



Redcar and Cleveland College

Better
education
and care

Re-inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published [add date]	Provider reference [add number]
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Introduction

Redcar and Cleveland College was inspected in October 2004. 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 visual and performing arts which was found to be less than satisfactory. Ofsted is responsible for re-inspecting all provision that is less than satisfactory within two years of the original inspection. If inadequate areas of learning or aspects of provision remain inadequate following re-inspection, inspectors will continue to monitor progress at annual assessment visits, but the areas will not be re-graded. They will be re-inspected during the full college inspection.

The less than satisfactory area was re-inspected on the 18 and 19 October 2006. The outcome of the re-inspection is as follows.

Curriculum area	Original grade	Re-inspection grade
Visual and Performing Arts	4	3

The college has made satisfactory progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and the provision is now satisfactory.

Context

There are 53 learners attending classes in Entry level, BTEC First Diploma and BTEC National Diploma art and design courses.

Strengths

- High key skills pass rates
- High attendance rates at lessons
- Good standards of observational drawing
- Effective rationalisation of the provision

Areas for improvement

- Decline in AVCE art and design success rate in 2006
- Inconsistency in the quality of lesson planning
- Insufficient progress in improving the quality of assessment

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Pass rates in key skills are high. Attendance rates are high, in 2005/06 they were 91% and during the re-inspection the rate was 100%. In 2006, the retention and success rates on the BTEC First Diploma in art and design were higher than the rates in 2005 on its precursor qualification the GNVQ Intermediate art. The success rate on the AVCE art and design declined in 05/06 to around the national average.

Progression to higher education is good. In 2006, 85% of the level three cohort progressed to higher education. Overall the standard of student work is satisfactory with some good work in graphic design. Standards of observational drawing, which were poor at the last inspection, are now good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, learners are well-motivated and produce good quality artwork with high levels of technical skill. Some lively and well-developed sketchbook work was seen, however, this was not consistent across design options. Insufficient progress has been made in improving the quality of assessment, an area for improvement from the last inspection. Teachers provide good one-to-one advice for learners in lessons. Target setting and formal assessment feedback are inconsistent. Some assessment feedback on the quality of learners work is over generous. Lesson planning varies in quality. Some concentrate on process rather than learning and few include an evaluation of the impact of teaching on learning.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent actions taken by staff in the area have improved the quality of provision. Managers have effectively rationalised the provision. Performing arts provision is no longer offered. Improved communications and team work are having a positive impact on standards of learners' work. However, course reviews do not place sufficient focus on the identification of key strengths and weaknesses in the provision.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Redcar and Cleveland College

Date of visit: 18 and 19 October 2006

This feedback contains brief findings from the annual assessment visit. It focuses on the themes explored during the visit and does not attempt to give a comprehensive overview of the college's performance.

Achievement and standards

In 2005, headline success and retention rates on long courses for learners aged 16 to 18 were below national averages. On long courses for learners aged 19+ headline success, retention and achievement rates were below national averages. At the time of the last AAV visit the college was implementing a range of actions designed to improve retention. How successful have these actions been?

- Good progress has been made in improving these rates. College data for 2005/06, available at the time of this AAV, shows that success, retention and pass rates on long courses for learners aged 16 to 18 have improved at all levels. Similarly, good progress has been made in improving success, retention and pass rates of learners aged 19+ on long courses in 2005/06. At level 1 and level 2 the success, retention and pass rates improved. At level 3 success and retention rates improved. However, pass rates at level 3 for learners aged 19+ fell by 5% in 2005/06 to 69 %. A good range of strategies have been put in place to improve levels of retention. For example, action has been taken to ensure learners re-enrol after holiday periods. Systems for monitoring and supporting learners at risk are more rigorous and a good range of additional learning support services are provided for those who need them. Managers are now placing much greater focus on monitoring retention rates through regular course review and senior management team meetings. A system of traffic lighting highlights those courses at risk. Staff development to improve the quality of teaching and learning has taken place throughout the year.

According to LSC data, overall apprenticeship framework success rates appear to have increased from 28% in 2003/04 to 60% in

2005/06. Are these figures correct and, if so, how has this been achieved?

- In work-based learning good progress has been made in improving success rates. The progress of apprentices is monitored centrally to ensure that curriculum staff support apprentices effectively in making steady progress. An increase in assessors dedicated to work-based learning in construction has addressed the poor apprenticeship success rates in this area of learning. The overall success rate of apprenticeship programmes has improved substantially, from 28% in 2003/04 to 60% in 2005/06.

Quality of education and training

At the last inspection there was too much teaching which was only satisfactory. At the last AAV a number of actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning had been put in place, including subject learning coaches and peer observation of teaching. What impact have these actions had on the quality of teaching and learning?

- A more robust system for the observation of teaching and learning is being introduced. The process for carrying out formal graded observations by managers has been strengthened. Twelve teaching and learning practitioners have been appointed to support staff in improving the quality of their teaching. A new system for course review and evaluation will focus on the outcomes from the observation process and what action needs to be taken to raise standards.

In work-based learning, the college SAR for 2004/005 indicates wide differences in the standard of assessment and portfolios between areas of learning. What has the college done to improve the consistency of assessment?

- Appropriate action has been taken to ensure consistency in assessment practice. The college has a well-managed assessment and verification process. Reports by external verifiers are analysed centrally and good practice identified by one external verifier is systematically shared with other college assessors. Learners are well supported by college staff and workplace supervisors. Clear targets for improvement are agreed by the learner, tutor and supervisor at regular progress review meetings.

- All college learners are given a thorough initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills during induction. They are also given an aptitude check to assess whether they will be able to cope with the demands of assignments. Vocational skills assessment is carried out at the first tutorial meeting to ensure that learners are enrolled on an appropriate course.
- The college is making good progress in developing provision in response to local and national priorities. There are more apprentices and a larger Entry to Employment programme. The college has been awarded a major Train to Gain contract for employee training. There are now sufficient work placement and employment opportunities for students on work-based learning programmes.

The CoVE in engineering was established in partnership with TTE in 2002-2003. How successful has it been in achieving its objectives?

- The college operates a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) for the process and manufacturing industries in partnership with a local training provider. At the time of the previous inspection, the management of the CoVE was weak. Many of the problems have now been resolved. The engineering programmes have been rationalised to remove duplication. Regular meetings of joint groups have been established and communications have improved. College staff are now available on the CoVE site throughout the week to provide support for learners. The training provider's resources are excellent. However, the teaching accommodation which is in a temporary building is uncomfortable for large groups and is not of the standard seen in CoVEs nationally.

The college SAR describes a wide range of successful provision for students aged 14 to 16 from local schools. How has this provision developed over the last year?

- The college has developed effective relationships with local schools to provide a wide range of vocational provision for learners aged 14 to 16. The provision has almost doubled this year. Progression from these courses onto post-16 provision at the college has increased this year. The college is an active partner in the Redcar and Cleveland 14-19 strategic developments.

Leadership and management

- Since the last AAV there have been significant improvements in key aspects of leadership and management. The college has gone through a period a major change including; a complete restructure, the implementation of a major accommodation strategy which will involve a new build due for completion in 2008 and, the introduction of several new policies and procedures. These processes have been well-managed. Staff have confidence in the new senior management team. The strategic plan has been reviewed in consultation with all college staff and the governing body. A new mission has been agreed which is well-focused on the community the college serves. This is underpinned by clear vision and value statements. A new approach to development planning has been introduced which will allow close monitoring and reporting on actions taken to address the college's strategic priorities.
- Governance has improved. New governors have been appointed who bring relevant skills, knowledge and expertise to the benefit of the college, and a new quality and standards committee has been established. Governors are now well informed about the performance of the college and about local and national initiatives.
- Financial management has improved. The college now regularly monitors staff utilisation. There have been substantial reductions in the budget for part-time teachers. The college exceeded its targets for the recruitment of learners aged 16-18 for the first time last year and is on target to do the same in 2006-07. The availability, reliability and use of management information to review and evaluate the quality of provision has improved considerably since the last inspection.

The college SAR for 2004/2005 states that communications within the college and with external partners has improved. Have these improvements continued and what have been the outcomes for the college?

- There have been significant improvements in communication. At the time of the last AAV in 2005 the new principal had introduced a range of systems and procedures to consult with and involve all staff in the development of key strategies and processes. Communications are now a strength. The principal effectively promotes an open and supportive management culture. Staff feel their contributions are valued. They are well-informed about the strategic direction and they

have a good understanding of the context in which the college operates. They are receptive to change and positive about the future.

- Employers find the college to be highly responsive and flexible in the development of provision which meets their needs. For example, the college provides a petrochemical company with an higher national diploma course which is flexible to fit in with the demands of the learners' jobs.

What progress has been made since the last AAV in addressing the key issues for improvement identified at the last inspection?

- Overall good progress has been made in addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- At the last inspection too much teaching was only satisfactory. The college is making satisfactory progress in this area. A more rigorous approach for the observation of teaching and learning is being implemented and a programme of regular staff development events is well-focussed on improving the quality of provision. The college has taken effective steps to increase the use of information and learning technology (ILT) in teaching and learning through the use of a virtual learning environment (VLE).
- Good action has been taken to improve the accuracy and consistency of course reviews. There are well-defined procedures for curriculum planning and course review. Course reviews that are focussed on reviewing and evaluating progress against a range of quality improvement targets now occur three times a year. In addition a comprehensive and well-documented system for curriculum evaluation has been introduced. The outcomes from these processes will be used to inform the self-assessment report.
- Work-based learning is now managed strongly. The provision is given an appropriate share of resources and is a high priority at curriculum review meetings.
- The provision for visual and performing arts which was graded less than satisfactory at the last inspection is now satisfactory (grade 3).

How does the college ensure that grades awarded to curriculum areas through the self-assessment process are accurate?

- The college has introduced robust systems for validating the SAR for 2005/06. These include internal meetings and external challenge to ensure that grades awarded and judgements made through the process are valid and supported by evidence.

Any themes from the pre-visit analysis not explored during the visit:

- None

Any other observations from the visit not identified in the pre-visit analysis:

- The college has robust systems to ensure that it complies with child protection guidance.