

Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College

Progress monitoring report

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Name of lead inspector: Alastair Mollon, Her Majesty's Inspector

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Type of provider: Sixth-form college

Address: Cheadle Road
Cheadle Hulme
Stockport
Cheshire
SK8 5HA

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College was last inspected in March 2019. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

This monitoring visit focused on the extent to which leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances. It was undertaken as outlined in the [operational note on visits carried out from January 2021](#) and with reference to the further education and skills handbook.

These 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.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, inspectors carried out this monitoring activity remotely. As a result, the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would be the case during an on-site inspection. Therefore, this report provides a more limited level of assurance.

The impact of COVID-19 has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgement below. Inspectors did not evaluate leaders' response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer of 2020, when the provider was not open to all learners and there were no national expectations regarding remote education.

Theme

What progress are leaders and those responsible for governance making to ensure that staff teach a curriculum and provide support to meet learners' needs, including the provision of remote/online learning?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have taken steps to rectify the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Following the inspection, they took the decision to stop providing apprenticeships. Leaders and managers ensured that apprentices either completed and achieved their apprenticeship or transferred to an alternative provider to continue their apprenticeship.

Governors appointed a new leadership team that has been in post since February 2020. Governors have a deeper understanding of the quality and effectiveness of

education at the college. They have made recent improvements in how they hold senior leaders to account to provide high-quality education for students.

Leaders and managers work with local employers to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that meets local and regional needs. For example, they have changed awarding body in health and social care to ensure that the curriculum maintains a focus on anatomy and physiology to suit students' career aspirations and employers' demand for workers in nursing and healthcare.

Leaders have maintained a focus on the delivery of a high-quality curriculum despite the pandemic. Managers use quality assurance processes effectively to improve the quality of education and to monitor students' progress. They have adapted how they monitor the quality of education. Managers use videoconferencing software to monitor the progress that students make and virtual learning walks alongside their established quality assurance methods.

Leaders and managers have trained teachers to develop the skills that they need to teach remotely and online. Teachers are confident in their use of new electronic resources to plan and teach the curriculum effectively. Leaders and managers recognise that a few teachers need additional support to improve their skills when teaching remotely and online. Teachers and students acknowledge that students make better progress when they attend face-to-face sessions.

Leaders, managers and teachers ensure that the curriculum is planned and taught in a logical order so that students recall what they have been taught. Teachers provide students with appropriate and relevant learning materials, as well as time for self-reflection and target-setting. In biology, students enthusiastically debate ethical issues such as those related to the COVID-19 vaccination programme. In health and social care, managers use subject specialists to provide students with the opportunity to explore a breadth of topics, such as psychology, physiology and anatomy.

During the pandemic, managers and teachers adapted the curriculum with careful consideration. For example, they delayed teaching infection control because they felt that it might increase students' heightened COVID-19 anxieties and well-being issues.

Teachers use assessment effectively and provide helpful feedback, so that students know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. This helps students to develop their knowledge and skills. Students methodically correct their work using the feedback received from their teacher. This ensures that knowledge remains in students' long-term memory, so that they can remember and recall when needed. For example, in biology, students recall previous knowledge about how the antigen presents itself in the cell, which links to their current topic of immunity. This helps them to develop a deeper understanding about enzymes.

Leaders and managers work closely with employers, who contribute to the development of the curriculum and provide information about careers opportunities. Employers provide actual and virtual work experience. For example,

students recently attended virtual work experience with a hospital pharmacist. Employers set projects and the NHS provides taster events through a range of workshops with sector professionals. Primary-school teachers provide webinars on working in the schools sector. As a result of the range of activities, students are more aware of future opportunities to help them make informed decisions about their next steps.

Managers and teachers have adapted learning programmes for some students, particularly those struggling with mental health issues throughout the pandemic. They modified the curriculum to keep students in learning and on track to achieve. This flexibility has helped prevent students from being overwhelmed and leaving college.

Leaders, managers and teachers recognise the potential negative impact that COVID-19 restrictions have on students' mental health, anxiety and motivation to learn. Teachers provide effective support to students who are falling behind in their learning. They provide individual coaching sessions via telephone calls or online group sessions to help students catch up.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- ensure that all teachers use online resources and remote learning activities effectively, so that students are motivated to achieve at least their expected levels of progress
- embed new governance arrangements to increase senior leaders' accountability on the quality of education to the board.

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