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Brogdale Community Interest Company

Progress monitoring report

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Name of lead inspector: Judy Lye-Forster, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection date(s): 27–28 January 2021

Type of provider: Independent specialist college

Address: Willowway
Culnells Farm
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Kent
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Brogdale Community Interest Company (Brogdale CIC) was last inspected in March 2019. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

This monitoring visit focused on the extent to which leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances. It was undertaken as outlined in the [operational note on visits carried out from January 2021](#) and with reference to the further education and skills handbook.

These visits are to help learners, parents, employers and government understand how providers are meeting the needs of learners in this period, including those with high needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, inspectors carried out this monitoring activity remotely. As a result, the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would be the case during an on-site inspection. Therefore, this report provides a more limited level of assurance.

The impact of COVID-19 has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgement below. Inspectors did not evaluate leaders' response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer of 2020, when the provider was not open to all learners and there were no national expectations regarding remote education.

Theme

What progress are leaders and those responsible for governance making to ensure that staff teach a curriculum and provide support to meet learners' needs, including the provision of remote/online learning?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have made reasonable progress in achieving the recommendations from the previous inspection. Teachers and support staff effectively establish students' starting points and as a result they have been able to accurately capture the progress students are making. Leaders have improved their monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching and learning. They identify and put in place support for staff to develop their practice. Some progress has been made in increasing and broadening the provision of work experience placements for students, however this has been hampered by the pandemic. Similarly, the provision of

impartial careers guidance is planned for and in place but has not yet been implemented.

Teachers are now more adept at thoroughly integrating aspects of the students' vocational learning with the development of their English and to a lesser extent, mathematics. As a result, learners are far more enthusiastic about learning and developing their English and mathematics, as they now understand the relevance of these skills for their futures. Leaders and governors recognise that there is still more work to do to improve the teaching of mathematics.

Many teachers continue to teach students face-to-face, in classrooms and workshops, and have other group members online, when it is not appropriate for them to attend college. This helps those students who are learning remotely to still feel part of the group and learn similar things. Students who are anxious about attending college or using video conferencing software are supported through paper materials that teachers send home. Teachers use phone and email communication frequently to support these students.

Teachers have worked with much determination to produce teaching and learning materials that students can use at home, either online or on paper. They have tried to ensure that students can develop the knowledge they need to support the development of their practical skills using websites, pictures, videos and diagrams. For example, students learning catering remotely have been sent recipes, the food required to make the dish and videos of the teacher demonstrating how to make the dish, so that they can continue to develop practical skills alongside their peers learning at college.

Teachers ensure that students benefit from worthwhile teaching activities when they attend college. Students enjoy the time they spend at college and are confident in identifying the skills they have improved during teaching sessions. Teachers' feedback to students on their work is positive and encouraging.

Teachers' planning of the curriculum is not yet sufficiently comprehensive or extensive. Teachers place too much emphasis on students' achievement of qualification evidence and insufficient emphasis on students' development of their personal, social and work skills.

Students speak highly of the support and guidance they receive, both in normal times and during periods of national restriction. They find the college to be a safe and inclusive space where they can develop new practical, personal and social skills.

Teachers work hard to give students the support they need to continue learning. Leaders and managers monitor students closely to ensure they participate in their studies, whether working onsite or from home. Staff work as a team and make daily welfare checks on students and their families. When a concern arises staff support families wherever they can, for example by providing food parcels. Safeguarding remains a high priority.

Teaching assistants play a vital role in supporting students, bridging education and welfare support. They receive specialist training in supporting challenging behaviour, communicating effectively and how to increase students' independence. Staff are confident in the support they give their students and, as a result, students trust staff and students' behaviour improves as they grow in confidence.

Staff have worked hard to keep everything consistent as they know their students respond best when things remain the same. They saw an increase in poor mental health amongst students during the national restrictions in March 2020, when their routines were disrupted. As a result, staff have since maintained a structured teaching day for all students regardless of whether they are working onsite or at home. This has helped students maintain relationships with their teachers, support staff and peers.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- ensure teaching and support staff more thoroughly integrate the students' personal and social development targets into their vocational curriculum

- ensure students develop their skills for work and benefit from external work experience placements as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

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