

Bodywork Company Performing Arts Cambridge

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 50009

Name of lead inspector: Jules Steele, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection date: 10 May 2021

Type of provider: Dance and drama school

Address: 25–29 Glisson Road
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This monitoring visit focused on safeguarding arrangements and 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.

This is the second visit following safeguarding concerns that had been brought to Ofsted's attention. The previous remote visit found that leaders had made insufficient progress in their oversight of safeguarding arrangements for students.

The provider offers the Trinity diploma in dance and musical theatre, funded by the national dance and drama awards (DaDA) scheme.

At the time of the visit, a total of 78 students were working towards the Trinity diploma, of which 53 were in receipt of DaDA funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgements below.

Themes

Do leaders and managers ensure the safeguarding and well-being of their students?

Insufficient progress

Leaders' arrangements to keep students safe while at college remain insufficient. Leaders have yet to establish a comprehensive culture of safeguarding.

Students told inspectors that a few staff make inappropriate comments to them in class in front of their peers. This leads to those students having negative images of themselves and developing behaviours that are harmful to their health and well-being. For example, a few students choose not to eat when they arrive home late after classes for fear that they will gain weight. Students told inspectors that 'looking beautiful' was more valued by these staff than students' talents. There are incidents of some staff discouraging students from going to auditions for roles when they may not have 'the desired physique'.

Governance arrangements are inadequate. The governing body resigned five months ago because of the lack of safer recruitment practices and there being barriers to governors having the appropriate oversight of safeguarding arrangements. Leaders have yet to establish any form of external scrutiny or convene a new governing body.

Tutorial arrangements for male students require improvement. Managers have worked with staff to strengthen the tutorial programme. However, they have only recently dedicated time to exploring subjects relevant to the specific challenges faced by males in the performance industry. For example, male students understand sexual predation related to their female peers, but have not yet had the opportunity to explore how sexual predation potentially relates to them.

Leaders' ongoing scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements, although strengthened, is not yet comprehensive. Leaders' oversight of chaperoning arrangements for visiting and guest tutors remains insufficient. Leaders have not followed up with managers to ensure that the new procedure for recording and securely storing recorded lessons is in place and effectively monitored. Safer recruitment practices are now established, and employment references followed up appropriately.

Leaders and managers have improved the focus staff place on making safeguarding explicit to students. Tutors now systematically teach students how to stay safe in the performing arts world. For example, students know how to protect their online identity and manage their social media presence appropriately. Students demonstrate a good understanding of safe working practices. They know how to prevent, recognise and treat performance-related injuries.

Students have an effective understanding of the protected characteristics of others. They develop empathy for the challenges faced by people with a range of disabilities. For example, the topics they choose for their final year work explore the perspectives of those with autism spectrum disorder and victims of sexual assault, and the societal issues related to gender identity.

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