

Little Gate College

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Mark Hillman, His Majesty's Inspector

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Type of provider: Independent specialist college

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Ofsted undertakes to carry out monitoring visits to independent specialist colleges newly funded by the Department for Education. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Little Gate College is in East Sussex. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 20 students aged 16 to 25 years old enrolled in learning. Students follow a programme of learning that includes work placements, skills development in for example, English and mathematics, and activities to enable personal development. Students have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, (SEND), including social, emotional and mental health needs, autism and speech, language and communication needs.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant learning programmes that are clearly defined and tailored to suit the individual needs of learners? Reasonable progress

Leaders, trustees and staff are highly ambitious for their students. They are passionate about the importance of employment for people with SEND and changing societal attitudes toward those with disabilities or learning difficulties.

Leaders and staff have designed a coherent programme of learning to help students gain the skills, qualities and confidence they need for employment successfully. They use their knowledge of the priorities in the region and their strong partnerships with employers to provide students with tailored work placements and training that align to local employment needs. Leaders have created a purposeful curriculum so that students develop their essential literacy, numeracy and personal skills successfully. This helps students prepare well for work and life.

Leaders use high needs funding carefully so that students can overcome barriers to learning, employment and independence. They use therapies and qualified specialists to support and train students, so they learn and use strategies to help them in their lives and become more confident.

Staff use their expertise well to plan learning that is well tailored to students' individual needs. They use education and health care plans effectively to set students

ambitious targets across their curriculum. They monitor the progress students make effectively to inform further targets and skills development. This contributes to students making good progress over the course of their time at the college.

Leaders and managers have appropriate processes in place to check the quality of education that students receive. They have clear and credible plans to develop these further to inform staff training, curriculum development and improvements to students' experience.

How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality learning programmes that develop independence, communication and skills and help them to achieve their personal and/or work-related goals? Reasonable progress

Students enjoy their time at college. They grow in confidence quickly, overcome barriers to learning successfully, and achieve well. Students learn essential new skills such as personal budgeting, healthy lifestyles and relationships, which helps them prepare well for adulthood. Staff equip students to become more independent, such as through travel training, carefully and appropriately reducing support over time to help learners become more autonomous. They provide students with high-quality work placements, such as proofreading and content writing for local newspapers, which gives them valuable opportunities to learn about the world of work.

Staff identify students' starting points, interests and aspirations accurately. They use this information to tailor their learning and work placements very effectively. In lessons, highly qualified and experienced teachers use very effective strategies to help students learn. For example, handling and visualising coins to aid students' recognition and writing verse to improve their literacy skills.

Wider support staff, who help students in lessons and at work, contribute well to recognising and planning students' development. They help students to learn using innovative strategies such as visualising and feeling coins to identify their value. However, in a small number of instances, support staff do not always provide students with sufficient time to answer questions or complete tasks before helping them, which slows their learning.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress

Well-trained and experienced safeguarding staff make sure students are safe. They ensure staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding. Safeguarding staff identify concerns quickly, take appropriate action and record concerns diligently. Where

necessary, they collaborate effectively with external agencies. Leaders check that staff are safe to work with students.

Leaders have a secure understanding of the risks related to radicalisation and extremist views. They have recently focused on further improving their assessment and mitigations of these risks. Trustees understand their responsibilities to ensure leaders continue to keep students safe from these changing risks.

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