

Rotherham Opportunities College

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	147317
Name of lead inspector:	Jonny Wright, Her Majesty's Inspector
Inspection date:	2 March 2022
Type of provider:	Independent specialist college
Address:	Brunswick Road Broom Rotherham S60 2RR

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 follow-up safeguarding monitoring visit has been carried out consequent to the provider being found to be making insufficient progress with respect to safeguarding at its previous monitoring visit. It follows the arrangements outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook'.

The focus of this visit is on the safeguarding theme below.

Rotherham Opportunities College is an independent specialist college that provides programmes to students with high needs. At the time of the visit, there were 12 students enrolled on a bridging pathway, 10 on an employability pathway and nine on an opportunities pathway. All students are aged 19 to 25 years and have an education, health and care plan. There is no residential provision.

Theme

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 safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty policies and processes that they use well to keep students safe. Since the previous monitoring visit, they have updated their policies and processes appropriately and have developed accessible versions that are easy for students to read.

Leaders and managers have appointed and trained additional designated safeguarding leads. They have also improved the process for students and their parents to report any concerns, including the provision of a dedicated mobile phone number and email address. Designated safeguarding leads accurately record any safeguarding concerns and follow them up fully to ensure that students stay safe.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff, governors and agency workers are suitable to work with students with high needs. They carry out effective background checks, including with the Disclosure and Barring Service, and obtain references from previous employers.

Staff undergo helpful training in safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, peer-on-peer abuse, hate crime and mental health first aid. This training helps staff to keep students safe.

Designated safeguarding leads work closely with local and regional 'Prevent' duty advisers to keep up to date with local risks, including 'cuckooing', cyberbullying and online radicalisation. They use this information well to advise staff, who, in turn, provide relevant information for students.

Teachers have developed an effective curriculum to help students understand radicalisation, extremism and risks pertinent to them. For example, teachers use examples such as online gaming that enable students to recognise and understand that violent games can affect their behaviours. Students with a social media profile are taught about the dangers of providing strangers with personal information.

Students feel safe and well supported by staff at the college. They know to whom they should report any safeguarding concerns. Students are confident that they can raise their concerns with any of their teachers.

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