

Bromley College of Further and Higher Education

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 130430

Name of lead inspector: Philippa Francis HMI

Last day of inspection: 7 May 2015

Type of provider: General further education college

Address: Rookery Lane
Bromley
BR2 8HE

Telephone number: 020 82955 7015

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This is a monitoring visit to evaluate the progress of the new full-time provision for 14- to 16-year-olds in the college in the first year of its provision.

This college has had full-time provision in place for 14- to 16-year-olds since September 2014. It has 65 students in this age group: 43 students joined the provision in Year 10 and the remainder joined Year 11. Students are from schools within Bromley borough as well as from London wards.

Themes

What progress has the college made in implementing clear admissions and exclusion policies for its 14 to 16 provision?	Significant progress
---	-----------------------------

A sound and inclusive admissions policy is in place which emphasises students' aptitude and commitment to taking a vocational pathway alongside study in core subjects. The policy has been developed carefully and in collaboration with local schools and the local authority. It is linked to local and regional employment needs, for example in the hospitality and catering industry, and ensures increased choices for students who are at risk of not continuing into education, training or employment. Admissions have included direct entry to Year 11 for 22 students who have received support to ensure they are able to make best use of the vocational options available to them in the final year of their Key Stage 4 studies. Students have a wide range of ability levels on entry, and a minority join the college with significant barriers to learning, such as a record of low attendance. Most students have settled well into college life, are working well together and are enjoying their studies.

An appropriate exclusion policy is in place based on college-wide policy and taking account of local authority guidance. No permanent exclusions have taken place, but the policy has been used appropriately to impose a number of fixed term exclusions in the academic year in line with the behaviour policy. Staff work closely with the local pupil referral unit as part of the approach to exclusion.

What progress has the college made in providing sufficient, appropriately qualified staff to lead and teach the provision and to support the learners?	Reasonable progress
---	----------------------------

Partway through the autumn term, in response to concerns identified about the quality of provision and the experience and capacity of the staff team to respond to some of the challenges presented by the initial cohort of students, a number of changes in leadership, management and in the teaching team took place. New leadership has ensured a clear vision, firm direction and changes in management of the provision, resulting in the development of a much stronger and more effective team of staff. The headteacher has extensive experience of school education, which combined with that of a small team of knowledgeable and experienced further

education teachers and teachers with secondary school experience is ensuring that students are taught and supported well. The teaching team is well resourced; for example, teaching assistants are present in all lessons, and students have access to the wide range of college-based support services such as counselling and careers guidance. A manager responsible for students' special educational needs is a recent addition to the team, and will have a particular focus on ensuring that teaching assistants are used to maximum effect.

What progress has the college made in ensuring that the curriculum is sufficiently broad and covers all statutory subjects?

Reasonable progress

The curriculum is appropriately based on the core subjects of GCSE English, mathematics and science, physical education, citizenship and information and communication technology. Students also have an opportunity to broaden their curriculum by taking a vocational option in hairdressing and beauty therapy, catering and hospitality, engineering or motor vehicle. Arrangements to group students by ability for core subjects have enhanced their opportunities to make good progress. Students' progress in mathematics at this stage in the academic year is good.

Arrangements for students to receive religious education are in place. Year 11 students received religious education during the autumn term and will take part in a religious awareness week at the end of the summer term. Sex and relationships education and other personal and social development topics are covered through timetabled time for Year 10 students and are integrated into the curriculum for Year 11 students. This integration is at a relatively early stage and needs further review to check that students have sufficient time allocated to ensure they learn about these topics thoroughly. Students meet for assemblies or tutor time daily and cover a wide range of topics; in particular, small group work is used to support their understanding of topical and cultural issues. However, a review of the extent to which students have a period of reflective time to focus on their spiritual development is needed.

Plans are in hand to develop a further vocational option in sports science in 2015/16, as well as to review the curriculum structure overall to ensure a coherent balance between vocational and core subjects. The current Year 11 students are receiving additional teaching and support to help accelerate their progress in the core subjects of mathematics and English. A work experience week is planned for Year 10 students.

What progress has the college made in quality assuring and evaluating all aspects of the provision for continuous improvement?

Significant progress

As a consequence of a thorough and rigorous evaluation of the quality of provision by senior managers in the autumn term improvement actions, much needed in a few cases, have been put into place promptly. The impact of actions is evident in students' improved attendance and behaviour. Managers have a strong focus on

using frequent observations of lessons, work scrutiny and discussions with students to inform their evaluation of the quality of provision. As a result, the headteacher has an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and has been very effective in developing the staff team and increasing the quality of provision. A development plan is wide ranging in its improvement actions, although relatively few are judged to be complete, in part because the provision is at an early stage in its development.

What progress has the college made in providing learners with sufficient student care, guidance and support, including the implementation of a behaviour policy appropriate for learners aged 14 to 16?

Reasonable progress

Staff provide students, a number of whom are vulnerable, with a high level of care and plenty of useful guidance. For example, almost all students are clear about their next steps either at college or in other education and training such as apprenticeships. Students make good use of the support services available to them, as well as the good personal support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Collaboration with a local authority attendance officer is helping to improve attendance, which has increased since the autumn term but still requires improvement. Managers are reviewing the timings of the college day to try to improve students' punctuality because a few are persistently late at the beginning of the day.

Behaviour has improved markedly since the early part of the autumn term. Inspectors observed much good behaviour by students during the visit. However, the rate of fixed term exclusion is relatively high, in part because of the rigorous implementation of the behaviour policy as part of the management changes in the autumn term. The rate is reducing notably in the latter part of the academic year.

What progress has the college made in providing good quality teaching, learning and assessment?

Reasonable progress

Vocational teachers are experienced in teaching practical skills and use the good range of specialist resources available to them to ensure that students learn the skills of their chosen vocation in a professional setting which replicates industry requirements. For example, the new kitchen and restaurant at the Orpington campus are customised to maximise students' experience of working in the catering industry. Grouping of students by ability in core subjects is helping teachers to be fully effective in matching their work to students' abilities more closely. However, teachers do not consistently check on students' understanding as fully as they should do during a few lessons. Assessment arrangements have been formalised to ensure that there are six assessment points during the year which inform the monitoring of students' progress, which is thorough. Teachers' marking and the provision of feedback are not of a consistently high quality.

Has the college implemented appropriate measures to ensure that all learners are reasonably safeguarded and that

Yes

it meets its statutory duty for safeguarding in relation to learners of this age group?

Robust arrangements are in place for safeguarding students. Students use a teaching centre dedicated to their use, with access restricted to staff with responsibilities for the provision. Students are appropriately supervised during the college day and are identifiable by their uniform and coloured lanyards. Students have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe and know who to contact if they have concerns about their safety. Staff are proactive in promoting their safety; for example, in a catering lesson good practice in health and safety was adopted routinely. Staff undergo recruitment checks and a single central record of these checks is kept. Staff receive regular training, including topical issues. Training for managers on protecting students from radicalisation and extremism is planned to take place very shortly, with further training in this area for all staff due to take place before the end of the summer term.

Strengths and areas for development in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Strengths:

- good vocational teaching, particularly of practical skills
- teachers' good management of students' behaviour
- teachers' good attention to health and safety
- teachers' good use of high quality practical resources to promote learning.

Areas for development:

- teaching of English
- use of assessment to promote learning in a few lessons
- the quality of marking and feedback to students on their work
- vocational teachers' support for helping students to improve their writing.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/user>.

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015