

TEC Partnership

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

Unique reference number:	130585
Name of lead inspector:	Alison Dennis, His Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	General further education college
Address:	Nuns Corner Grimsby DN34 5BQ

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

TEC Partnership was inspected in September 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.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that ongoing strategic developments are implemented quickly and effectively, and are fully communicated to staff? Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have implemented a range of strategic developments to address the concerns identified at the previous inspection. The appointment of campus principals and directors has resulted in clearer lines of accountability and greater consistency across the group's campuses. The chief executive shares useful updates and briefings with all staff, which campus principals then discuss further with staff at each campus. These new structures have further enhanced communication across the group and campuses are now more integrated within a well-connected partnership.

Leaders have improved internal communication arrangements to ensure that staff are fully briefed about strategy and to involve them more in developments. They meet with staff at the group's campuses to share information and to gather feedback about existing and planned initiatives. They use an annual staff survey and termly 'pulse surveys' to gain an understanding of the experience of those working across a very large organisation. They use this information to review the impact of strategic and operational changes and adapt the implementation of initiatives where the impact is less positive than expected. Staff appreciate the visibility of leaders and the open channels of communication that leaders create. This has improved staff morale and many staff feel empowered to contribute to the direction of the organisation.

Leaders have placed increased emphasis on the training and development of their staff. Weekly group-wide development time provides opportunities for all staff to take part in mandatory and individualised training to enhance their skills and expertise. Leaders have introduced a range of tailored training pathways for staff to develop their capacity to lead and manage change across the organisation. Staff find these opportunities beneficial to their professional development and they appreciate the increased time to share ideas with their colleagues.

Governors have a thorough understanding of the progress that leaders are making in the implementation of their strategic priorities. They are actively involved in supporting leaders to review the effectiveness of the changes that have been made. Governors provide valuable challenge to support the continued implementation of improvement actions.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that staff receive sufficient support to help them to manage their workloads? Reasonable progress

Leaders have taken effective action to support staff to manage their workloads. They have recruited staff to vacant roles and enhanced recruitment processes to make the appointment of new staff more timely and efficient. This has reduced the need for staff to provide additional cover and has ensured that staff have a manageable workload. Staff now have more time to plan their teaching and to take part in training and development.

Leaders care about the well-being of their staff. They have introduced new measures to improve working conditions, including increasing the annual leave entitlement and providing more flexible working arrangements. They arrange opportunities for staff to come together for activity days and social events. This is contributing to individuals and teams feeling valued by leaders and managers.

Staff feel well supported by their line managers and able to discuss matters which may impact on their workload or well-being. They feel listened to when doing so and they appreciate the actions taken by leaders to lessen any pressures where possible. This is further contributing to a more positive and energised culture among the workforce.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that the plans in place for safeguarding reporting and monitoring across the group are swiftly implemented? Reasonable progress

Leaders have taken effective steps to standardise safeguarding procedures across the group. The group's designated safeguarding lead has clear oversight of arrangements for safeguarding. They communicate effectively with a team of specialist safeguarding staff at each of the group's campuses to ensure that concerns are recorded accurately and monitored effectively.

Leaders have introduced a single online platform for staff to report safeguarding concerns. They have provided training for staff about how and when to report concerns. They reinforce this through helpful newsletters and frequent in-person and online training. This is having a positive impact on how well staff understand and use reporting procedures.

Leaders have in place effective processes to review patterns and emerging trends in safeguarding referrals at each campus. They review information frequently through meetings and use this to determine support for learners and future training needs for staff.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that all adult learners benefit from effective careers information and guidance to understand how to achieve their long-term career goals and that learners on vocational education programmes for young people benefit from effective and suitable work experience? Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have improved the careers information and guidance provided to adult learners. Tutors explore learners' long-term aspirations at the start of programmes and discuss these with learners throughout their courses. Leaders have introduced weekly workshops for learners to access advice about the qualifications they need to achieve their long-term goals, as well as practical support to develop their CVs and job applications. However, a few learners are not aware of the workshops available to them.

Leaders and managers have taken effective steps to ensure that learners at each campus receive high-quality careers guidance. Leaders have appointed a group manager with responsibility for careers across all campuses. This is helping to standardise the information that is provided to learners and the sharing of practice between staff. Learners can access qualified careers advisers at any campus. Leaders recognise the need to promote the availability of these advisers so that more learners access this valuable resource.

Leaders have improved arrangements for the provision of work experience for young learners on study programmes. They have appointed at each campus a specialist team of staff to oversee the provision of work experience. They have also introduced an online dashboard to identify the number of placements required for learners and to monitor progress towards completion. This information is shared frequently with senior leaders and governors, including at board meetings. As a result, leaders are more assured about the progress being made towards placement completion targets.

Leaders are beginning to use the new systems and reporting procedures well to source and plan relevant and high-quality work placements for young people. Learners on courses where work experience is a mandatory part of the qualification attend relevant and high-quality work placements. For example, learners on T-level early years educator complete placements in primary schools to support pupils with phonics and mathematics. Level 3 health and social care learners attend placements at local hospitals to gain insights into the working practices of accident and emergency departments. At the time of the visit, leaders were yet to secure a large

number of placements. They were using the new arrangements well to secure these as quickly as possible.

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