

Coventry College

Progress monitoring report

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Coventry College was last inspected in September 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

The newly appointed principal and senior management team have made progress against most of the recommendations made at the previous inspection.

Leaders and managers prepared well for the risk of further disruption to on-site learning in this academic year. In September 2020, teachers of vocational programmes brought forward the practical skills development of their learners while they could still attend specialist workshops and classes. As a result, during national restrictions, teachers have focused on teaching the theory and underpinning

knowledge needed by their learners. Once they can return to the specialist facilities, teachers plan to reinforce this knowledge and hone learners' practical skills.

Teachers switched learners' scheduled face-to-face lessons to online learning when the national restrictions came into force in January 2021. As a result, all learners access their learning through online platforms, regardless of whether they are learning remotely or are among the very small number of learners attending the college.

Learners enjoy their online lessons and participate with confidence. Teachers have developed a range of strategies to ensure that learners remain motivated, and they make frequent checks on learning, for example through regular use of quizzes.

Learners can provide examples of how their learning has developed since the start of the year and refer to topics covered earlier that they have since recapped. For example, learners in beauty therapy have deepened their knowledge and understanding of different skin types. Apprentices have revisited their learning on health and safety at work to adapt to the challenges posed by the pandemic, for example in the use of personal protective equipment.

However, teachers' assessment practices are not consistently effective. In some areas, learners are making slow progress. These learners do not receive sufficient feedback on their work for them to understand their grade and to know what to do next. Teachers do not routinely correct spelling and grammatical errors in learners' work and they give little feedback to learners that would help them improve their written English. However, learners in other areas do benefit from helpful advice on how to improve. For example, learners in nail technology receive helpful feedback to help them improve their written treatment plans, using the correct technical language and spelling. Leaders have recently introduced a comprehensive marking and feedback policy to improve these aspects of assessment practice. However, this guidance is not yet consistently used by all teachers, and so it is too early to see its full impact.

Learners and apprentices are well supported and know whom to contact if they have any concerns about themselves or anyone else. Well-being coaches work closely with curriculum teams to ensure that learners are supported. They undertake well-being calls to check on learners at home. As a result, attendance to online lessons has increased. Most learners enjoy regular personal development sessions, where they explore and learn more about relevant contemporary challenges such as cyber-bullying and knife crime, as well as environmental issues such as recycling.

Teachers and support staff work closely with learners with additional needs to identify what works best for them. Individualised support plans are put in place that enable these learners to achieve in line with their peers. Learners feel well supported. They are confident that their teachers and tutors are always there to support them and offer advice.

Managers and teachers value the professional development and updating opportunities they receive. Teachers have undertaken training to develop their skills and knowledge to teach more confidently. They have gained a good understanding of the importance of ordering logically the content of their programmes. Learners now build on their knowledge and understanding over time and demonstrate their proficiency as a result of effective recapping and practising.

Leaders and managers have made improvements to the advice and guidance learners receive from pre-enrolment to progression routes out of college. Pre-enrolment advice and guidance are well established, and the school liaison work undertaken ensures that learners joining the college are well informed about what to expect. Learners new to the college benefit from an effective induction that includes careers advice and support. However, the quality of the on-programme advice and guidance given is not yet consistently of a sufficiently high standard across all curriculum areas for all learners.

Governors work closely with the senior team and receive regular, detailed reports. Board members possess the skill and expertise to challenge and scrutinise the information with which they are presented. As a result, they are well informed and knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the college and are clear about the improvements that need to be made.

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

- managers and teachers implement consistently the college policy on marking and providing feedback to learners on their work, so that learners know what they need to do to improve their work
- all learners receive consistent, high-quality careers advice and guidance that target their career aspirations and plans for their next steps.

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