

Calman Colaiste (Kisimul Group)

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

Unique reference number:	144791
Name of lead inspector:	Penny Fawcus, His Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent specialist college
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Calman Colaiste (Kisimul Group) was inspected in January 2023. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

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

Calman Colaiste is a small independent specialist college. It provides further education for young adults with autism, severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities and associated challenging behaviour. Many students are non-verbal or have notable communication and language difficulties. The college is part of the Kisimul Group of schools, with residential and supported-living homes. At the time of the visit, there were 20 learners studying at the college.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in improving the quality of education and the relevance of curriculum? Significant progress

Following the inspection in January 2023, leaders overhauled the curriculum. They now ensure that all learning has a clear purpose and is impactful. Leaders ensure that the curriculum develops learners' independence. Leaders have rapidly developed their resources, staffing and accommodation at the college. They have developed a working farm to support the 'Farm to Fork' vocational and work-related curriculum. Learners now have meaningful, work-related opportunities to develop themselves to live a more independent life.

Leaders and managers have established a highly reflective culture across the college. Tutors feel inspired to plan learning that is ambitious for all learners. Tutors, therapeutic staff and support staff work highly effectively together. They constantly review, share best practice and improve their skills and strategies. They work effectively towards a shared goal to developing learners' independence and ability to have a meaningful life.

Leaders have created a highly suitable approach to supporting the progress of their learners. Teachers set personal achievement targets for learners which embed their education, health and care plans (EHCP) outcomes. Teachers set incrementally challenging targets for each learner. Learners' achievement of bronze and silver targets will meet EHCP outcomes. At gold and platinum level, these targets extend beyond the EHCP target to challenge learners further. As a result, tutors provide an ambitious curriculum that prepares students for adulthood.

Leaders and managers closely monitor the quality of education. Managers review all targets set by tutors for learners, to ensure that they are appropriate and ambitious. Managers conduct frequent learning walks. They use their findings to set helpful developmental targets for tutors. Managers provide valuable training for tutors that relate to educational and therapeutic needs. Training for tutors includes target setting, baseline assessments, dysphagia training and speech and language training. As a result, tutors are now highly skilled in tailoring the learning and enabling learners to access the curriculum.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that teachers improve the planning and sequencing of the curriculum to support students to work more independently? Significant progress

Teachers plan and tailor the lessons extremely effectively. In environmental learning, teachers plan for a learner to order activities for a routine task to achieve their bronze target. The silver target requires them to order the tasks and consider the time required for each task, taking into account other factors such as the weather. At gold level, the learner needs to use a year planner to identify tasks over a 6-week period. As a result, teachers set targets to meet and possibly exceed learners' EHCP outcomes.

Teachers use highly effective communication strategies to support learners to access the curriculum. Teachers plan tailored resources and communication to the individual needs learners have. In lessons, teachers use verbal instructions, picture communication cards and Makaton to communicate. As a result, learners receive the appropriate support to access their learning and work independently.

Managers monitor learners' individual progress effectively. Managers work with staff to provide effective solutions for learners with barriers to learning. Therapeutic staff and teachers work together to identify highly effective communication strategies. Teachers use these strategies skilfully to lessen the barriers to learning. One such strategy is 'backward' instruction for learners who are reluctant to follow instructions. Teachers show the learners the end result of a process and the resources they need to use to get there. With a little prompting, learners succeed in making the connections necessary to create the desired outcome. As a result, learners progress with their learning.

Managers and teachers communicate frequently with parents and carers to extend the learning beyond the classroom. They share detailed information about the progress learners make at college. Managers and teachers encourage parents and carers to repeat similar activities with learners at home, such as cooking recipes or shopping. As a result, learners have the structure and routine in their daily lives to develop meaningful life skills.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that students can access the community and participate in relevant and meaningful enterprise activities, work-related activities or work experience? Reasonable progress

Leaders have designed a highly suitable work-related curriculum. Learners develop their knowledge to provide basic husbandry for a range of different animals. Furthermore, learners develop independent living skills by cooking their own lunch. In creative arts, learners produce artefacts to sell at coffee mornings. As a result, the curriculum supports learners to develop the skills they need to progress towards independence.

Students benefit from voluntary work in the local foodbank. Learners perform valuable routine activities alongside other volunteers. They separate ingredients such as coffee, sugar, soap powder to include in 3-day parcels. They count out tins for the food parcels accurately. They sort out donations and put them away. Learners take part in social interaction with other volunteers. As a result, they are developing their confidence and social skills to access the community.

Managers ensure that learners benefit from frequent visits to the local community. Learners participate in weekly visits to a swimming pool. They visit a local equestrian centre for horse-riding and dog walking. They visit local shops to buy products to take to the local food bank. Learners participate in enrichment days such as visits to local farms and pantomimes. As a result, learners are developing their resilience to cope and regulate their behaviour when out in the community.

Teachers plan highly relevant activities in the community to support learner progress. Teachers individualise their instructions to target the specific development areas learners have. Learners with a target to use both hands use their dominant arm to lift the item from the shelf when shopping. They pass the item to their less-dominant hand and place it in the trolley. They repeat this for each item they collect. As a result, learners continue to develop the skills needed for aspects of independence.

Leaders have plans in place to further develop the range of work and volunteering opportunities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh award and contacts with local charity shops. However, at the time of the visit, these were not yet in place.

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