extend the learning to other settings. However, this is not consistently applied to all learners. Observation of learners in class and reference to particular ILPs indicates that some learners are not being sufficiently challenged while the progress of others is not adequately reflected in the review of their plans. This reduces the overall level of attainment in this group to satisfactory.

Example 6: evidence from a drama lesson in the sixth form of a comprehensive school which has a unit for learners with profound and multiple learning difficulties

Context

This drama lesson is designed to support learners' personal development. The aims of the lesson are for learners to: (1) experience dramatic tension; (2) experience environments which give opportunities for controlled cause and effect; (3) take the lead; (4) experience non-directed opportunities for exploration and expression; (5) have opportunities to work on their own individual targets. The lesson takes place in the post-16 classroom and adjoining room. Two other adults are working in the main room, creating the visual effects and the music. The title of the lesson is 'Leaving the cave, into the light'.

Evidence

The teacher has a great sense of dramatic effect which enables him to set the scene for this lesson very well. His evocative use of voice primes the learners for what is to happen, for example, telling them the lights are going out, to listen to the night and, after he says he feels scared, to encourage them to think about and express their emotions.

The staff take the lead from the learners, supporting and extending their responses, demonstrating possible responses. The staff are well briefed and well organised, and used to working in situations such as this. The teacher maintains an overview of the whole session, directing others as appropriate.

The resources are excellent and combined to great effect. It is difficult to believe this is a classroom.

The learners show they feel the sense of dramatic tension; they vocalise when the night noises begin, and one says clearly that he does not want to leave the cave. The first student to go out from the cave is excited. He runs out and then the rest follow. The focus student, Kevin, is involved. He vocalises, shows excitement and pleasure and approaches his teacher for contact for the first time (as reported later). He looks very pleased with himself afterwards and appears to know how well he had done. Another student plays with the veils and waves his hand in a tight circle in a beam of light. This is full involvement.

The session is very slick. The learners explore the environment and express their emotions without any technical hitches to spoil the atmosphere. The session is ended before the learners become bored which leaves them with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Interview

The teacher is completely clear about the aims of the lesson and how he has structured it to achieve them. The written plan is evidence of this. He states the need for tight planning in a creative situation such as this to ensure that staff all know the part they have to play. His account of two of the learners' achievements is clear and detailed. It indicates that he knows them well, and that they have met some of their individual learning aims very well. The teacher checks his views of what happens during the lesson by discussing them with the other two adults assistants.

Other features of effective provision

Excellent use of resources; very good teamwork between staff; age-appropriate activity; good support and encouragement for the learners; effective planning.

[Attainment very good (2)]

Commentary

This unusual lesson was very effective in enabling learners to feel dramatic tension, make choices and feel a range of emotions. It was well planned and staff were well briefed. A meeting immediately after the lesson allowed each member of staff to discuss perceptions of what each student did and to correlate and note them on their records. Progress towards learners' individual aims is well tracked in this way. Staff know the learners very well and have close relationships with them. They support them to succeed without taking away their scope for exploration and other student-led aspects of the lesson. The teacher's account of the lesson's rationale and organisation, and the learners' achievements, is persuasive. The learners entered into the spirit of the lesson extremely well, some clearly expressing their feelings by words and actions. This is the start of 'role play' and is a very notable development for these learners.

Example 7: key skills session in a specialist college for learners with physical difficulties and some associated learning difficulties

This is a group of 16–18-year-old learners with profiles of good cognitive ability, with some specific language deficits which restrict achievement in their chosen courses. Several of the group have mild, delayed language development and several have been assessed as having dyslexia.

The session is highly structured and follows a predetermined format and lesson plan by the teacher. There is little evidence of individually differentiated activities for learners and very limited reference to targets set following baseline assessment of literacy skills.

The lesson is primarily a pre-set range of worksheet-based activities to be completed by learners at their own pace. Support staff work 1:1 or 1:2 with learners prompting, and in some cases interpreting, learners' responses without giving time for the processing of information.

ILPs lack specific targets and do not take account of the initial assessment or diagnosis. The tasks

are performed in isolation and have little reference or relevance to the learners' primary courses.

Learners work with good levels of concentration and complete the tasks. Over half move straight onto the subsequent sheet without marking by staff. A significant number of incorrect responses are ignored. Discussions with learners indicate that they believe they are making progress because of the volume of work completed. However, none can identify specific skills developed or new knowledge acquired. They are unaware of progress against criteria for key skills or the possibility of accreditation for literacy. Some learners are frustrated by the requirement to attend sessions, seeing little point in doing so.

[Attainment poor (6)]

Commentary

Attainment is poor in this lesson with learners showing very little understanding of the purpose of the lesson or course aims. The provision for specialist teaching and learning is unsatisfactory and does not meet the individual needs of learners. There are few signs of diagnostic assessment informing planning or effective literacy/language teaching. The teacher lacks specialist qualifications. There is no scheme of work. The worksheet approach is not appropriate and does not take account of the specific needs of learners with delayed language skills or dyslexia. There is no evidence of multisensory teaching or special materials to assist learning through ICT; enlarged text; use of amanuensis or augmentative or assistive aids for learning. The lesson is dull and uninspiring. The learners do not participate in assessment or self-evaluation. The learners' achievement and attainment are restricted by poor teaching and planning.

2. Teaching and learning

2.1 Evaluating teaching and learning

Interpret the *Handbook* criteria with specific reference to learners with LDD/SEN, and keep in mind the characteristics of effective teaching and learning in which:

- teaching and support staff are knowledgeable, competent and can demonstrate their expertise in their subject and in working with learners with LDD/SEN
- teaching is planned in a way that meets the needs identified in the ILP or IEP with:
 - use of multi-sensory approaches
 - use of relevant information and communication technology
 - consistency by all staff
 - a variety of teaching approaches
 - age-appropriate learning activities
 - opportunities for learners to make choices and develop independence skills
 - effective staff teamwork
 - a sense of humour
 - account taken of specific disabilities, for example, worksheets are not used for learners experiencing difficulty with text
 - a theoretical understanding used, where appropriate, to underpin practical work
- learning is supported for individuals where they are:
 - confident, self-aware and secure
 - motivated and inspired
 - productive
 - challenged and fully involved at levels commensurate with their abilities
 - enabled to develop new skills and acquire knowledge
 - enabled to increase their understanding of the subject and their own development
 - able to make choices and express their views and opinions
 - respected by staff who understand their culture and abilities.

-
- assessment of achievement in sessions and over time includes:
 - the use of recording tools to identify small but significant steps of progress based on detailed, rigorous and regular review of individual learning targets
 - appropriate reviews of session objectives through feedback both verbally and through marking
 - lesson outcomes being used to inform the next stage of learning
 - multidisciplinary intervention which is reviewed and discussed
 - sharing of information with other professionals, parents, advocates, carers and the learners through regular review and reporting
 - regular tutorial support to include the learners in the process of evaluation of progress
 - procedures to evaluate the impact of the intervention on individuals and to measure the success of the department or course.

Be alert to teaching which may have superficially positive features but which lacks the rigour, depth, insights and command of good specialist teaching.

Examples might be teaching in which:

- teachers plan interesting activities which keep learners busy, but do not use the activities to develop learners' knowledge, skills and understanding
- teachers plan sessions carefully, but the knowledge, skills and understanding being developed are not those most needed to help young people prepare for adult life
- teachers make lengthy and detailed records but they are in terms of tasks completed rather than new knowledge, skills and understanding developed by learners
- learners with physical disabilities, sensory difficulties and dyslexia on mainstream courses are provided with generous, well-organised individual support, but support workers do not help learners to develop the capacity to understand and manage their disabilities themselves.

2.2 Lesson observation

Observing lessons is essential for judging the quality of teaching and learning, but it will also give indications of standards and achievement. Visit a range of lessons from all of the provision for learners with LDD/SEN, including mainstream lessons where learners are receiving additional support.

Example 8: evidence from a 16–19-year-old Youth Award Scheme programme for learners with general learning difficulties in a college of further education

Communications through drama: ‘The lottery winner’

The teacher explains that members of the group are about to devise their own performance based around the theme of ‘winning the lottery’. The learners are asked to work in pairs for five minutes to share thoughts on what they would do with their lives if they won the lottery. When doing this they are asked to try and remember what their partner is saying. After the discussion, during which the teacher circulates between pairs to provide encouragement and listen to the emerging discussion, each pair of learners in turn is asked to relate to the whole group what their partner had said. The learners enjoy the challenge of recalling the ambitions of their partner with the teacher enthusiastically praising each of the contributions. The teacher concludes this section of the lesson by asking individuals to demonstrate to the rest of the group their immediate reactions on hearing the news of their win. They are asked to imagine who they were with, where they were when they heard the news, what they did and to demonstrate their emotions.

The teacher then asks the learners to work in groups of three or four to imagine that they are to organise a ‘lottery winners convention’. As a group they are expected to develop a slogan for the event and a unique greeting for the members of the lottery winners club. The teacher asks individual learners to give an example of a slogan of which they know and others to demonstrate a different type of greeting that they have used already with family, friends or strangers. The groups are then given 10 minutes to develop their ideas and suggestions before presenting to the whole class who are then asked to agree by consensus which proposals should be adopted for the convention.

As a conclusion to the session, the learners are asked to work in pairs again, but on this occasion to imagine that they are participants at the convention. They are asked to consider their relationship as a couple and to speak to the whole convention about how their lives have changed, for better or for worse, as a result of their win. Their presentation to the rest of the group is made under the spotlight, at the front of the darkened hall.

The learners are provided throughout the session with a range of opportunities to develop learning through the practical application of social skills, group work, consensual decision making, listening skills, improvisation, time management and a variety of contexts in which to communicate with others.

[Teaching and learning good (3)]

Commentary

Learning is good in this session because individual learners make rapid progress in the development of their personal and communication skills. These include groupwork skills and confidence in being able to articulate their own thoughts and ideas. This process is helped by skilful teaching that is well planned around clear aims and objectives linked to the learners’ ILPs. The teaching encourages active learning and participation in a range of well-structured activities which allow the learners to express their thoughts, explore their emotions, develop questions and extend their understanding. The learning, while enjoyable, is challenging and well paced. The teacher provides constant individual support and attention throughout the session.

The lesson could have been improved if the teacher had allowed time for learners to reflect on their progress and to formally record this before the lesson concluded.

Example 9: observation of creative arts lesson in a specialist college for learners with autism aged 16–19

Context: the small group of learners are developing creative skills through art work by creating imaginary backgrounds to enlarged photographs of themselves

The session has been well planned with the aims of the overall lesson and individual targets clearly displayed on the whiteboard before the lesson begins. The teacher then reinforces the aims verbally at the beginning of the session. The lesson plan includes specific targets for each student. The targets have been derived from the learners' ILPs. The teacher uses a range of materials to stimulate the imagination of the learners and clearly explains what he is doing. The lesson plan is clearly part of a sequence of lessons and longer-term curricular plans, with reference to criteria for accreditation at entry level 1.

The teacher skilfully questions learners who respond with interest and enthusiasm and can reflect back to the teacher appropriate observations about context, emotion and the relationship of the person in the scene to the imagined background. Effective debate ensures that learners support one another in their experimentation and design. Examples of learners' previous work are well presented on display boards showing a range of activities in several media. The learners maintain long-term concentration with behaviours which reflect a well-established work ethic.

By the end of the session all learners have selected and drawn in an imaginary background and moved to the next task, effectively assessing their own progress against objectives and completing tasks within set time criteria. There is good evidence of progress in portfolios illustrated by photographs and assignment work, with pertinent written commentary by the teacher. Peer evaluation of the session is excellent with very good recording of progress by teacher. Relationships between teacher and learners are excellent.

Discussion between the learners and the inspector indicate that they understand the concept of dimension and are able to locate the subject of a piece of artwork in relation to surroundings. They also share their enthusiasm for the subject, accurately and enthusiastically describing their own progress and their aspirations for accreditation.

[Teaching and learning excellent (1)]

Commentary

The teacher had prepared and delivered a very stimulating lesson which built on prior skills acquired by the learners. Evidence from records and learners' portfolios indicated very good progress over time with planned accreditation to assess attainment.

The working atmosphere was highly conducive to learning, with both teacher and learners having high aspirations. Discussions with both staff and learners confirmed judgements based on evidence collected from observation and records. The activity very effectively addressed specific goals for learners in autism by developing relationships and understanding of environment in which the learners live through practical activity and structured discussion, ending with well-focused self-evaluation.

Example 10: evidence from a class of 16–19-year-old learners in a special school for visual impairment following a GCSE English course

Context: the learners are studying a module in their GCSE course on poetry. They are starting work on a theme related to war. This lesson is the first part of a series of sessions reviewing a range of poems by various authors/poets

The lesson has been planned effectively to ensure that learners experience the poetry in a range of media to facilitate learning using a multisensory approach. The teacher and support staff have prepared the room before the session and additional materials are readily at hand to support individual learning. The lesson plan refers to individual learners and differentiated materials and activities are planned for each one.

There is clear reference to the scheme of work and the sequence of lessons for the module. The session opens with the group listening to the teacher reading a poem by Wilfred Owen followed by sound questioning by the teacher. Touching and feeling items of memorabilia from the Second World War give meaning to the discussion. Learners are interested in the equipment used and ask relevant questions. Some of them show an understanding of the emotions and moods of the soldiers described in the poem. Most are more concerned with the various uses and functions of the artefact than with the moods they evoke. For a time, most of the learners lose track of the purpose of the lesson. The subsequent discussion is in danger of going on for too long and being too remote from the lessons' objectives. However, the teacher tactfully steers it back on course. The teacher then directs learners to individual tasks related to the poem to support learners in their understanding of the experiences shared by soldiers. Several learners then begin to think about the emotional responses of humans to such conditions.

The learners are able verbally to express and record the activities set and to review their individual progress at the end of the session through the use of ICT, braille and tape recorders. All learners require prompts and direction to start tasks and they can work unaided with occasional prompts. Homework is set to revisit and reinforce activities taught in the lesson. Reviews of documents (IEPs, learners' files, teacher's marking file) indicate that learners make steady progress, with regular review of learning and revisiting topics. Attainment is at GCSE grades d–f.

[Teaching good (3), learning satisfactory (4)]

Commentary

The teacher has introduced the topic effectively and has stimulated interest in the group through use of appropriate multisensory materials. Good preparation and differentiated activities have promoted access to independent learning for learners. Materials are well chosen to augment and assist individual learning.

The focus of group discussion was diverted by some members of the group who, for a time, seemed more interested in the uses of the historic artefacts than in the feelings their use may have evoked in the soldiers. It took skilful leadership by the teacher to restore focus. Nevertheless, this digression by some of the learners reduced the focus of their work temporarily. Hence, learning was judged to be only satisfactory while teaching is good.

2.3 Other evidence on teaching and learning

Lesson observation is usually the most important source of evidence on the quality of teaching and learning, but the analysis of work and discussions with learners can also yield valuable information. This is particularly important when the work includes a coursework component undertaken over time or when a student on a mainstream course is receiving additional specialist support. Under these circumstances, the observation of individual lessons may give a very partial picture of the learners' learning experiences and of the support provided by teachers.

The work analysis will give you a good feel for the overall rate of progress and, therefore, the pace of the teaching and learning, and effectiveness of specialist support. It will show the range and depth of the work that the learners are required to

do. For example, discussions with learners may give you a sense of their motivation and the range of their experiences. You can ask questions to show whether they understand clearly how well they are doing and what they must do to improve.

3. Other factors affecting quality

You should report other factors only in so far as they affect the standards and achievement of the learners and the quality of teaching and learning. Note and evaluate any significant features of the curriculum, leadership, management, staffing, accommodation or resources.

Teaching and learning are affected by access and resources, for example:

- limited access to subject teaching areas and equipment by non-ambulant learners
- unacceptable temperature in classrooms, either too hot or too cold
- unsatisfactory venues where rooms are too small for the number of learners
- floor coverings that create excessive noise and echoing which can disturb learners with sensory impairment
- poor control of lighting/window coverings
- poorly designed and badly printed learning materials which are difficult for learners with dyslexia to read
- areas where students' work can be displayed.

In residential specialist provision learning should be assessed across the whole curriculum. You will need to determine how this is affected by:

- the quality of accommodation and resources
- the range of programme activity which helps to prepare young people for adult life
- access to preparation and sharing of quality food and refreshment
- access to and participation in the local community
- the quality of guidance from a range of professionals to promote:
 - independent living
 - personal development
 - future transition including employability and further education
- individualised care/living plans that are part of a co-ordinated response to need across the provision

-
- the provision of therapy and personal care, including counselling, taking into account equality, diversity and relevant health and safety legislation.

Staff development and performance should be reviewed to take account of needs that may arise with individual learners or the provision as a whole, to include:

- staff qualifications for specialist disability groups
- regular supervision of care workers
- regular appraisal for teaching and support staff
- the provision of specialist training and updating related to research and specific disabilities.

Resources should be audited, reviewed and updated to give learners access to:

- recent technological devices to assist and augment learning
- the use of age-appropriate books and materials
- ICT
- work experience with or without support.

You will need to evaluate how well managers establish productive links with relevant agencies and other interested parties to promote social and educational inclusion. There might be links to:

- feeder providers and schools
- social services and the Care Standards Commission
- health services – psychology, psychiatry, physiotherapy, speech and language and occupational therapy
- Connexions/careers services
- local employers
- voluntary organisations and self-advocacy groups.

Assessments

You will need to determine the extent to which assessment for learners with LDD/SEN is undertaken by trained teachers, therapists and specialists. You will also need to evaluate how far assessment helps to:

- identify patterns of difficulty, strengths and weaknesses

-
- ensure appropriate access for all individuals, building on prior attainment and experience
 - enable the learners to understand themselves
 - access special provision or arrangements including exemptions in examinations
 - provide recommendations for support.

Criteria for all assessment should include the extent to which:

- learners understand the process and agree to the assessment
- materials and methodology are suitable for adults
- assessments involve the learner as a full partner in the process
- assessments are private and confidential.

Preliminary assessment/screening/initial assessment should:

- include an interview which takes account of prior experience and achievement
- include discussions, questionnaires, visits with parents, advocates and staff from previous placement
- be part of further in-depth assessment
- be followed up by an agreed action plan
- include an analysis of individual learning styles.

Full diagnostic assessment should:

- be clear and relevant to learners' individual and course targets
- use relevant materials and up-to-date methodology
- assess for all learners, spelling, writing, reading, numeracy and then include specific tests for identified disability for example:
 - short-term memory deficit
 - visual impairment
 - hearing impairment
 - visual processing
 - motor control
 - communication difficulties

-
- specific language difficulties
 - provide a profile of strengths and weaknesses
 - identify starting points for new learning.

A full report should include:

- feedback to the learner that is accessible and individual
- a description of the outcome of the assessments
- conclusions about the individual and their difficulties
- a statement of the learners' long-term goals
- recommendations about:
 - teaching strategies
 - specialist support
 - cross-college support
 - access to ICT
 - special arrangements, for example, examination exemption
 - referral to specialists, for example, speech and language therapists
- with the learners' permission, share the information with all teachers working with the learner.

4 Writing the report

The following are two examples of subject sections from inspection reports, the first from a college of further education and the second from a specialist residential college. (They do not necessarily reflect the judgements in any or all of the examples given elsewhere in this booklet.) The summative judgements in these reports use, for schools, the seven-point scale: **excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor** – and, for colleges, the five-point scale: **outstanding; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory very weak**. The summative judgements **excellent/very good** used in school reports correspond to **outstanding** in colleges; **poor/very poor** used in schools correspond to **very weak** in colleges.

Example 1: report on provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in a general college of further education

Overall the provision in this area is **outstanding (grade 1)**.

Strengths

- *well-planned and very effective teaching*
- *imaginative entry-level provision in vocational areas*
- *excellent real work learning programmes*
- *excellent resources*
- *good management and co-ordination of provision.*

Weaknesses

- *inconsistent approach to target-setting and individual learning plans.*

Scope of provision

- ◇ *The college offers a range of full-time and part-time programmes for school leavers and young adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. The programmes offered are designed to provide an appropriate learning experience that is matched to the identified needs of the learner. Provision for learners with severe and moderate learning difficulties focuses on the acquisition of independent learning skills that will enable them to progress to programmes with a more vocational focus. An 'individual vocational programme' caters for more able learners aged 16–19 who have left school with few or no qualifications and who frequently make their presence felt through their challenging behaviour. This programme initially focuses on personal development, basic skills and confidence building. Learners are placed onto vocational programmes across the college for part of the week, as determined by their individual learning goals and programme. The school also supports full-time entry-level provision provided by the schools of construction, hospitality and leisure, performance arts and creative arts.*

Achievement and standards

- ◇ *Achievements within the school are good. The achievement of learning is measured, recorded and recognised using a series of internal and external accreditation. Targets for achievement are set for learners, for the programmes and for the school. A system for measuring value added has been developed and is used effectively. It indicates that most learners add considerably to their knowledge and achievement while at the college. Targets for individuals are challenging and learners are aware of the goals they must seek to achieve. The attendance of the learners, at 80%, is well above the national average of 66% for similar provision in other colleges.*
- ◇ *The standards of work achieved by most learners are consistently high. In real work situations,*

such as the access to horticulture and team enterprise programmes, learners are prepared for effective participation in the workplace and the skills learnt often exceed assessment objectives.

Quality of education and training

- ◇ Most teaching is consistently very good and some is excellent. Some 75% of the lessons observed by inspectors were awarded grades 1 and 2 and none were graded less than satisfactory. Teachers are enthusiastic and learners are well motivated. Teaching is exceptionally well planned to ensure that the majority of sessions offer a range of activities which have an appropriate degree of challenge. Individual learners' needs are accommodated within lessons and there is skilful class leadership to ensure that all learners participate, respond and progress. In effective lessons, learners understand why they are being asked to do a task, how well they are doing and how they can improve. Learning support workers are used effectively to oversee and support the progress of individual learners. In a small number of sessions, some of the learners are insufficiently challenged and adopt passive roles. There is insufficient use of IT by learners and teachers in lessons.
- ◇ Resources for teaching are very good. A modern independent living area enables learners to practise essential life skills in a realistic environment. Facilities for the team enterprise and horticulture programmes provide a real work production environment. All full-time programmes have dedicated base rooms which are well equipped and provide learners with a sense of ownership and place within the college. Space within some of the base rooms is inadequate for some practical activity. There is good access to IT facilities within base rooms and there is a separate computer room. Learners on entry-level programmes in vocational schools also have access to good and relevant facilities. Staff hold appropriate qualifications and many have developed considerable experience. Staff development is promoted and staff regularly update their skills and knowledge.
- ◇ An effective tutorial system is used to monitor and support learners' progress. Initial assessment often starts while the student is attending college on a school-link programme. Initial assessment is used to inform the individual learning programme and to identify the most appropriate programme. On joining the college as a full-time student, initial assessment continues through an extended induction. Assessment continues throughout the period of the learners' studies. However, there are some inconsistencies across the school over the process of recording learners' progress. Student self-assessment and peer assessment are also used to establish individual learning goals. Existing vocational entry programmes are operated jointly by staff from the school who provide the tutorial support to learners and vocational staff who provide appropriate work-skill training. These programmes are highly effective in developing the skills of learners.
- ◇ Curriculum design and content provide a sound framework for student development and contain aims and objectives that are realistic and achievable. There is an appropriate balance between preparing learners to be more independent and providing work preparation skills. Learners enjoy their college experience and grow in confidence during their time there. They place a high value on the levels of support they receive and respond positively to the challenges and expectations placed upon them. Most have the opportunity to attend residential activities, away from the college. Activities are planned to enable them to apply and consolidate the skills which they have learnt in a different context. There is also a European exchange programme with the Netherlands for students with severe learning difficulties.

Leadership and management

The provision is well managed. The desire to help learners to develop into adults, with a sense of responsibility and an awareness of what they can do, underpins all developments within the school. There is a clear sense of direction and the commitment to continuously improve provision. Managers and staff regularly review their performance and seek to develop better teaching and better outcomes for learners. Self-assessment is thorough and identified the strengths noted by inspectors. Entry-level provision in vocational areas is being developed as the first phase of a planned strategy to reduce the present curriculum offer and provide greater opportunity for learners with learning difficulty and disability within the wider college curriculum.

Example 2: a curriculum area report for an independent specialist college for learners with physical disabilities and some learning difficulties.

Literacy, numeracy and key skills

Overall provision in this area is satisfactory (grade 3).

Strengths

- good teaching
- good use of learning resources, including ICT
- good student achievement of learning targets.

Weaknesses

- some inappropriate staff training or qualifications
- insufficient co-ordination of literacy, numeracy and key skills across the curriculum
- limited literacy and numeracy teaching for some learners.

Scope of provision

- ◇ *The college provides a range of literacy and numeracy workshops. There are currently 55 learners attending weekly sessions. Learners on the entry-level programmes have regular literacy and numeracy sessions. Timetables are negotiated to support individual learning requirements. Key skills are included as part of the curriculum for learners on vocational programmes.*

Achievement and standards

- ◇ *Learners attend regularly and are punctual. Retention rates are good, with only a few learners withdrawing from provision early. Learners work towards individual learning targets. The majority of learners make good progress and effectively develop their personal skills. They increase their self-confidence and are increasingly able to work independently. The college is currently developing a database to record and measure the progress learners make against their individual learning targets. In 2000/01, seven learners achieved A to G grades and two achieved grade C in GCSE English. Unsatisfactory access to literacy and numeracy restricts achievements for some learners.*

Quality of education and training

- ◇ *All teaching is satisfactory and above; 75% is good or better. In the most effective sessions, planning includes the preparation of individual learning activities that relate closely to learners' individual literacy and numeracy targets. The new adult literacy and numeracy core curricula are effectively used in planning. Teachers appropriately use a wide range of learning methods to develop learners' literacy, numeracy and key skills. They take account of the individual preferred learning styles and are based on initial baseline assessment. Teaching and planning for key skills is good and appropriately develops skills of problem solving, analysis and observation, as well as literacy and numeracy. Access to key skills for ICT is good.*
- ◇ *Good use is made of ICT in literacy, numeracy and key skills sessions. Computers are available in most classrooms. Some teaching sessions take place in the learning resource centre where the extensive range of computers, relevant software and Internet access support learners in their studies. In literacy and numeracy, workshop learners enjoy using software packages to develop their reading and spelling skills. Effective use is also made of specialist equipment including large computer monitors and mouse stabilising devices. However, the computers and printer in the literacy and numeracy workshop are sometimes unreliable and cause frustration for staff and learners.*
- ◇ *Some staff, including the literacy, numeracy and key skills co-ordinators, are appropriately*

qualified and experienced. However, other staff do not have any additional specialist qualifications. In response to this identified shortfall, the college has organised training for several members of staff.

- ◇ Resources are generally good. However, there are some instances when classrooms are too small to allow staff and learners, including those who use wheelchairs, to move around comfortably. Some lessons take place in rooms that are not ideally suited to the purpose. For example, a numeracy session, which did not involve the use of computers, was taking place in a computer suite. The college does not yet have a central resource base or library, but plans to develop the open learning centre to include a research facility. In some instances, learners are unable to select their own books and resources and have them supplied by teachers. This is unsatisfactory.*
- ◇ Learners are motivated, enjoy the lessons and take pleasure in their success. Access to workshops for literacy and numeracy is unsatisfactory. They are oversubscribed with access limited to two hours per week. In addition, timetabling arrangements are inflexible and learners sometimes have to miss other lessons to attend workshops. Class sizes are generally low and allow time for staff to give individual coaching and tuition. In addition, facilitators provide some high-quality learning support, enabling learners to maintain their concentration and make the maximum use of their time in class.*

Leadership and management

- ◇ Literacy and numeracy workshops are effectively managed with appropriate action planning by the co-ordinator, with support and guidance from senior managers. Literacy and numeracy provision on entry programmes is also well co-ordinated. The new co-ordinator for key skills effectively manages the large group of non-specialist staff who support the delivery of key skills in vocational areas. Good practice in literacy, numeracy and key skills is not well communicated across teams.*