

Cambian Dilston College

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector:	Jacque Brown, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent specialist college
Address:	Dilston Hall Corbridge Northumberland NE45 5RJ

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This is the first reinspection monitoring visit to Cambian Dilston College following publication of the inspection report on 11 November 2021 which found the provider to be inadequate overall.

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

Themes

To what extent have leaders and managers implemented actions to rectify the serious safeguarding concerns identified during the previous inspection?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have addressed the serious safeguarding concerns that were highlighted at the previous inspection. They have made access to the college site and the main building secure. The gates to enter the site are closed during the day and a fob system is used to enter the main building. Leaders have ensured that tutors complete appropriate training in the completion of risk assessments. As a result, tutors identify potential risks and actions required to mitigate the risks effectively in the assessments that they complete. For example, they carefully review the potential risks of learners with challenging behaviour visiting community venues and ensure that appropriate support is in place.

Leaders have rectified the health and safety concerns raised at the previous inspection. For example, regular temperature checks of the refrigerator and freezer are completed and hazardous materials are stored securely.

Leaders have ensured that staff have sufficient expertise to work with learners with challenging behaviour. Tutors have attended training on positive behaviour support which has increased their confidence in implementing appropriate strategies to work effectively with learners. The number of incidents involving injury to staff has significantly decreased this term. The lead for behaviour support holds debrief meetings with staff following any incident when they discuss lessons learned and what action they can take to reduce the likelihood of future incidents occurring.

Leaders have provided training for staff in the 'Prevent' duty. This has increased the understanding of staff about the potential risks of extremism and radicalisation and made them more alert to the dangers of online activity and the use of social media. Leaders have installed an effective firewall on classroom computers which enables them to monitor learners' activity and prevent access to inappropriate sites.

Leaders have devised an effective process for monitoring the content that learners review on their mobile phones. Learners and their parents have signed an agreement to consent to staff checking learners' phones, and staff carry out regular checks. When learners are identified as being at higher risk, checks are made more frequently.

Leaders have ensured that much of the site has been redecorated, which has improved the learning environment. They have placed an emphasis on good-quality displays in corridors and classrooms which further enhances the college environment.

Leaders have not yet improved the horticulture area sufficiently. They have completed some basic repairs but there is more to do to make these areas high-quality spaces that support the curriculum. Leaders have been too slow in improving the outside toilets where work was being completed on the day of the monitoring visit.

To what extent have leaders and managers improved the rigour and effectiveness of the quality improvement process in order to tackle weaknesses swiftly?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have produced an appropriate action plan to tackle weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. However, a few actions do not have sufficient priority, such as the improvement and monitoring of students' attendance at college and in lessons. Leaders review the action plan frequently. Leaders and governors are aware of the impact of actions that have been implemented and have an accurate view of where further improvements are required.

Leaders have produced a suitable schedule of activities to provide oversight of the quality of the provision. The schedule includes regular observations of teaching and peer-reviewing of learners' booklets. As a result of these activities, leaders have implemented frequent training and coaching to enable tutors to improve their teaching. Tutors have attended training that has supported most of them to recognise more accurately the incremental progress that learners make from their starting points. However, leaders recognise that there remains too much inconsistency, with a few tutors not being able to identify accurately the progress that learners make. Leaders have organised further training to develop the understanding and skills of these tutors.

Leaders have implemented an appropriate curriculum policy that includes the important role of residential staff in implementing a 24-hour curriculum for learners who reside at the college. However, it is too early to see the full impact of this in further developing the curriculum to meet the individual needs of learners.

Leaders ensure that tutors work with staff at local schools to develop their understanding of the curriculum and how to improve it. For example, tutors are improving their use of phonics to support learners to improve their reading skills. Two tutors have been promoted to lead on specific aspects of the curriculum, such

as literacy, as leaders recognise the importance of this in strengthening the curriculum that they provide.

To what extent have leaders and governors improved governance arrangements to ensure that governors are able to hold leaders and managers to account for the quality of education and support that learners receive? **Reasonable progress**

Governors have recently appointed two experienced interim managers from the wider Cambian network of providers to provide additional capacity to the leadership team. These managers provide effective support to the principal in order to improve the quality of the provision.

Governors have completed effective training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty, which has improved their understanding of potential risks. The training has enabled governors to provide more effective challenge to leaders and provide appropriate support to address the safeguarding concerns identified at the last inspection.

Senior leaders and governors have strengthened the governing body through the appointment of a parent to provide an independent voice in the scrutiny of the quality of the education that students receive.

The Cambian regional lead for education has commissioned appropriate leadership training and qualifications in working with young people with high needs for the senior team at the college. She has ensured that the principal has developed close links with leaders from outstanding providers in other parts of the Cambian group. This has improved the expertise of the senior leadership team.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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