

Cambian Lufton College

Report following a monitoring visit to an 'inadequate' provider

Unique reference number:	131921
Name of lead inspector:	Kathryn Rudd, HMI
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Type of provider:	Independent specialist college
Address:	Lufton, Yeovil BA22 8ST

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Cambian Lufton College was previously inspected in June 2019 when inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to be inadequate.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in addressing the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

Cambian Lufton College is an independent specialist provider of further education based in South Somerset. It caters for a range of students with learning difficulties, including autism, social and emotional impairments, and other complex needs and behaviours. The college offers residential and day provision for students between 16 and 25 years of age, including those needing up to 52-week provision. The majority of students are residential and based in homes in, or close to, the college campus. Some students are located in the nearby town.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring safeguarding arrangements are effective? Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have taken decisive and urgent action to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. They are now working much more effectively with partners, including the local authority. They are using such partnerships to gain specialist advice and enhance their practice. For example, the local authority safeguarding lead trained all Cambian Lufton staff on the criteria for reporting incidents. Leaders and managers are now clear on what to report, how to report and who to.

Students feel safe at the college. Leaders and staff have improved the quality and timeliness of communications with students' parents and carers. Parents are reassured by this change and the college's more proactive response to any issues they have.

Leaders and managers have improved the quality of their safeguarding policies, procedures and practices. They now identify and track all safeguarding-related issues closely, taking appropriate action where required. Comprehensive safer recruitment practices now ensure that all staff have rigorous background checks to ensure that they are safe to work with their students. All staff have had up-to-date and relevant safeguarding training. Leaders regularly review the quality of this training to ensure that it meets the needs of their workforce and students. New safeguarding support arrangements now meet their students' requirements better. For example, specialist communication resources help students express their concerns or wishes more easily. Leaders and managers have also commissioned an independent advocate to

enable young people to share their views and resolve issues directly. This is helping empower students to be more involved in the decisions that affect their lives.

Leaders and managers have strengthened the arrangements for reviewing their practice. They now have regular meetings, which include governors and external partners, during which they review and learn from safeguarding issues. They share best practice between staff teams and monitor improvements more closely.

Governors and external partners ensure that the college's leaders are meeting improvement targets. Governors provide leaders with expert advice and appropriate challenge. As a result of these collective actions, the number of recorded student issues has reduced.

Leaders and managers correctly recognise that they now need to build on these improvements and ensure a consistent approach to all safeguarding arrangements. Further improvements to record-keeping across the organisation are still required.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring tutors have the necessary skills and expertise to ensure that students benefit from high-quality learning programmes? **Reasonable progress**

The recruitment of new subject and specialist staff is now enhancing students' learning and support. For example, the focus on students' health and well-being has improved, following the appointment of a new physical education teacher. A recently established gym and the additional sports-based activities that have been introduced are encouraging students to maintain their physical health and participate in social activities more than in the past.

Staff who are new to the college benefit from a thorough induction and feel well supported in their roles. Staff quickly gain in confidence and feel confident about applying their professional skills. The opportunity to shadow more experienced teachers helps them to develop these skills further and gain a better understanding of their students' needs.

Governors and leaders have appointed a training coordinator and invested in a comprehensive cross-college training programme to fill gaps in staff knowledge and develop their specialist skills. Leaders and managers are now developing a clear overview of staff training requirements and the number of staff who have completed training and development courses successfully.

Staff are highly committed to improving the quality of the curriculum and they value the training and professional input they are beginning to receive. However, as the training programme has only been introduced recently, the full impact of that programme has yet to be seen.

How much progress leaders and managers have made in ensuring the curriculum meets the needs and interests of students? **Reasonable progress**

The focus, structure and breadth of the curriculum are improving. Students can now work towards qualifications or learning programmes at an appropriate level, which better meets their long-term future aspirations or needs. Leaders have developed a selection of modules which can be tailored to the needs of students on study programmes. New vocational pathways provide opportunities for students to develop a range of work-related skills through practical activities.

New links with employers, and the employment of a new manager, now support an expanding programme of useful and safe work placements for students. Leaders recognise that their employer links are still developing and that currently not all placements are sufficiently challenging. By contrast, outdoor volunteering activities are enabling students to engage effectively with the wider community and help them decide on work options.

Some activities planned are not sufficiently challenging and purposeful. They only cover the criteria of the qualification rather than fully developing students' skills, knowledge and behaviours in line with their abilities and the curriculum aims. Resources such as interactive smartboards are not always used effectively, for example to provide age-appropriate learning tasks and activities. This means students' digital skills and knowledge are not being developed sufficiently well. Too many students at the college are not achieving their goal of developing relationships with their peers, because they are engaging primarily with adults.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring students have access to specialist impartial careers advice? **Reasonable progress**

Students now have access to improved independent advice and guidance. After the previous inspection, leaders were quick to appoint an external advocate who helps students achieve their longer-term aims and wishes. They commissioned an expert careers advisory service to support students' career aims. Student tutorials now focus on establishing how well students are developing skills to meet the goals in their education health and care plan.

Leaders and managers have established a useful transition event for students and their families. Students met a range of housing providers and explored options for their lives after college. Students do not currently have transition plans in place, although leaders have plans to introduce them.

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