

RNN Group

Progress monitoring report

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Type of provider:	General further education college
Address:	Eastwood Lane Rotherham S65 1EG

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

RNN Group 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**

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have given greater control to curriculum managers for determining the way that the curriculum is developed. Managers' actions are having a positive impact on the quality of education for young people on study programmes but are less effective in apprenticeship provision. Governors, leaders and managers have improved their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Curriculum managers identify the aspects of teachers' practice that are strong and those that need development. They plan training and coaching sessions to help staff improve their teaching. For example, managers in engineering conducted remote lesson visits to evaluate how well

teachers checked learners' understanding after the teachers had received training on assessment.

Leaders and managers have begun to tackle the weaknesses in apprenticeship programmes by developing the curriculum to respond to employers' and apprentices' needs. Tutors in subjects such as business administration and human resources carefully plan and sequence the curriculum to support learners to develop new knowledge and skills. However, on construction apprenticeships, actions taken by leaders and managers have not been sufficient to improve the quality of education.

Leaders and managers have carefully redesigned the approach to the teaching of English and mathematics. The recently introduced team-teaching model has reduced the impact of staff absence so that students get access to regular teaching. Teachers identify gaps in students' knowledge and skills, and plan individual learning activities to address these. However, it is still too early to evaluate the impact of these changes on the development of students' English and mathematical skills.

Managers and teachers in most subject areas successfully adapt the content and sequence of the curriculum to respond to changes in employer demand brought about by the pandemic. For example, in health and social care, managers have enhanced the curriculum so that students can learn new skills in areas such as social work, nursing and paramedicine.

Most teachers use online and remote learning systems well to make lessons engaging for students and apprentices. Teachers plan a broad range of learning activities that help students to build their knowledge and skills and recap on what they know. For example, apprentices studying human resources have access to online professional learning resources in addition to their teaching sessions to help consolidate their knowledge and understanding.

A few apprentices in areas such as carpentry, joinery and bricklaying receive insufficient access to a well-planned remote learning curriculum to help them make progress in gaining new knowledge and skills. Tutors do not regularly review apprentices' off-the-job theory work to determine the progress that they make in improving their knowledge.

Most tutors provide good support as apprentices approach their end-point assessment. They agree activities with apprentices that help them to consolidate and reinforce their knowledge. For example, healthcare practitioner apprentices participate in a series of professional discussions with their tutor to improve their confidence in speaking about their skills and how they apply them at work.

Teachers successfully enable students on study programmes to remember what they have learned. They constantly recap information and practise repetition of practical exercises. As a result, students can recall with confidence what they learned last term. For example, students in media make-up remember what they have learned

about how to apply latex and use their knowledge and skills to create special effects make-up looks.

Teachers and pastoral support staff work flexibly with students using social media tools and online discussions to tackle students' issues and concerns. Students value the additional support that they receive from staff to help them participate fully in lessons and benefit from college services.

Progress tutors have maximised remote opportunities to deliver careers education during the COVID-19 restrictions. They have worked with national employers to provide students with useful knowledge about specific job roles to help them make informed choices about their next steps. For example, students in public services have taken part in an online army careers event with the Royal Artillery.

Students have a sound awareness of how to keep themselves safe when learning online. They understand local risks and know how to protect themselves from risks such as county lines and gang crime.

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

- ensure that managers and staff make swift improvements to the quality of education that apprentices receive in all curriculum areas
- ensure that all apprentices are provided with remote learning and planned learning activities for completion during off-the-job training, while this still cannot be delivered on college sites
- continue to improve English and mathematics teaching to ensure that students are supported to develop their knowledge and skills successfully.

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