

Trinity Specialist College

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Independent specialist college

Address: Lindridge Farm, Lindridge Road, Sutton
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This is the third re-inspection monitoring visit to Trinity Specialist College following publication of the inspection report on 18 April 2016, which found the provider to be inadequate overall.

This monitoring visit focused on the effectiveness of leaders and managers to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, self-assessment arrangements and the effectiveness of safeguarding.

Themes

The effectiveness of the actions to overcome the following safeguarding weaknesses: ensuring learners are safe; the recording and monitoring of all incidents or concerns is effective and the suitability of staff training. **Significant progress**

The recording and monitoring of all safeguarding concerns and incidents continue to be thorough and accurate. All relevant staff make good use of the secure software system to report any safeguarding concerns or incidents. Following training, these staff are now confident and competent in using the system. Teaching and learning support assistants' (LSAs) confidence in knowing when to report a concern or incident is good and all of the workforce are clear about their responsibilities, knowing what to do if a safeguarding incident arises. Managers, teachers and LSAs attended training to ensure that they understand the 'best interest' principles in the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The senior leader responsible for safeguarding monitors all incidents and concerns regularly and has very good links with key local authority safeguarding personnel. As a result of closer monitoring of safeguarding and health and safety incidents, and the training staff have received in managing aggressive or disruptive behaviour, the number of major incidents has reduced. Teachers, LSAs and managers are quick to identify potential problems and to respond appropriately when an incident takes place. Senior leaders review how staff respond and make any necessary changes in practice or support.

The recently appointed trustees all have a suitable understanding of safeguarding, with one trustee having significant professional experience and expertise in safeguarding. All relevant policies and procedures align closely to the local authority guidance and arrangements. Senior leaders review and revise policies as necessary before trustees approve any changes.

College leaders continue to ensure that they meet their duties and responsibilities defined under the 'Prevent' duty. Responses to students identified as being at risk of radicalisation or extremism continue to be appropriate and proportionate. All trustees have completed or plan to complete relevant training, and the senior leader

responsible for 'Prevent' and deputy designated safeguarding lead completed a workshop to raise awareness of 'Prevent'.

The effectiveness of self-assessment, quality improvement arrangements and performance management actions in raising standards and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Reasonable progress

Senior leaders continue to make reasonable progress in overcoming the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. The arrangements for self-assessment now make better use of the available evidence, including relevant data and teaching and learning observations. However, the current draft of the report fails to reflect the range, diversity and complexity of the current student group, the significant challenges these students face, and how the college is helping students to achieve their potential and is enabling them to become more independent.

The recently appointed board of trustees has a good range of experience and expertise. The trustees are making good progress in establishing appropriate governance and reporting structures. Their priorities of improving safeguarding and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are appropriate. Their extensive experience supports senior leaders and provides them with practical resources to improve the management of the college; for example, one trustee intends to share a process that will make the auditing of the single central register easier and more reliable.

Leaders and managers now have a strong focus on improving the skills and professionalism of teaching staff. The use of a recruitment agency to identify suitable staff gave managers the flexibility to convert temporary positions into permanent posts when they identified staff with the right approach, necessary skills and potential to meet the complex needs of Trinity Specialist College students. Where possible, managers identify current learning support staff with the potential to become teachers, offering relevant professional development and support to help them achieve qualified teacher status. Teachers are improving their teaching and assessment skills as a result of good, practical support from senior leaders, relevant in-house and external professional development and regular team meetings.

Senior leaders recognised the need to increase the amount of specialist therapies available to students. Music therapy is now available to all students attending the Lindridge Road site, resulting in positive benefits including improvements in fine and gross motor movements, better social behaviour, increased vocal communication and reductions in tension and levels of anxiety. Relevant students at the Clifton Road site now have support from an educational psychologist. Despite the best efforts of the leadership team, no speech and language therapist has been contracted, resulting in the significant proportion of students with communication difficulties not having

access to the necessary specialist. However, a speech and language therapist is scheduled to start in April 2017.

Senior leaders recently invested in a commercial management information system with the intention of improving the recording of student information, the setting of targets and the monitoring and reviewing of progress and achievement. The system is currently in development and it is too early to identify any impact.

The effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment and how well teachers set appropriate targets for students and record progress.

Reasonable progress

Senior leaders recognised the need to improve the use of the assessment of students' starting points, to plan learning that reflects their individual needs and to specify how learning activities contribute to the achievement of long-term learning goals. This work is still at an early stage with different parts of the college using different methods for planning learning and recording progress.

The majority of students with complex needs and very challenging behaviour benefit from effective learning support. This provides a consistently reassuring approach, lowering their anxiety levels and enabling them to access learning, interact with peers and cope with changes to routine without becoming distressed. At present, the student progress and review records for these students do not clearly identify the impact of learning and support on each individual. However, teachers are developing a new approach to planning individual learning that will identify progress and make clearer the links between curriculum activities and individual goals.

Improvements in the target setting and recording of achievement for students with less complex learning needs are effective. The links between what happens in the classroom, on work placement, or in the community and individual learning targets are generally clear, appropriate and reviewed regularly.

Staff across the college have a greater awareness of the need to reinforce functional skills wherever possible. The discrete functional skills sessions require further work to ensure that all activities are relevant to each individual, provide the appropriate challenge for the most able students and are suitably structured and meaningful activities for students with lower levels of ability.

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