

# Pathway to Success at Kingsbury Training

The Gardens, Erdington, Birmingham, B23 6AG

**Inspection dates** 25–27 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	Adequate	3
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Adequate	3
Quality of teaching	Adequate	3
Quality of curriculum	Adequate	3
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Adequate	3
Leadership and management	Adequate	3

## Summary of key findings

### This school is adequate because

- Good progress is made when students learn practically; less progress occurs in some academic subjects where some students rely too much on help from staff and show less interest.
- Tutors make lessons interesting, although work is not always well matched to students' individual abilities and the feedback provided is not always specific enough to help students improve.
- The students enjoy getting rewards for good work and behaviour, although the way students are awarded these is not consistent enough to make a marked impact on their learning, conduct and attendance.
- Students' attendance generally improves well compared with that in their previous placements. There is still some lateness to school, and lessons and some students remain hard to engage at times.
- The headteacher is ambitious for students and wants them to do well; improvement since the last inspection has been adequate. However, systems and procedures in the school are not always consistent enough in ensuring that all students' special educational needs are fully met and that monitoring and evaluation of teaching are rigorous enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- Students enjoy vocational learning in the school's workshops and on projects offsite.
- Relationships with students are strong, and staff use these and their good humour to manage students when they are not paying attention in lessons.
- There is a wide range of subjects and courses on offer, especially for vocational learning, sporting activity and outdoor pursuits.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school requires improvement and must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place at one day's notice. On the third day of the inspection, the school was not operating as an end of year award ceremony took place offsite.
- Four lessons were seen, taught by five tutors. Two were undertaken jointly with the headteacher, amounting to two hours of observations.
- No responses were made by parents on Parent View. Although there were responses to the online survey from students last autumn, these were not from students currently registered at the school.
- Discussions took place with staff and all school policies were examined, as was students' work and other evidence about their progress. Records of lessons observations and training were also checked; account was taken of the responses in the two questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

George Derby, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Pathway to Success is a school for up to 45 boys and girls with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. It provides vocational training and education for students aged 14 to 16 years. It opened in 2009.
- The school has not had any students on its roll until last year; students attending previously were all solely on the roll of their mainstream school. There are now three registered at the school, all with a statement of special educational needs. The students have been placed by Birmingham local authority; two are autistic. Some have learning difficulties but all display challenging behaviour at times. The statements identify that students should be full time at the time school but the local authority has agreed that their initial placements are part time, building to full time.
- One student has been at the school for a year but is also educated at another independent special school for half the week. The two other students entered the school in the last few months. Students have had previously disrupted educations and have attended poorly at their previous schools. Students are from a wide range of cultures and ethnic groups.
- The school is located at the Kingsbury Training Centre, a 16 to 18 years provision which had a learning and skills Ofsted inspection last November. The school utilises the facilities and staff of the training centre.
- Pathway to Success also provides alternative provision for students at mainstream schools. These remain on the roll of their school, although a small number attend four days per week and some do not attend any place on the fifth day. These students are not on the roll of Pathway to Success. Up to sixteen attend Pathway to Success each day.
- All students, those who are post-16 and those who are 14 to 16 years attending the school or attending alternative provision, are taught together.
- The school was last inspected in June 2010 but this is the first inspection when it has had students on its roll.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and planning so that it is at least good and much is outstanding by ensuring that tutors:
  - take full account in their planning and teaching of students' special educational needs and the targets set for them which come from their statements
  - provide work which is matched to the needs and abilities of all students
  - are consistent in the way rewards are given and sanctions applied, based on clear criteria for success
  - take every opportunity to help students to work and learn independently
  - provide written and verbal feedback to students about their work which not only praises their success but also helps them to be clear about the next steps needed to help them improve
  - fully plan aspects of scientific learning and physical education and that the revision of the curriculum policy is completed.
- Ensure that students:
  - are clear about what they must do to achieve their reward and the sanctions that will be applied if there is any misbehaviour
  - improve their attendance and punctuality to school and lessons

- take more responsibility for their learning in academic lessons and work more independently
  - help to keep the school free of litter.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
- focusing rigorously on how effectively students are learning, and not just on what is being taught, when monitoring lessons
  - increasing the accuracy of self-evaluation by concentrating on the provision and achievement of those who are in the school
  - ensuring that the planning for students who have statements takes full account of the statement objectives through smarter targets which are monitored and evaluated rigorously on a regular basis
  - providing training in managing the communication and social needs of students with autism
  - working closely with the local authority and other schools to ensure plans are in place to manage the provision of students with part-time or shared placements
  - ensuring that the proprietor addresses the shortfall in meeting regulations.
- The school must meet the following independent school standards by:
- ensuring that there is an admission register which is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 17)
  - ensuring that suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for students aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education (paragraph 23A(1)(c))
  - ensuring that there is suitable outdoor space to enable physical education to be provided to students in accordance with the school curriculum (paragraph 23G(1)(a))
  - ensuring that there is suitable outdoor space to enable students to play outside (paragraph 23G(1)(b))
  - ensuring that the following information is provided to parents, carers and others about the proprietor: where the proprietor is an individual, their full name, address for correspondence during both term time and holidays, and a telephone number or numbers on which they may be contacted at all times (paragraph 24(1)(a))
  - ensuring that the following information is provided to parents:
    - particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions
    - details of the complaints procedure adopted by the school, together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year
    - the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 24(1)(b)).

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

### Adequate

Students' achievement, although adequate, requires improvement. It is not yet good because some do not do as well as they could in their academic studies, usually because they do not attend some of these lessons and tutors' planning does not always take full account of their individual special educational needs.

They make good progress in vocational learning and their attitudes to this practical work. They develop good employability skills, including good practical construction and building trades skills. They display good levels of motivation and they talk positively about the projects they have undertaken offsite and in the workshop. They apply themselves well and are keen to build on what they have learned previously and know how they can improve their work. Their ability to think for themselves and problem solve improve well in practical situations. There are key strengths in the skills they have developed in aspects such as painting and decorating, carpentry and bricklaying. They receive certificates for, and gain good levels of understanding in, health and safety at work, such as in the use of personal protective equipment, display screen equipment, first aid and fire awareness. They achieve well in gaining awards which are usually at the highest Entry Level.

Although the academic lessons focus on the English and mathematical skills needed for employment, a few students sometimes find learning a struggle and make slower progress. This is because learning is not always specifically tailored for them or broken down into small enough steps. Some do well and gain Entry Level awards in functional literacy and numeracy. Lessons work best, and students make better progress, when they understand the relevance of what they are learning, especially when the activity is part of the vocational lessons. This gives students the opportunity to use their skills in a practical context. In addition, individual support provided helps students develop the skills they have most difficulty with, which for some is developing early reading skills. This also helps the most reluctant students who fear having their literacy or numeracy weaknesses exposed in front of other older students.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

### Adequate

Behaviour and personal development is judged to be adequate and not good or better because some students do not always concentrate fully in the more academic lessons and a few do not always arrive punctually to school or lessons. While attendance is much better than previously, for a few it does not improve consistently enough. The administrative staff have reasonable systems in place to follow up absence and to contact parents but for some students this has limited impact.

Students' generally work hard in, and enjoy, practical lessons. A main focus for the school is to improve students' self-esteem and to help them to believe that they can succeed. The school is largely successful in doing these things, especially in building students' confidence. As a result of this and the improvement in workshop skills, they are satisfactorily prepared for the future. Staff are good role models and help students to make the 'right' decisions. They take a pride in their work and get a great sense of achievement when they have produced, for example, timber joints to a required standard or a brick wall pointed correctly. However, students do not always take a pride in the accommodation and leave litter inside and outside the school. Older students, not part of the school, do not provide good role models in this respect and leave cigarette litter outside the building, as they are allowed to smoke at the front of the school.

During the inspection, students were polite and tried hard with their work. They got on well with one another. However, a few were late to English and mathematics lessons, and some distracted each other by talking socially in lessons rather than applying themselves diligently. Sometimes they wait for help or to be told what to do next when they could think for themselves. At times, students referred to their mobile phones and tried to log onto the internet when working. The

school's past records show there is no bullying and that sanctions are applied, and referrals made to tutors, mainly for mobile use during lessons, lateness or absence and occasional swearing.

Students enjoy working towards the rewards they get such as 'Go Ape' and visits to Drayton Manor, although these are long-term goals. Short-term incentives, such as 'stickers', 'stamps' or points in lessons are not consistently applied.

Students are provided with an employability and personal development course which provides opportunities to understand about public institutions and learn about living in a multicultural society. As part of their community work, as well as work experience, students are regularly involved in work to improve buildings and accommodation in the local area. However, there is no student council or forum for students to make their views known, which could help extend their understanding of their role as citizens. The proprietor has taken steps to ensure that no partisan political views will be promoted and that there will be balanced debate during any political discussion with students.

### Quality of teaching

### Adequate

Teaching is adequate and is not yet good because not enough account is always taken of students' specific special educational needs in planning and teaching. Only a narrow range of strategies are used to support personal improvement.

Written planning for lessons is based clearly on the schemes of work, and is written for all learners in the lesson, aged 14 to 18 years. However, the targets specified for those with statements are very broad. They are often about course completion, rather than about the specific aspects of their learning or behaviour which need to improve, as identified in the objectives of the statement. While the tutor takes into account the level of the course content that the student is working at, the work is not always refined enough or precisely matched to what students with learning difficulties need. Neither does it take full account of their literacy, numeracy or social and emotional needs. Sometimes, students are given too much help in academic lessons and not enough is done to stretch them, getting them to think for themselves and apply what they have learned.

A key strength is the way in which tutors find ways to engage and interest students. Students respond positively to these and concentrate well on what they are asked to do in these lessons. Sometimes, however, the tutors do not make it clear what students will actually learn in these circumstances and miss the opportunity to extend their learning further.

Staff use humour and their positive relationships well to manage students in lessons. They have a variety of ways of rewarding students for good work and behaviour, but these are often individual to the tutor. Some do not use the school's systems of awards consistently enough to inform students about how they are doing and why they have been awarded, or why they have not achieved, a particular point. Consequently, while students get a sense of achievement, the potential use of this to tackle important issues consistently and systematically, such as punctuality and attendance and increase the time students have to learn, are missed.

Assessment is adequate. Test information and observations are recorded regularly. Tutors have a number of ways of recording progress in relation to aspects of learning, such as attention, concentration, listening and responding. They track improvement in relation to course requirements and criteria. There are also good systems for students to record their learning and ongoing progress, and for tutors to respond to this through the student logs. However, the impact of these is sometimes lost when learners complete these inconsistently because tutors do not insist these are filled in. Written comments such as 'good' are well received by students but these are often the only comment. Alone, these do not identify what is good and how students can improve further.

**Quality of curriculum****Adequate**

The quality of the curriculum is adequate but is not yet good. It prepares them satisfactorily for future work or training. The school provides a rich and varied curriculum; not all students take the opportunities on offer and there are missed opportunities to include some aspects of the students' statements in curriculum planning. All regulations are met.

A good range of vocational opportunities are on offer relating to traditional trades and employability skills and personal development, as well as information and communication technology (ICT) skills and hairdressing. Courses are accredited at Entry Level and Level 2, although the latter is not undertaken by the school's students; they only attend on a part-time basis, and as a result, are unable to achieve this level. Functional skills learning in English, mathematics and ICT is also on offer and work in is generally planned to make what they learn relevant to the vocational aspects. Careers guidance is fully planned and there are aspects taught in English and mathematics, such as application form completion and money matters. A wide range of sporting activities, such as caving, hill walking, orienteering, archery, climbing and well as fitness regimes on site are well received by students.

Although not failing regulations, there are some weaknesses in planning. Occasionally, planning only provides the briefest outline of what students will undertake and the skills they will learn. Similarly, vocational learning covers scientific aspects although, at times, there is little in planning which reflects this. The school's curriculum policy is under revision as the school is developing new courses for September.

**Pupils' welfare, health and safety****Adequate**

Students' welfare, health and safety are adequate rather than good or better. Students are kept safe and free from harm. A good range of detailed policies support this area well. Health and safety is a central part of their vocational learning and students have good awareness in this area. Fire drills have been a cause for concern in the past because they have not been regular enough and procedures have not always been followed by some staff. The school's new plans and arrangements mean that these problems have been addressed well, although the improvement is relatively recent. All regulations are met except one. The school's admission register is still not completed correctly, although the attendance is recorded accurately.

Safeguarding arrangements are effective and systems for staff recruitment robust; all relevant checks are made on staff, including volunteers. Four staff are trained at a higher level as designated persons for child protection. This is to ensure there is always someone on site with the necessary skills, if the lead tutor is absent. Similarly, five tutors are trained in first aid at work. Regular checks are made on equipment and there are detailed risk assessments for the accommodation and activities on and off site. Staff training in health and safety is regularly undertaken. Students are free from bullying and harassment, although the school's systems for rewarding good behaviour are not fully reflected in the behaviour policy.

Students learn how to keep safe in the community and when using the internet. They demonstrate a strong commitment to health and fitness, which are promoted well through the curriculum and sporting activities. No smoking is allowed on the school site and the school's students adhere to this. Post-16 learners, however, do not provide good role models as they are allowed to smoke in the vicinity of the school.

**Leadership and management****Adequate**

Leadership and management are adequate but require improvement. The headteacher is passionate about ensuring that students are prepared for future life and is ambitious that students do well. She constantly reviews the curriculum to ensure that its makeup reflects what they need for the future. She is successful in achieving this and ensuring students are ready for the next steps. However, the proprietor has not ensured that all regulations are met fully. The school does not provide some of the required information to parents, the school's recreation area is out of use and has been for some time, and there are no showers or changing facilities for students when undertaking physical activity.

While improvement since the last inspection is adequate, some aspects which were problematic in the last year have been slow to improve, such as fire safety and one regulation is still not met despite being raised previously. There have been a good number of curriculum developments, although tutors' planning for some aspects is not as detailed as it could be.

Staff receive regular training, especially in relation to vocational learning. However, they have not undertaken any training in relation to autism, although this is an ambition of leaders. In order to improve provision for students, a tutor is undergoing an accredited course as a special educational needs coordinator. This tutor is to oversee the target setting for students with statements and the training needs of staff in the near future. Although there is regular communication with the local authority about students' needs, there is little written ongoing review or planning documentation to show how part-time students will increase their time to a full-time placement, or about the relative responsibilities when a student's place is shared with another school.

Monitoring of teaching is regularly undertaken, although not directly by the headteacher, and is of variable quality. While she examines students' work and aspects of learning, the proprietor has decided to use tutors who are trained in observation from the post-16 provision. Evaluations generally identify the salient points about strengths and weaknesses of teaching but sometimes focus little on learning, especially where students have statements. A few observations recorded do match the grade awarded and provide limited information.

The headteacher has a realistic view of the school's performance, although the self-evaluation document does not separate its work from other aspects of the centre, such as alternative provision. It also means that the key areas of focus which relate to students' needs, as identified on their statements, are sometimes not considered sufficiently.



## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135898
<b>Inspection number</b>	422805
<b>DfE registration number</b>	330/6208
<b>Type of school</b>	Special school for students with behavioural, emotional, and social needs
<b>School status</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14–16 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	3
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	3
<b>Proprietor</b>	Anthony Danbury
<b>Headteacher</b>	Yvonne Lewis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 June 2010
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£10,000 (full time)
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