

Short inspection of RNIB College Loughborough

Inspection dates:

20–21 November 2019

Outcome

RNIB College Loughborough continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

RNIB College Loughborough is an independent specialist college. It offers residential and day provision. Most students travel daily to the college. Students have a range of disabilities, including sight loss. The large majority have moderate learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorder. The college is located in purpose-built accommodation on the campus of Loughborough College. Both colleges work together so students benefit from a wide choice of provision.

At the time of the inspection, 70 students were on courses from entry level to level 3. Most students study a personalised programme through an enterprise curriculum which operates real work environments. They include the Bell Bar, arts centre, college office, eBay shop and media hub. Five students are on supported internships with five employers. At their previous inspection in March 2017, RNIB College Loughborough was judged to be good.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Students enjoy learning at RNIB College Loughborough. They settle into college life well. They make new friends who they meet outside of college for lunch or to go to the cinema. Students feel safe and are comfortable talking to staff about any concerns they may have. Their excellent behaviour contributes to the calm and purposeful environment at the college.

Students benefit from the support they receive from staff. Teachers, support staff and therapists work well with students to manage their anxieties and help them gain in confidence. Students learn to work as part of a team and interact with others more effectively. As a result, students cope well with new environments, improve their communication skills and seek help if needed.

Students would happily recommend the college to a friend. They like learning new things and are rightly proud of the skills they develop. Staff work closely with employers, Loughborough College, parents and students to develop an interesting

curriculum. Students who study independent living skills put the skills they learn, such as vacuuming, cleaning and washing clothes, into practice at home. At work, students communicate well with new people in different situations. Employers value the skills that students bring.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

RNIB College Loughborough is a good college. Leaders and managers have put in place an ambitious curriculum that challenges students to be the best they can be. Students gain the skills they need to become valued members of the community, employees or volunteers.

Staff plan a stimulating joined-up curriculum that focuses on students' end goals. For example, supported internship students who plan to become self-employed learn how to use spreadsheets to manage stock. This in turn helps them to identify shortages in jewellery and knitted items they have made for an upcoming sale.

Teachers plan learning in a logical order that builds on students' prior knowledge and skills. For example, students working as a team to produce wreaths for Christmas had specific job roles. Students who were given the marketing role researched posters in the town centre. Next, they discussed with the teacher what they thought about the posters. They went on to decide which ideas they would use to promote the wreaths.

Staff support students well to achieve their goals. For example, they help students develop the skills they need to travel independently to work and in their community. Support staff assist students to build their confidence over time through practice. They reduce support gradually. Students learn to catch the right bus. They identify key landmarks, so they know when to ring the bell in time to get off at the right stop.

The quality of careers advice and guidance is good. Students know what to expect before they start college. Staff prepare students well while at college for their next steps. Teachers work with students to develop their personal statements in readiness for work experience or supported internships. Students have access to impartial careers advice and guidance through external organisations. This helps students to progress into work and supported living.

Leaders and managers have high expectations of staff. They provide them with regular development opportunities which most staff benefit from. A small minority of staff need further support and training to improve how they plan challenging lessons that build swiftly on students' existing skills and knowledge.

Governors and leaders manage change well. They have worked together to develop an ambitious strategy for the future of the college and to benefit students. This has been achieved with minimal disruption to the day-to-day running of the college.

Governors hold leaders to account for the quality of education. They challenge leaders and managers to improve the curriculum which leaders respond to well.

Leaders do not always identify specific actions that have brought about improvements to the quality of provision. They do not routinely pinpoint which actions have had the greatest or least impact. In a minority of instances, leaders continue to add extra actions to improve areas that are not improving quickly enough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors pay high regard to the safeguarding and well-being of their students. They receive regular updates from the safeguarding team about issues such as cuckooing and county lines. Students know how to keep themselves safe from harm. They have produced and acted in a video based on Star Wars that explores the dangers of good and evil. Staff use the video with students to discuss risks such as online grooming.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers need to support all teachers to plan challenging lessons that build swiftly on students' existing skills and knowledge.
- Leaders need to identify which actions bring about swift improvements to the quality of provision. They should use this knowledge to improve other aspects of the provision, where appropriate.

Provider details

Unique reference number	131990
Address	Radmoor Road Loughborough Leicestershire LE11 3BS
Contact number	01509 611077
Website	www.rnibcollege.ac.uk
Principal/CEO	June Murray
Provider type	Independent specialist college
Date of previous inspection	15–16 March 2017
Main subcontractors	–

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the second short inspection carried out since RNIB College Loughborough was judged to be good on 19–21 November 2013.

The inspection team was assisted by the programme leader learner progress, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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