

Goldwyn Sixth Form College

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

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Goldwyn Sixth Form College was inspected in June 2018. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement. Personal development, behaviour and welfare and outcomes for learners were judged to be good. Other key judgements and provision for learners with high needs were judged to require improvement.

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

The college operates on four sites, with its main site in Ashford, Kent. The college has close links with Goldwyn School and offers foundation study programmes and entry, level 1 and level 2 courses in motor vehicle, body repair, welding and fabrication, construction and motorcycle maintenance. Students also study functional skills, life skills and personal and social education. There are currently 43 students attending the college. Most of the learners have complex learning difficulties that include behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.

Goldwyn college became a member of the national association of specialist colleges (Natspec) in September 2018.

Themes

What progress have leaders and managers made in improving quality assurance arrangements, and particularly the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that all learners make good progress? **Reasonable progress**

Senior leaders and governors have developed and improved quality assurance arrangements since the previous inspection. They use new termly learning and inclusion reports to indicate in detail strengths and capture the improvements made. They link these reports effectively to the development plan to make sure that they can see the progress they are making since the previous inspection. Leaders need to identify in greater detail weaknesses in the provision to plan more effectively to tackle all of these. They accept that their current development plan lacks quantifiable targets and can describe how their new development plan will be improved.

Leaders and managers have improved quality assurance processes for work experience, and particularly for external work placements. Staff monitor students'

participation in work experience more closely than at the time of the previous inspection. They can report in greater detail about the benefits that students derive from work placements.

Leaders and managers have strengthened their procedures for checking on and improving the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers talk positively about the impact of leaders' actions to improve their classroom practice. Leaders, managers and external consultants now carry out processes to check, standardise and improve teaching, learning and assessment. This is having a positive impact on teaching and learning. Leaders recognise that in a few cases they need to act more quickly to help staff improve their feedback to students.

Leaders and managers have broadened the range of training that teachers receive to help them improve their skills. Teachers appreciate the training that they have undertaken. They feel that this has made them more effective in the classroom. Teachers can give examples of how training has helped them support students more successfully. However, the training that staff have received on planning individualised learning is currently not having enough impact on teachers' lesson planning and students' learning.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that tutors use learners' starting points to plan challenging work for learners? Insufficient progress

Although teachers engage students successfully in learning, they do not yet plan lessons that challenge students sufficiently. Most teachers set individualised targets for students, but these concentrate too much on the work to be completed by the end of the lesson rather than the learning that will be taking place. Students benefit from small class sizes and the support that they get from teachers. This helps them to develop their practical skills and confidence. Too often students all work on the same task at the same level of difficulty. As a result, teachers do not challenge them well enough for all to reach their full potential.

Since the previous inspection leaders and staff have improved the ways that they assess and measure students' starting points. However, they still do not bring together all the information they have about students' prior attainment, participation and personal and social needs to plan successfully a personalised curriculum for students. Teachers rely too much on the very well-developed relationships they have with students and their parents and carers to try to tailor teaching and learning to the needs of students.

Students value the practical activities that teachers plan. These increase their levels of confidence during their courses. Teachers work closely with students to help them develop their independent living skills. This helps students to take and pass their

driving tests, travel on public transport to meet friends and to understand the career options available to them.

What progress have governors made to ensure that they can act effectively to support leaders in improving the provision? **Significant progress**

Leaders at the college and governors at Goldwyn School aim to provide a form of governance that is focused solely on the sixth form college. The members of the college strategic committee are well qualified, highly experienced and know the college very well. They are very enthusiastic about their roles and strongly focused on the success of the college. Members of the committee meet frequently to oversee work at the college. They also take part in governing body meetings at Goldwyn School. As a result, they understand how pre-16 schooling has an impact on students at the college.

The members of the strategic committee had a substantial positive impact on the speed of improvements. They can give detailed examples of how they have held senior leaders to account and also supported them to improve the provision. Committee members produced detailed and useful learning inclusion reports. They use these effectively to check progress on actions from the development plan. They have worked closely with the head of the college to establish improved systems for tracking students' progress, particularly against targets from education, health and care plans.

Committee members know about the impact of the actions that they and senior staff have taken. They can describe in detail the improvements that have taken place since the previous inspection. They understand the remaining weaknesses of the college and oversee actions to remedy these effectively. For example, they recognised that the current development plan does not contain measurable targets and have planned carefully to remedy this. They understood the need to improve the organisation of, and students' participation in, external work experience. They oversaw actions to improve this effectively.

Committee members have a comprehensive overview of the achievements of college students. They can explain in detail the most recent and in-year achievement data and the reasons why achievements declined in 2017/18.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that learners achieve their functional skills qualification in English and mathematics? **Reasonable progress**

Students' attendance at functional skills lessons has improved, although it is still too low. Leaders have recently appointed a highly experienced functional skills teacher who has started to transform the teaching of English and mathematics at the college. Students benefit from the improved prominence of functional skills teaching. Students now better understand the relevance of these skills to their vocational work and lives. They now understand more clearly the importance of achieving qualifications in English and mathematics. Students feel more confident about their writing skills and mathematical calculations.

Teachers now more successfully embed English and mathematics in their subjects. Teachers work closely with the functional skills teacher to develop useful and informative resources for students that enhance their literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers have improved the ways that they contextualise English and mathematics in their vocational lessons. This helps students to understand the importance of developing these skills to be successful in the workplace. For example, in motor vehicle lessons students calculate engine speeds and revolutions per second in different gears. They learn the correct spellings of engine parts and shock absorber systems. Students calculate the costs of a job to a customer, including the hourly rate and cost of parts, and then translate this to a working job card. This prepares students well for work placements and future employment.

Very small numbers of students took functional skills examinations in English and mathematics in 2017/18. Staff have entered more students for these examinations in 2019 but it is too early to judge the impact of the improvements in functional skills teaching.

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