

# Greater Brighton Metropolitan College

Progress monitoring report

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<b>Type of provider:</b>	General further education college
<b>Address:</b>	Littlehampton Road Worthing West Sussex BN12 6NU

## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Greater Brighton Metropolitan College was last inspected in October 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 and training 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 dealt with most of the recommendations from the previous inspection well. Improvements to apprenticeships have not been as swift as in other areas. Leaders and managers acknowledge that apprenticeships remain an area for improvement.

Leaders and managers support teachers to develop their teaching practice well. Teachers benefit from support that is specific to the areas that they need to improve and relevant to the courses they teach. As a result, teachers improve their teaching

practice more rapidly. Teachers and skills coaches develop greater confidence in both their classroom and in remote teaching practice. They include more varied and complex teaching resources in their remote lessons, which they use well to support their learners and apprentices. For example, carpentry skills coaches record their own videos demonstrating practical skills.

Teachers support learners with high needs well. Teachers have improved their knowledge of education, health and care plans and work closely with support staff to plan and teach effectively. Consequently, learners with high needs benefit from the support and care they need to progress in their studies.

Leaders have strengthened the board of governors and introduced a new meeting structure that allows board members to scrutinise information and challenge the actions taken by senior leaders effectively.

Leaders and managers do not have enough oversight of the impact of the actions they have taken to improve apprenticeships. Consequently, they have been too slow to introduce alternative measures to improve the experience of apprentices. For example, managers reinforced with employers the requirement to give apprentices time off work to complete their studies. Managers were too slow to identify that this problem continued to affect apprentices on school business professional programmes. As a result, these apprentices complete their work in their own time and do not benefit from support from their skills coaches.

Teachers of vocational courses for learners aged 16 to 18 have made sensible changes to the order in which they teach their curriculum. They prioritise the development of practical skills while learners are able to attend college and focus on theory while they work remotely. Teachers have successfully adapted the assessment of learners' work so that learners can continue to demonstrate the progress they are making. As a result, learners continue to develop the skills and knowledge they need to make progress in their courses.

Apprenticeship skills coaches plan what they are going to teach in a logical sequence. For example, in accountancy, apprentices at level 2 develop their skills at bookkeeping transactions before moving on to bookkeeping controls.

Most apprentices develop significant new skills as part of their apprenticeship programmes. Employers value the new skills that apprentices bring to the workplace and highlight their increased confidence. For example, carpentry apprentices complete a wooden-floor installation, applying what they have learned on their training. However, on the school business professional apprenticeship, a small number of apprentices say that they are consolidating existing knowledge. While they are learning some new skills, these apprentices are not gaining substantial new skills and knowledge through their apprenticeship.

Staff have a good understanding of the personal circumstances of their learners and use this to support them effectively. Those identified as vulnerable who cannot attend lessons on site continue to receive support from learning support assistants

during remote lessons. Staff check the progress and well-being of learners closely, particularly those who are vulnerable. Learners value the support they receive and how it helps them to make progress with their studies.

Staff support learners to keep physically and mentally well. They speak with learners about the importance of good sleep and how to access counselling support. They have made changes to the timetable to include physical and mental health activities. These informal activities help reduce the isolation and social anxiety that some learners feel.

Learners and apprentices feel safe and know whom to report any concerns to about their safety. Managers responsible for safeguarding keep staff updated with the increased risks to learners during periods of COVID-19 restrictions. However, leaders and managers do not assure themselves that all learners, particularly apprentices, fully understand the information provided on how to keep safe online and from radicalisation.

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

- monitor and review more closely the impact of the actions they take to improve apprenticeships, so that they have effective oversight of the quality of the experience of all apprentices
- ensure that staff reinforce safeguarding training with learners and apprentices, including online safety and risks of radicalisation, so that they understand how to protect themselves.

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