

TEC Partnership

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	130585
Name of lead inspector:	Steve Hailstone, Her Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	17 and 18 November 2021
Type of provider:	General further education college
Address:	Nuns Corner Grimsby DN34 5BQ

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

The primary focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made post-merger in addressing the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspections.

TEC Partnership, previously called the Grimsby Institute Group, and East Riding College, merged in July 2020. The Grimsby Institute Group was graded outstanding at its inspection in May 2017. East Riding College was confirmed as good at its short inspection in December 2019. The partnership's centres include the Grimsby Institute, East Riding College, Scarborough TEC, Skegness TEC, and Modal Training. At the time of this visit, 4,189 learners were on education programmes for young people, 3,282 learners were on adult learning programmes, and there were 1,186 apprentices and 283 learners with high needs.

Themes

Since the merger with East Riding College, how well have leaders achieved their strategic objective to ensure outstanding learner success across all parts of the organisation? Significant progress

Leaders and governors have managed a very effective merger between TEC Partnership and East Riding College. They accurately identified potential risks and took appropriate actions to mitigate them. They communicated frequently with staff to update them on progress about all aspects of the merger and to reassure them about job security. Governors maintained close oversight of the merger process and ensured that the merger was completed successfully and on schedule.

Since the merger, leaders and governors have focused closely on maintaining high standards and a high level of learner achievement across the partnership. The expansion of the partnership has brought benefits that have a positive impact on learners, including opportunities for staff to share best practice and expertise.

Learners across the partnership benefit from a stimulating learning environment that contributes significantly to raising and maintaining their motivation and aspiration, and enabling them to achieve well. They frequently use state-of-the-art technology and resources to support their learning. For example, a sophisticated lorry cab simulator at the Modal Training centre enables apprentices on large goods vehicle (LGV) driver programmes to develop the skills to drive a lorry competently and safely.

Governors for the partnership as a whole and at each centre provide very effective support and challenge to leaders to ensure that they successfully implement the

partnership's strategy and that learners benefit from high-quality education. Governors speak passionately about the organisation, and demonstrate significant commitment to maintaining very high standards across all parts of the partnership.

Leaders and governors focus particularly well on ensuring that learners benefit from an effectively planned curriculum that is highly responsive to current and projected local and national needs. Leaders work very closely with employers and agencies, such as local enterprise partnerships, to identify skills needs and to shape their curriculum in response. The curriculum has been successfully extended to provide routes into growing sectors, such as drone technology, robotics, and laser welding. LGV driver provision responds to the shortage of lorry drivers, both locally and nationally.

How successful have leaders' actions been since the merger in ensuring that all apprentices at the East Riding College campuses benefit from an effectively sequenced curriculum? **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers at East Riding College now work more closely and effectively with employers to identify the specific skills, knowledge and behaviours that employers need and to involve them in curriculum planning. Most employers are fully involved in selecting units of the apprenticeship that benefit their organisation. They receive frequent updates about the progress that their apprentices are making and are positive about the support that they receive from the college.

Managers and trainers plan the apprenticeship curriculum logically and carefully, taking account of the skills and knowledge that apprentices already have before they commence their programme. Apprentices in joinery gain a good understanding early in the programme of how to use tools to cut wood, and they understand the importance of mastering this skill before moving on to more complex tasks.

Leaders recognised that they needed to review how programmes were sequenced during the periods of COVID-19 restrictions. Their success in delivery during these periods meant that very few apprentices had breaks in learning. Managers provided apprentices and their employers with additional support, including online training, which meant that most apprentices did not fall behind. However, despite this support, a minority of apprentices on the level 3 early years educator programme have not made expected progress. In a few instances, tutors do not ensure that employers release apprentices on this programme for their training.

On the level 3 early years educator programme, employers are not engaged fully enough in reviewing apprentices' progress. This means that, in too many instances, they are not sufficiently aware of their apprentices' progress or what apprentices need to learn next. This has a negative impact on the progress of a few apprentices on the early years educator programme.

In a few instances, tutors do not check carefully enough apprentices' understanding of their targets and the progress they are making, or inform apprentices of their progress. For example, on the level 3 early year educators programme, the feedback that apprentices receive often focuses on providing brief praise to apprentices rather than indicating specifically what they could do to improve.

How successful have leaders' actions been since the merger in ensuring that all teachers at the East Riding College campuses set precise learning goals for learners who have high needs, so that these learners are clear about the knowledge and skills that they need to develop? **Significant progress**

Leaders at East Riding College provide a relevant curriculum to enable learners with high needs to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need for adulthood. Learners successfully develop independent living skills through a life skills programme, and employability skills through a supported internship programme. Other learners develop their vocational skills well through a wide range of vocational programmes from levels 1 to 3 in areas such as catering and health and social care.

Tutors accurately identify learners' starting points using education, health and care plans and information from schools, and through taster days prior to programmes commencing. They carefully use this information to develop precise and appropriate vocational and personal goals that enable learners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need.

Tutors plan and deliver the curriculum in a logical order to build learners' skills and knowledge. In catering, learners begin by learning about health and safety and food hygiene. This prepares them well early in the programme to serve members of the public in the college restaurant and provides a foundation for the development of their catering skills.

Tutors carefully plan the development of English and mathematics skills as part of the curriculum, and support learners well to improve these skills. For example, learners develop their communication skills and their understanding of managing money through raising funds for the Cash for Kids charity.

Tutors successfully use extensive recap and repetition activities to help learners to remember the knowledge and skills that they have acquired. In independent travel, the tutor first spends time discussing with learners a planned journey, and then uses a range of visual resources such as maps to reinforce what learners need to know to make the journey successfully. Learners then take the journey and review the impact of their learning before taking the journey again.

Learners have an appropriate understanding of safeguarding as relevant to their lives. They have a good understanding of online safety, including using social media.

However, they do not have sufficient understanding of the potential risks in the communities in which they live.

How effective have leaders' actions been since the previous full inspection in 2017 in sustaining the drive to raise standards at the Scarborough TEC campus? Significant progress

Leaders and managers have successfully realised their aim to raise and sustain standards at the Scarborough TEC (STEC) campus. They have implemented a rigorous improvement strategy that has enabled them to improve aspects of leadership and the quality of education that they had identified as not being of a high-enough standard. Learners at STEC now benefit from high-quality teaching and training, fit-for-purpose resources and learning environments, and a well-established culture of high expectations.

Leaders have taken active steps to ensure that the partnership culture and ethos is understood and embraced by staff and learners at STEC. Leaders and staff participate fully and effectively in implementing the partnership-wide arrangements to ensure consistency in management and ethos. They also appreciate the level of autonomy that they continue to have as a local provider of education.

Leaders and managers have invested significantly in the buildings, facilities and learning resources at STEC. They have successfully moved the college to a new campus, which provides a welcoming learning environment.

Leaders set very clear expectations for learners about their behaviour and attitudes, which has resulted in increased attendance and a respectful culture at STEC. Learners enjoy being at college. They behave maturely and are very respectful of each other. Staff provide appropriate and effective challenge to learners whose attendance is a cause for concern and ensure that these learners quickly return to college so they can catch up with any missed learning.

Tutors plan and sequence the curriculum effectively, which enables learners to make swift progress through their studies. They teach core knowledge and skills first, ensuring that learners have fully grasped these, before moving on to more complex material and theories. For example, learners on level 2 media make-up study the basics of media make-up first, such as human anatomy and make-up colour, to gain a secure understanding of health and safety, colour palette and technique. They then move on to more complex techniques such as how to make skin effects.

Tutors work effectively with employers to plan and provide good opportunities for learners to gain useful experience of work that is relevant to their studies. These opportunities enable learners to apply their knowledge in work-related settings and develop valuable work-related skills.

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