

Easton and Otley College

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 10044994

Name of lead inspector: Matt Vaughan SHMI

Inspection date(s): 5–6 March 2018

Type of provider: Specialist college

Address: Bawburgh Road
Easton
Norwich
NR9 5DX

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This is the second re-inspection monitoring visit following publication of the inspection report on 20 July 2017. The inspection found the provider to be inadequate for overall effectiveness; quality of teaching, learning and assessment; personal development, behaviour and welfare; outcomes for learners; 16 to 19 study programmes; provision for learners with high needs; and adult learning programmes. The provider's effectiveness of leadership and management, and apprenticeship provision were judged as requiring improvement. The focus of this second visit, around three months after the first, was to judge, against the themes previously agreed, the progress leaders, governors and managers have made to improve the provision.

Themes

What actions have been taken to ensure that all safeguarding arrangements for all groups of learners are effective?

Insufficient progress

Since the previous re-inspection monitoring visit, leaders have not ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are effective. Teachers' and learners' use of potentially hazardous resources and materials on countryside management courses is not secure and is not recorded and monitored rigorously. During the course of the visit, inspectors discussed in detail the specific aspects of the college's safeguarding procedures and protocols. Inspectors identified specific concerns about the implementation of safety procedures and protocols. Although there is no indication that learners are at immediate risk of harm, inspectors judge that the college does not follow best practice in rigorously implementing safety procedures.

Staff have completed the online safeguarding training. All full-time learners have completed an induction training course on safeguarding that includes appropriate promotion of online safety and the dangers of radicalisation. Some full-time learners demonstrate a good understanding of such issues but too many do not. All part-time learners are expected to have completed this course by the end of the spring term. Too many apprentices do not have sufficient awareness of the dangers of extremism and the relevance of such concerns in their workplace.

What actions have been taken to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment rapidly?

Insufficient progress

Too much teaching, learning and assessment still requires improvement. When teaching is effective, including in floristry and equine studies, teachers provide challenging activities that extend learners' thinking and application, and culminate in them making good progress. These teachers deploy pertinent assessment tasks and use questioning adeptly to enable learners to understand fully specific topics and subject matter and to improve their knowledge and skills proficiently. Well-qualified teachers, often with substantial industry experience, use resources, including information learning technology, to enrich learning, promote effectively the demands of employers and ensure that learners advance well. The majority of learners enrolled on carpentry, motor vehicle and construction courses improve their practical skills and often create products or carry out practical tasks and projects to a good standard.

Too many learners do not make the progress of which they are capable because too often, teachers teach only to the lowest ability. As a consequence, too many learners are not challenged to augment their knowledge and skills. In lessons, too many learners do not take notes and record their learning to enable them to consolidate their understanding and work independently outside the classroom or workshop. Some teachers pay little heed to their learners' starting points, progress and prior attainment when teaching. Weaker teaching provides limited tasks and activities that do not enable learners to learn sufficiently and make good timely progress in their studies. Too often, learners complete mundane, repetitive tasks that do not challenge and motivate them to develop their higher-level thinking skills. At times, teachers answer their own questions without providing learners with sufficient time to reflect, consider and answer. Some teachers do not monitor effectively their learners' progress; they do not use assessment incisively to gauge the progress learners are making and inform their subsequent teaching to ensure that learners overcome barriers and excel. Some learners studying level 3 qualifications do not understand the relevance of studying particular aspects of theory to achieving their qualifications and career goals. A few teachers do not work effectively with learning support staff to ensure that targeted learners make swift progress.

A greater proportion of English and mathematics teaching than previously enables learners to improve these essential skills and make swift progress in their studies. However, too many learners studying English and mathematics GCSE qualifications are not proficient in applying appropriate understanding and skills when critically evaluating extracts of written text in their English studies or when solving algebraic mathematical problems. Not enough vocational teachers promote successfully the importance of English and mathematics in their subjects and relevant industries to ensure that learners understand the value of, and advance, such skills.

What actions have been taken to ensure that the progress of learners and apprentices is monitored rigorously and that governors, leaders and managers understand accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the provision?

Reasonable progress

Since the previous re-inspection monitoring visit, governors and leaders have put in place clear plans to ensure that the progress of learners and apprentices is monitored rigorously. Their intention is for appropriate interventions to take place to enable learners falling behind in their studies to catch up and make good progress. However, the records of governors' and leaders' meetings do not demonstrate sufficient focus on the progress that learners and apprentices are making. Leaders are not able to provide robust information on whether a greater proportion of learners and apprentices are making good progress than previously. Too many learners are not aware sufficiently of their targets and goals or able to articulate what they need to do to make rapid progress. Leaders acknowledge that the planned monitoring processes to effectively track learners' progress are yet to be established across the college. However, leaders and managers have dedicated much time to promoting with teachers the value of recording accurately and frequently such information on the college's standardised tracking process. This includes the monitoring of progress against 'holistic' assessments that are intended to measure the progress of learners who study 'pass/fail' qualifications without grade boundaries. Leaders have firm plans in place to conduct the first full scrutiny of measuring learners' progress shortly to enable them to understand better the progress learners and apprentices are making.

Governors continue to improve their understanding of the college's strengths and weaknesses. The 'Curriculum Recovery Strategy' group involving governors and leaders meets frequently to discuss most aspects of the college's performance. Governors are aware of most weaknesses and leaders' planned actions to rectify such concerns, including improving English and mathematics provision. Governors enhance their understanding of the quality of provision through conducting thematic learning walks of lessons.

Leaders continue to implement a phased restructure of staffing and resources. Two newly established curriculum director posts are to be recruited to in order to strengthen the quality of provision. Two vacancies for full-time advanced learning coach posts, one for each campus, are to be filled up shortly. Leaders are implementing robust performance management. A total of 27 teachers continue to be supported to improve their practice; a further five staff have left the college.

The college's observation process still lacks rigour because too many observers are insufficiently evaluative in their recordings. The records of too many observations continue to be overly optimistic, resulting in too much teaching being judged good or better. Too many observers place emphasis on describing teachers' actions and do not pay close attention to the impact of teaching, learning and assessment on learners' progress and outcomes. Too much action planning continues to pay

insufficient attention to all the specific aspects of teachers' practice that require improvement. Managers' moderation processes to assure the rigour and quality of observations have very recently improved and they are now demonstrating good challenge of very recent observation findings. In early January, leaders and managers ensured that the large majority of teachers and assessors participated in relevant four-day training to improve aspects of their practice. Leaders now ensure that learning walks to assess the quality of provision have a specific focus on improving teachers' practice.

What actions have been taken to ensure that learners' attendance, punctuality and behaviour are good?

Insufficient progress

Since the previous re-inspection monitoring visit, leaders have redoubled their efforts to improve learners' attendance. Leaders and managers continue to deploy a 'live' data source to monitor up-to-date information on attendance across the campuses and implement actions to chase up absenteeism. They carry out well-publicised promotions to drive up attendance. They have increased the array of incentives to reward learners with high attendance. Overall attendance levels have increased from the same date in the previous year but still remain below leaders' targets. Leaders' data over time indicates that learners' attendance at engineering lessons remains high, but is low in English, mathematics, arboriculture and brickwork lessons.

Many learners are late to their lessons and are seldom challenged by their teachers. Too many teachers set low expectations; they do not challenge their learners to demonstrate appropriate work-related skills and turn up to lessons on time. Too many teachers finish their lessons early and do not maximise lesson time to ensure that learners leave their lessons fully cognisant of what they have learned and what work they need to do to make good progress. As a result of learners leaving some lessons early, other learners still attending their lessons have their learning disrupted because of loud noise and idle chatter in the adjacent corridors.

What actions have been taken to ensure that learners for whom the college receives high-needs funding receive high-quality teaching, learning and assessment?

Significant progress

Since the previous re-inspection monitoring visit, leaders and managers now ensure that all learners' progress and achievement against challenging targets are monitored and recorded effectively. On discrete courses, teachers and support staff assiduously assess learners' needs and abilities against seven curriculum competencies. They monitor learners' progress effectively against mostly challenging targets. Learners are fully aware of their progress because teachers use a broad range of pertinent methods involving colours, shapes, symbols and written text to record and illustrate

progress. Learners studying on foundation courses are aware of what they need to do to improve their work and reach agreed targets. Teachers now teach to meet the different needs and abilities of their learners and, as a result, learners are challenged to work hard and make good progress. Teachers use good questioning and explanation techniques to ensure that learners studying in discrete provision grasp new ideas, meanings and concepts. Teachers work collaboratively with support staff to ensure that new learning is reinforced and consolidated effectively before moving on to new topics. Most support staff are adept at enabling their learners to work out problems, complete activities and learn independently. Teachers make good use of assistive technologies to enable all learners to participate fully in lessons.

Learners continue to reap the benefits of support from enterprise coaches and by undertaking internal work experience and enterprise activities across the campuses. For example, on the Easton campus, learners improve their communication, reading, writing and mathematical skills through operating one of the college's cafes. No learner has taken up external work experience. However, for the 2018/19 academic year, leaders and managers have plans in place to ensure that learners have meaningful external work placements and supported internships with employers. The chair of the governing body is providing his considerable commercial expertise to further partnership-working with employers. Work with Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils is at an embryonic stage, but both local authorities have committed to support the college with this important development.

What actions have been taken to ensure that apprentices access high-quality and timely off-the-job training?

Reasonable progress

Managers' data forecasts that overall achievement for apprentices in the current year will be considerably above both national and provider-group rates. However, managers' information indicates that far too many apprentices will not complete within the agreed planned timescales. As a result, managers now implement swifter intervention actions to ensure that apprentices make more rapid progress and complete their programmes successfully in a timely manner. For example, managers have recently revised agriculture apprentices' off-the-job learning from training on site to 'block release' on the college campuses. This is in order to focus specifically on apprentices who are behind in their studies and enable them to catch up.

Leaders and managers ensure that all apprentices who learn remotely have sufficient opportunity to improve their English and mathematical skills. Managers now collect and analyse the proportion of apprentices who achieve their functional skills qualifications the first time they take the examinations. Their data illustrates that the large majority of apprentices who receive all their off-the-job learning on the employers' sites achieve their English and mathematics functional skills qualifications at the first attempt. However, those apprentices who attend their off-the-job training at the college fare less well. For example, around a quarter of apprentices do not

achieve their mathematics functional skills at their first or second attempt. Too many apprentices who have achieved their English and mathematics functional skills qualifications or are exempt from having to study these qualifications do not receive any further support to improve such essential work-related skills.

The quality of apprenticeships provision is variable and too much is not effective. Where provision is good, teachers and assessors enable apprentices to gain relevant subject and industry knowledge well, in order to further their value in the workplace. They use good questioning techniques to challenge apprentices to augment their understanding and skills and to apply their new knowledge confidently. They agree clear and challenging targets with their apprentices and monitor these effectively through regular reviews of progress that fully involve employers. As a consequence, employers help inform and shape apprentices' learning, and apprentices make good progress.

However, too many apprentices are not making the progress of which they are capable. Some employers are not involved sufficiently in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of apprentices' off-the-job training. As a result, they do not know when this takes place or the progress made by their apprentices. Some employers provide their apprentices with too little time to study and make good progress, particularly those apprentices whose off-the-job training is planned remotely. Some apprentices are not visited frequently enough by assessors in the workplace and consequently are not assessed, coached and challenged sufficiently to advance their knowledge and skills.

Although apprentices' induction programmes include a mandatory focus on the importance of British values and the dangers of radicalisation, too many do not have sufficient awareness of such issues. Too many do not understand how and why such concerns relate to their workplace and job roles. A few employers are not aware that their apprentices are expected to have an understanding of these aspects of working and living in modern Britain.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Learner View

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

Employer View

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018