

## RE-INSPECTION OF CITY OF SUNDERLAND COLLEGE

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### Outcome of Re-Inspection

The overall provision in mathematics is now **satisfactory**, and in health and social care work-based learning (WBL) it is now **satisfactory**.

### Background

City of Sunderland College was inspected in May 2002. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory or better in all areas inspected, except in Mathematics, Construction, and Health and Social Care work-based learning which were found to be unsatisfactory.

Ofsted and the ALI have particular duties in relation to colleges where their inspection report indicates that individual curriculum and/or work-based learning (WBL) areas are unsatisfactory or very weak or that leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory provision in any curriculum or WBL area, or less than satisfactory leadership and management, Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the unsatisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that the curriculum or WBL areas, or leadership and management are satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Where leadership and management are satisfactory, all unsatisfactory provision will be re-inspected normally during one week.

If, after approximately 24 months, the college has not made sufficient progress to justify a judgement that the curriculum or WBL area or leadership and management are satisfactory, the original grade for the area that continues to be unsatisfactory will remain on the college's record until the next full inspection within the cycle. Ofsted will inform the local LSC that provision remains unsatisfactory and the reasons why.

Following monitoring inspections, in the spring term of 2003, inspectors judged that progress had been made in addressing the weaknesses in construction and that the overall provision in that area was judged satisfactory.

### Date of the Re-Inspection

In accordance with the above procedures, monitoring visits of mathematics, construction and health and social care work-based learning took place on 5 and 6 December 2002 and on 7 and 8 April 2003. The re-inspection of mathematics and of health and social care work-based learning (WBL) took place on 24-28 May 2004.

## **Mathematics**

In the May 2002 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

### **Strengths**

- Good use of resources centres
- Good support.

### **Weaknesses**

- Low pass rates on GCE A-level and GCSE courses
- Low attendance and retention rates on GCSE mathematics courses
- Low added value scores in GCE AS and A-level mathematics
- Some dull and uninspiring teaching
- Inappropriate teaching methods.

Retention rates are high in GCE AS and A-level mathematics. The retention rate in GCSE mathematics has improved and is now similar to the national average. The pass rates for GCE A-level and GCSE mathematics have improved, but are still below the national average. In January 2004, the pass rate in the AS modular examination improved significantly. Students also have the opportunity to gain a numeracy certificate, and the pass rate for this qualification is high. The standard of students' work is satisfactory. Punctuality in the lessons observed was good and the attendance rate, during a time of revision and examinations, was 63%.

Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, teachers give clear presentations and make good use of question and answer techniques. Students work effectively in groups and share ideas with other students. In less effective lessons, students give correct but superficial answers to questions so that others cannot learn from these answers. Teachers are sometimes unable to identify the extent of students' understanding or the reason for errors.

There are well-equipped learning centres which students use to practice what they learn in lessons. They make good use of a virtual learning environment which contains teacher's notes, assignments and model answers. Students value the help they receive from more able students who run a weekly

homework club. Some classrooms lack sufficient teaching aids, wall displays and computers. Teachers share good practice with each other and local school teachers, with whom they are developing productive partnerships.

### **Health and Social Care Work-based Learning**

In the May 2002 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

#### **Strengths**

- Effective support for students
- Much good teaching
- High pass rates on many courses
- Wide range of courses
- Good progression to other FE courses, HE and employment
- Well-managed, work-based learning programmes in care.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Low retention rates on some courses
- Poor assessment practice on the early years NVQ courses
- Weak course management of the early years NVQ course
- Insufficient accreditation of prior learning

- Poor assessment planning on full-time courses

In 2003, retention on the NVQ level 3 care course was high, but the pass rate was low. In the current year, 2004, retention is high on the NVQ care courses and satisfactory on the NVQ early years course. Most students are making at least satisfactory progress towards their qualifications and on the NVQ early years course, 30% of the cohort who are due to complete this year have already attained their qualification. Approximately 40% of students demonstrate attainment levels beyond that which would be expected at this stage of their courses. Standards of students' work are generally satisfactory and sometimes good or very good.

The standard of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but better on care courses than the early years course. Good checking and reinforcement of learning, and thorough feedback on observations in the better sessions, were balanced by missed opportunities to confirm or extend understanding in other sessions. Arrangements for the accreditation of prior learning are now satisfactory. Assessment practice on the NVQ early years course has improved and is now of a satisfactory standard. All assessors are appropriately qualified and their support for students is good. Care continues to maintain satisfactory or better standards of assessment and internal verification. The response and involvement of employers are positive.

The college was slow in taking effective action to address weaknesses in the management of early years provision. This year the new team has implemented strategies and established systems to effectively record and monitor students' progress, and encourage faster progress towards achievement of their qualifications. Self-assessment at course level is weak with poor understanding of performance data.

There will be no further re-inspection of the college because there are no remaining unsatisfactory/very weak areas.