

# Ruskin Mill College

## First re-inspection monitoring visit report

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**Type of provider:** Independent specialist college

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# **Monitoring Visit: Main Findings**

## **Context and focus of visit**

This is the first re-inspection monitoring visit to Ruskin Mill College following the publication of the inspection report which found the provider to be inadequate overall.

## **Themes**

### **What progress has been made in clarifying the accountability, reporting arrangements and communication links between residential and educational provision?**

In the six weeks since the inspection, trustees and senior managers have taken swift and decisive action to begin to rectify the areas of concern identified by inspectors. Links between the educational and residential provision are clearer and accountability has been clarified as a result of the appointments of an executive principal, new registered residential area manager and registered quality and safeguarding compliance manager. Plans are in place to merge the Ruskin Mill Trust wholly owned subsidiary company responsible for the residential care of learners with the education provision. Senior managers and trustees have researched the implications for staff and the process will start once trustees have formally agreed the decision. Other recent appointments include the new position of company secretary, reporting to trustees, with the authority and responsibility to ensure that agreed improvement actions are fully implemented. The procedures for residential managers to report to the leadership team and trustees appear stronger, with the residential area manager now a member of the senior management team. The revised organisational structure will give equal importance to education, care and health and provide greater accountability to the trustees.

The number of residential agency staff designated as duty managers will reduce in order to improve accountability and enhance the career structure within residential care. The college intends to provide opportunities for education staff to take on joint education and care roles as a way of overcoming any perceived barriers to cooperative and collaborative working. The college has reviewed the use of fixed term contracts and agency staff and is currently investigating ways of encouraging a wider range of high quality applicants for residential care positions.

Following the inspection, senior staff produced a detailed action plan. The plan identifies many of the priorities for improvement, but impact statements lack specific, measurable outcomes and actions are not clearly prioritised.

## **Priorities for improvement**

- Maintain the pace of implementation of actions to rectify the identified areas for improvement and, in particular, the removal of any perceived barriers between residential and educational provision.
- Review the action plan, ensure that impact statements are measurable, have a clear link to the experience of the learner, and are not part of the process required to achieve the desired outcomes.

## **What progress has been made in developing of strategies to reduce the number of incidents that compromise the safety of students and staff?**

Trustees and senior managers recognise the need to develop a coherent and consistent system for recording and reporting any student-related incidents or concerns wherever they occur. The college recently invested in a sophisticated, web-based system that allows education and care staff to record, track and respond to student incidents and alert relevant staff by email and/or smartphone.

Weekly team meetings now include education, care and health matters and take account of any medical changes, changes in circumstances, concerns or significant individual achievements. More frequent, regular and focused discussions with staff on safeguarding and student well-being are starting to take place.

A simplified means of recording key details about the learners in the form of a one page profile is currently under development. At present, this profile does not clearly show the intended destination for the individual. Further work is also required to ensure that the new, extended assessment process clearly links with the students' long term goals and their individual learning plan.

The appointment of a part-time consultant psychologist and psychiatrist appointment has the potential to support the management of particularly difficult or challenging behaviours and improve the quality of personal planning.

## **Priorities for improvement**

- Continue to make better use of management information and the web-based behaviour recording system in order to record, collect and collate any information relating to student achievement, their progress and any safeguarding or health and safety incidents.
- Make the links between assessments, transition destinations and positive outcomes clearer and more closely connected to individual learning plans. Include intended destinations in students' one page profile.

## **What progress has been made in evaluating the quality of all aspects of safeguarding and health and safety?**

Key staff are currently reviewing and analysing previous safeguarding and health and safety incidents in order to identify trends or ways to improve practice. The structure and content of health and safety and safeguarding reports to the leadership team are also under review. Guidance for staff on the college expectations of student safety and well-being are being revised to reflect the Care Quality Commission recommended practice. The college intends to pilot and evaluate a new system for risk assessing and reporting all safeguarding and health and safety incidents during the summer, with full implementation in autumn 2014. The IT (information technology) infrastructure of residences was checked to ensure that all relevant staff had suitable access to the behaviour reporting system and, where necessary, investment made to ensure staff can use the system easily.

The arrangements for managing e-safety require further development. Not all staff have sufficient awareness and confidence to manage e-safety incidents effectively. Some students are not fully aware of what to do if they are concerned about their own or other learners' e-safety.

### **Priorities for improvement**

- Review e-safety arrangements to make certain that staff have the experience, knowledge and confidence to deal with e-safety concerns as they arise.
- Incorporate care, education and any other relevant planning documents into a single personal plan that is accessible to and understood by all education and care staff and students.
- Ensure that all staff have access to the full range of training opportunities necessary for them to understand and implement the new planned safeguarding and health and safety procedures.

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