

Green Labyrinth

Progress monitoring report

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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Green Labyrinth was last inspected in November 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 previous inspection the quality of information that leaders report to the board of directors has improved. As a result, directors have increased their level of scrutiny and challenge, and now hold leaders to account for improvements. Directors understand clearly the strengths and areas for improvement in the quality of education. They recognise that while secure plans are in place to tackle most of the areas for improvement, the impact of the actions is yet to be seen.

Leaders and managers have carefully reviewed the curriculum for learners who have high needs and for young people. They have introduced three- and six-month fast-track foundation employment learning programmes and included additional knowledge of workplace practices. Managers and teachers ensure that the curriculum is planned and taught in a logical order, so that learners build on pre-existing

knowledge, skills and behaviours before learning new content. For example, at the start of the programme, learners undertake an assessment of their knowledge of the skills required for work. They take part in learning activities to deepen their knowledge and then reassess their understanding and skills levels. This helps them to increase their confidence and move successfully into a work placement.

Work-based learning consultants (WLCs) work well with apprentices and employers to review and make changes to the curriculum, so that it reflects the tasks apprentices undertake at work. For example, apprentices who study management, and lead on projects at work, study project management first. Apprentices say that this helps them to put into practice what they have learned in the workplace. Employers support apprentices to translate this new knowledge into practical work skills.

Managers use information on learners' starting points effectively in order to create more individualised learning programmes. As a result, the number of learners who have moved on to further study or employment has increased. However, in a minority of cases, WLCs do not consistently use information on apprentices' prior knowledge and development needs to set ambitious targets. For example, WLCs do not set targets that encourage apprentices studying management to achieve the highest grades on their assignment work and make the progress of which they are capable.

Leaders have implemented appropriate actions to improve learner attendance. For example, they have recruited additional staff and learning mentors who track and follow up non-attendance, and support learners to overcome their barriers. However, at the time of the visit, learners' attendance had declined. Managers attribute this to the change to young people's routines, and their social and emotional issues, as a result of the pandemic.

All learners participate in online lessons. Teachers ensure that they use suitable physical resources to support their learning. For example, learners receive a workbook, which they use to record their learning during online sessions. This helps them to recall and reinforce their learning and develop their skills to learn independently.

Teachers use effective question and answer techniques when teaching in classroom and online sessions. Learners use the online chat function to answer questions when they are not comfortable answering verbally. Teachers use this information well to plan future learning sessions.

Leaders work closely with employers to create meaningful work placements for learners. The placements enable them to develop the skills and behaviours they need to gain employment. For example, learners who work in an office answer queries from customers, place orders and learn to use computer systems. As a result of their work at a placement, learners have received job offers. However, leaders recognise that they need to do more to ensure that all learners participate in work placements that meet their needs and interests, when it is safe to return to the workplace.

Managers identified an increase in the referral of learners and apprentices to health and well-being services, and the need to provide them with more frequent and specific support. For example, an increase in the prevalence of suicide attempts by learners and apprentices informed the content for their recent newsletter. This included information and links to external support agencies. Learners and apprentices also continue to receive face-to-face and online support from a counsellor. Staff have received further training around mental health issues and self-care to better support their learners and apprentices.

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

- ensure that work-based learning consultants consistently use information on apprentices' prior knowledge and development needs to set ambitious targets, so that they make the expected or better progress
- ensure that the attendance strategies put in place for young learners are monitored carefully and adopt appropriate actions to ensure that they are effective and bring about improvement.

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