

Inclusive college

The learning support department in one of the colleges of further education we became familiar with had unusual managerial and organisational features. In particular, the college sustained stable staffing structures where students with learning difficulties were concerned. To ensure consistency in this department, the college employed a small number of staff on long-term contracts over much of the teaching week. It was felt that this policy would enable the college most successfully to include, teach and support those students with learning disabilities. This practice was not common across the college, but was a direct consequence of the head of department's insistence on adhering to professional principles of good practice in most effectively supporting these learners and the support and commitment of the college principal. The value of this consistent and committed staffing was strongly acknowledged by the young people themselves, both at the college and by those on link placements from feeder schools. It clearly had a very positive impact upon their sense of stability and security in the turbulent environment of a busy sector college.