

# Suffolk New College

Progress monitoring report

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<b>Unique reference number:</b>	130820
<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Linnia Khemdoudi, Her Majesty's Inspector
<b>Inspection dates:</b>	4–5 February 2021
<b>Type of provider:</b>	General further education college
<b>Address:</b>	Rope Walk Ipswich Suffolk IP4 1LT

## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Suffolk New College 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**

Leaders ensure that learners access timetabled lessons during the current COVID-19 restrictions effectively. Most learners are working remotely from college. Teachers have adapted the sequence and content of courses appropriately. They ensure that learners continue to develop their underpinning knowledge. In mathematics and English, teachers support learners to improve their skills gaps. This is helping learners improve their understanding of topics such as ratios.

Senior leaders track and support vulnerable learners to ensure that they are safe. Managers encourage vulnerable learners to work from college wherever possible.

Teachers and support staff provide a single point of contact for these learners. The support that learners receive is timely and effective.

Teachers show careful consideration of how the current pandemic is affecting learners. Teachers ensure that learners understand how the pandemic has affected sectors, such as the food and drink industries. They encourage learners to make use of the resources they can access from home to help them learn. For example, hospitality learners cook food at home, and creative learners find artefacts for mood boards while out walking. As a result, learners are continuing to develop their knowledge and skills.

Vocational teachers focus appropriately on raising learners' aspirations and developing their work skills. Teachers in many subjects invite industry practitioners, guest speakers and employers to talk to learners. However, not all learners have the same access to these activities. As a result, they do not have a good enough understanding of the industries in which they want to work.

Too few learners have received specific careers advice and guidance. Teachers help learners understand what their next steps could be. However, staff do not always help learners plan how to achieve their intended next steps or understand which wider choices they may have.

Senior leaders have supported staff to develop their use of technology effectively. Most teachers use the available technology to teach interesting and engaging lessons. They ensure that learners are fully engaged in a range of learning activities, including peer feedback and group work. However, a few teachers still try to replicate face-to-face lessons too closely. They fail to check the engagement of learners in lessons effectively. They do not check that learners are active, for example by using facilities such as thumbs up or cameras. Therefore, they are not clear if learners are developing new knowledge quickly enough.

Teachers' feedback on the development of learners' practical skills is limited. In practical lessons, teachers often only see learners' finished products. Teachers are unable to observe the processes that learners use to achieve work of a high standard. As a result, teachers are unable to correct any poor techniques that learners demonstrate.

Teachers' feedback to learners on English errors such as spelling and grammar is inconsistent. Some teachers make spelling and grammatical errors in their written feedback to learners. As a result, learners are not developing their English skills quickly enough. They continue to repeat the same errors in their work over time.

Teachers' support for learners is good. They know their learners well. They work collaboratively and effectively with learning support assistants. Teachers know what learners have achieved and what they still need to complete. They support learners to catch up and help them stay focused when working remotely. Teachers monitor

student attendance closely. They raise concerns quickly if they cannot contact a student. Consequently, students' attendance is high in most areas.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that learners can relate dangers, such as county lines, to where they live. Too many learners think these concerns are restricted to London. They do not relate them to their own neighbourhoods. Tutors discuss drug and alcohol misuse and the effects of smoking with learners. However, too many learners do not know which areas of concern could impact them personally.

Senior leaders have enhanced the skill set and experience of the governing body. Governors closely monitor the progress of improvement actions. They hold senior leaders to account if they feel progress is too slow. Senior leaders report safeguarding concerns to governors frequently. Governors have good oversight of the actions which leaders take to keep learners safe.

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

- ensure that teachers provide accurate and consistent feedback to help learners to improve the standard of their written work over time, improving their spelling and grammar
- develop alternative ways to enable more learners to access employers, to help them to understand what it is like to work within their chosen careers and how to achieve their career aim
- ensure that learners are actively engaged in learning and benefit from effective formative feedback on their practical skills development.

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