

# St Charles Catholic Sixth Form College

Interim visit report

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<b>Unique reference number:</b>	130411
<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Joanna Walters, Her Majesty's Inspector
<b>Visit dates:</b>	25 to 26 November 2020
<b>Type of provider:</b>	Sixth-form college
<b>Address:</b>	74 St Charles Square North Kensington London W10 6EY

## Interim visit

### Context and focus of visit

On 17 March 2020, all routine inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. As part of our phased return to routine inspections, we are carrying out 'interim visits' to further education and skills providers. Interim visits are to help learners, parents, employers and government understand how providers are meeting the needs of learners in this period, including those with high needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below and the findings are based on discussions with leaders, managers, staff and learners.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the provider.

### Information about the provider

St Charles Catholic Sixth Form College is based on a single campus in North Kensington within the borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The college enrolls learners from across most London boroughs and has a Catholic ethos at the centre of college life. Over the last few years, the college has increased the range of vocational courses on offer while reducing A-level courses. The college offers a variety of A levels and vocational courses, mostly in business, science, English, mathematics, information and communication technology, sport, arts, media, travel and languages and humanities. The college currently has around 1065 learners who are aged 16 to 19 years.

### **What actions are leaders taking to ensure that they provide an appropriate curriculum that responds to the reasonable needs of learners and stakeholders and adapts to changed circumstances?**

Leaders and managers have made frequent changes to the way learners access their studies since March 2020. Between March and May, learners completed their studies at home. Teachers taught lessons through videoconferencing software and sent work packs home to learners to complete. During this time, leaders issued laptops and other accessories to learners who did not have access to computers. This ensured that learners could continue with their studies. Learners completed a mixture of home study and face-to-face teaching from June to October. Learners now attend college for all of their lessons.

Leaders and managers adapted the sequence in which the curriculum was taught, in readiness for when learners returned to the college in September 2020. Managers worked with teachers to plan the units that they feel are best delivered through

videoconferencing and those that are more suitably taught face-to-face. For example, in level 3 sports studies, theoretical units, such as nutrition, anatomy and physiology, were moved to being taught through videoconferencing lessons.

Leaders and managers are aware that vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making less progress than expected as a result of the disruptions last term. Specific packages of support are put in place for learners to help them catch up, such as extra sessions with teachers and learning support staff. For example, in science, learners who did not complete some of the practical experiments participate in extra science clubs outside of lessons to fill gaps in their knowledge.

**What steps are leaders, managers and staff taking to ensure that the approaches used for building knowledge and skills are appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of learners?**

Leaders and managers decided that there should be more assessment of learners' knowledge and skills due to the disruptions in their learning. Learners who were returning for their second year of study completed assessments as part of a transition course from year 12 to year 13. The results from the assessments helped teachers to identify what learners did and did not know, and helped them plan the curriculum.

Teachers use short tasks, such as quizzes, at the beginning of lessons as a form of revision. Teachers say they find it to be a useful way of instantly marking work to identifying the gaps in learners' learning. In A-level English, learners benefit from recapping in topics, such as how to structure essays, to be able to write to a higher academic standard. Learners like the immediate feedback they receive from teachers as it helps them to improve and develop their knowledge and skills.

Teachers share lesson resources with learners in advance of lessons. This helps learners to prepare to participate in discussions and activities, so they can develop a deeper understanding of the topics they study. For example, in A-level mathematics, teachers share presentations with learners about integration.

Leaders and managers report that there is an increase in the number of learners who require support for anxiety due to COVID-19 related issues. Learners can receive support from staff, including from a college nurse, a counsellor, the mental health team and learning support staff. Learners appreciate the support staff give them, which helps them to progress with their studies.

Managers are responding to a decline in the availability of work experience placements for learners. They set up videoconference work experience opportunities with employers for learners. Learners participate in vocationally related work place tours, such as to media production spaces and science labs. They attend webinars from industry professionals.

## **How are leaders ensuring that learners are safe and well informed about potential risks, including from online sources?**

Leaders and managers take steps to ensure that learners are safe when they are online. They introduced a learning agreement that outlines the expectations of learners' conduct and behaviour when learning online. Learners know who to contact if they have any concerns about safety.

Staff provide parents and carers with information on how to spot the signs of online grooming and cyberbullying. This helps parents and carers to protect learners when they are working online at home.

Leaders and managers put in place safety measures to keep staff and learners safe. Training was given to learners on how to work remotely and when returning to the college premises. Staff provide learners with the latest COVID-19 safety arrangements. Learners know they have to wear a mask in communal college spaces, use hand sanitiser and keep two metres apart. Learners say they find the information helpful and that they feel safe in college.

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