

# Queensmill College

Monitoring visit report

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<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Saher Nijabat, Her Majesty's Inspector
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<b>Address:</b>	50 Ellerslie Road Shepherd's Bush London W12 7BN

## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

From autumn 2019, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to independent specialist colleges newly funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency from August 2018 onwards. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Queensmill College is based in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and was formally established in 2019. The college is a specialist post-19 provision for young people with complex and moderate autism spectrum disorder. All learners attending Queensmill College require a high level of support.

Queensmill College teaches life skills programmes to 16 learners at their main site in Shepherd's Bush. 11 learners are on supported internships at the West Middlesex University Hospital and Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.

Queensmill College works closely with Queensmill School but is a separate organisation. The college has recently moved to new premises and senior leaders are in the process of transferring college-related management functions from the school to the college.

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

### Themes

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant learning programmes that are clearly defined and tailored to suit the individual needs of learners?**

**Reasonable progress**

Senior leaders have designed a suitable curriculum for young people with autism spectrum disorder who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. They work well with the local authorities and employers to offer programmes which help learners go on to positive destinations, such as further education, community living or employment opportunities.

Learners have access to two well-structured pathways. They complete formal qualifications, such as level 1 employability and entry 1 personal progress awards, as part of their learning programmes, and work towards achieving their EHC plan outcomes. Staff teach a well-structured curriculum which builds in complexity over time and covers

different areas of the preparation for adulthood agenda, such as employment, independent living, community inclusion and health.

On supported internships, learners complete work placements in different departments with their employer. Teachers work closely with learners' workplace mentors and job coaches to help learners develop essential employability skills. As a result, learners complete their work placements successfully. Some learners have secured employment with the same employer.

Leaders provide suitable staffing and accommodation for learners who have complex needs. Learners have access to a low arousal environment with sensory integration rooms for self-regulation. Those who are sensitive to certain noises use ear defenders to help them manage their sensory processing. As a result, learners have access to a conducive learning environment that meets their needs.

In their transition of moving into a new building, senior leaders have not fully embedded their quality checks to assure themselves of quality of teaching. For example, leaders do not check the quality of their process for recognising and recording progress and achievement. As a result, trustees and senior leaders do not have sufficient oversight of the different aspects of their provision. They have yet to fully establish wider links with the further education sector to improve their practice and identify varied transition opportunities for their learners.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality learning programmes that develop independence, communication and skills and help them to achieve their personal and/or work-related goals?**

**Reasonable progress**

Leaders ensure that learners benefit from individualised programmes that suitably develop the skills they need to live as fulfilled and independent lives as possible. On the life skills programmes, learners participate in enriching activities, such as yoga, mindfulness and trips out in the community. As a result, they gain confidence in social skills and progress well with their learning programmes.

Learners on supported internships take part in different jobs across the hospital. With step-by-step learning support from the job coaches and workplace mentors, learners gradually build confidence and essential workplace skills, such as communication and timekeeping. Consequently, by the end of their placements, learners work independently, with reduced support from job coaches.

Teachers track learners' progress towards their programme goals accurately. Staff use witness statements, observations and photographs proficiently to record learners' achievements. They use feedback from support staff, therapists, and employers to review learners' progress towards their term targets. Learners make good progress towards their learning goals and EHC plan outcomes.

Therapists work collaboratively with curriculum staff and train them to use different communication strategies, such as emotional regulation, to support learners to communicate. Teachers make lessons interesting and engaging by using fun, interactive resources. They use visual prompts effectively, such as pictures, signs and symbols to meet learners' communication needs. Consequently, learners understand the content of lessons and complete activities as independently as possible.

Parents value the use of daily communication books as it enables them to have an insight into their young person's day at college. They use the books to inform staff of any changes or upsets that may have occurred at home.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have put in place effective arrangements to ensure the safety of their learners. They identify risks specific to individual learners and update their support plans accordingly.

Staff teach learners how to lead safe and healthy lives. For example, learners correctly explain the fire evacuation procedures and demonstrate how to work safely using appropriate protective equipment.

Staff form respectful relationships with learners. Learners who are non-verbal appear to be happy and well supported. Learners on supported internships feel safe and know who to go to if they feel unhappy or have any concerns.

In the transition of responsibility from the school, senior leaders have not ensured that all processes are fully implemented. For example, staff do not always maintain detailed enough records of safeguarding incidents. Although leaders carry out suitable checks to ensure that staff are safe to work with vulnerable learners, they do not hold these records in one place, and the single central register is not fully updated.

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