

It's official – RNC is the UK's leading college of further education for people with sight loss

Submitted by: Royal National College for the Blind
Wednesday, 23 February 2005

*** NEWS FROM THE ROYAL NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR THE BLIND ***

It's official – RNC is the UK's leading college of further education for people with sight loss

The Royal National College for the Blind (RNC), Hereford, a specialist residential college of further education and training for people (16+) who are blind or partially sighted, has been confirmed as number one of its kind in the country after receiving a glowing testimonial from education watchdogs Ofsted and ALI, describing RNC as an "Outstanding college providing high quality education and training where students' individual needs are very well met".

The Principal, Roisin Burge, commented: "I am delighted that the commitment to the students and enthusiasm of the College staff has been recognised and rewarded in such complimentary terms. What gives me great pleasure is the recognition given to the very good teaching and support in the College and the very high level of student success".

"I am also pleased about our leadership and management grade, which the Inspectors rated "outstanding". The entire College team shares the belief in achieving high quality through encouraging and enabling both students and staff to be innovative and not to simply accept barriers to learning. This is what makes us so successful and is what drives everyone involved with the College to continually higher standards".

For some time, many have considered RNC as the UK's leading college of FE for people with sight loss. Now these findings provide hard evidence that this claim is indeed true. The outcome of the inspection was extremely positive with all 7 of the College's curriculum areas graded as good or outstanding. Inspectors considered the teaching standards in Sport and Leisure, Massage and Complementary Therapies and Independent Living Skills and Mobility to be outstanding. To date this is the best grade profile that has been awarded to a specialist residential college aimed at people with sight loss, across the entire UK.

The inspection identified among the Colleges many strengths:

- Very good teaching and learning. "The quality of teaching is significantly above that found within the Further Education sector"
- Very good achievement by most students
- Excellent range of specialist resources
- Outstanding support for students' individual needs
- Outstanding leadership and strategic management - RNC has become one of the few colleges (mainstream and specialist) to be described as "outstanding" (the top grade) for its overall performance in leadership and management.
- Very good promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity.

These key strengths heavily outweighed the 3 areas the inspectors feel RNC needs to focus on, namely:

teaching accommodation for some curriculum areas, the use of additional resources in some teaching sessions and access to external work placement for some students.

The government inspectors said that the College demonstrated an “....exceptional culture of placing the needs of students at the centre of planning and of all the College’s activities and developments” and that “A common feature that permeates the curriculum is that students’ overall programmes are tailored individually to meet their specific needs”.

Continued

It’s official.... continued

The inspection listed a number of things which the students liked about the College, including:

- broad range of opportunities and activities
- greater independence
- friendly staff who are excellent role models
- excellent teaching
- good accommodation
- good resources for music technology
- the sense of a friendly community
- being treated like an adult.

All Ofsted reports, including that of RNC, can be found on www.ofsted.gov.uk. ENDS

CONTACT

Cathy Fletcher or Emily Robinson, RNC Marketing Department, 01432 376622, or cf@rncb.ac.uk

NOTES FOR NEWS EDITOR

Student case studies and photos available on request

22/02/05