

MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of college: King Edward VI, Nuneaton

Date of visit: 4 October 2007

Context

King Edward VI, Nuneaton was last inspected in October 2003. Leadership and management were judged to be satisfactory. Five curriculum areas were judged to be good and four were judged to be satisfactory. Enrolments have increased every year since the inspection. In the last year, full-time equivalent students increased from 1023 to 1087.

Achievement and standards

What progress has been made in improving high pass rates at AS and A2?	Insufficient progress
--	-----------------------

Overall college success rates have been slightly higher than national averages for the past three years. College data for 2006/07 show that overall pass rates for GCE AS levels have improved very slightly and are in line with national averages. The percentage of high pass rates has also improved slightly in the last year, but they are still significantly below national averages. At GCE A level, the percentage of high passes has declined in the past year and is significantly below the national average.

At subject level, 60% of both AS and A2 courses are at or above national averages. Subject areas targeted for improvement in the last year have shown substantial improvements in success rates. However, other subject areas have shown a decline or remained the same.

What progress has been made in improving success rates in key skills?	Reasonable progress
---	---------------------

The overall success rate for key skills was 32% in 2006/07, an increase on the previous year, but below the college's target of 45%. The achievement of the exam component has increased every year over the last three years and currently stands at 80%. The college has identified portfolio completion as the major barrier to an improvement in key skills pass rates.

In the past year, the college has made significant changes to the management and delivery of key skills to address this.

A new key skills manager oversees a new team of five subject specialist teachers. Teachers work to a common scheme of work, which provides students with a better balance of activities. The key skills team has developed subject specific key skills assignments for AS level, to encourage the completion of key skills portfolios and there is better tracking of student progress in portfolio completion.

Quality of provision

What improvements have been made to the tutorial system?	Reasonable progress
--	---------------------

The college's self-assessment report identifies inconsistencies in the quality and content of tutorials as an area for improvement. The college has changed the tutorial system substantially in the past year. A tutorial working group devised a new programme, which is more coherent, structured around the five 'Every Child Matters' themes. The schedule includes more opportunities for students to have one-to-one meetings with their tutors, which students say they value highly. Staff development sessions were held on tutorial provision in the summer and materials have been developed for tutors' use. Whilst it is too early to gauge the full impact of these measures, staff interviewed feel very positive about the changes. Observations of tutorials are carried out, using the college wide observation of teaching and learning framework. However, tutorials are not graded and the results do not feature in formal action plans.

What progress has been made in improving the impact of initial assessment?	Reasonable progress
--	---------------------

In the last year, the college has revised its initial assessment test, from a spelling test to a computer-based literacy and numeracy test. All students take the new test and those identified as needing additional support are offered it. Students in receipt of support increased from 18, in 2005/06 after the spelling test, to 49 in 2006/07, after the new initial assessment test. There has also been a significant increase in teacher referral and students' self-referral. Teachers are better informed about how they can support students with additional learning needs. Improved guidance notes have been developed and disseminated to all teachers.

Detailed individual learning plans for students with additional learning needs are being devised to share with tutors. However, the results of initial assessment for other students are not yet fully utilised by teachers or students. The college is at the early stages of monitoring the impact of its additional learning support. Current data suggests that students are achieving expected results.

Leadership and management

What actions have been taken to improve the promotion of equality of opportunity?	Reasonable progress
---	---------------------

The self-assessment report identified a number of areas for development related to equality of opportunity. The college monitors and analyses the performance of different students well and identified the under-achievement of British Indian girls in both GCE AS and A2 for 2005/06 and 2006/07 as an issue. The college has taken reasonable actions to investigate the causes and is monitoring the outcomes appropriately. The college also identified poor access to some buildings for people with limited mobility. It is taking reasonable measures to ensure suitable access and has recently carried out work to ensure that the science block is accessible for all students. The college also identified an insufficient emphasis on equality and diversity within the curriculum through its lesson observation system. Curriculum areas are required to produce an equalities statement, identifying how they will address equality and diversity issues. They are also required to report on progress in their self-assessment report and identify actions for improvement. The college intends to set up an equal opportunities group to oversee and monitor matters relating to equality and diversity.