

Harington Scheme

Not-for-profit organisation



3–6 November 2015

Inspection dates

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for learners | Requires improvement |
| Provision for learners with high needs | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Achievement for learners has declined sharply; the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications, especially by the date planned, is too low.
- Learners' achievements in English and mathematics functional skills qualifications are low.
- Not enough teaching and learning is of good or outstanding standard.
- Teachers and support staff do not use the results of their assessment of learners' starting points well enough to plan learning and training effectively.
- Leaders and managers have not been successful in maintaining the quality of provision since the previous inspection; self-assessment and quality improvement arrangements are not effective.
- Managers do not use data sufficiently well to monitor the performance of the provision.

The provider has the following strengths

- Initial advice and guidance is very effective and motivates learners with high needs to participate in education and training.
- Learners receive very good specialist care and support from a range of appropriately qualified and experienced staff and volunteers.
- Work experience is well organised and helps learners develop good skills for employment.
- Learning takes place in a calm and welcoming specialist horticultural setting in which learners feel well protected, and where both tutors and learners treat each other with respect.
- Good use of strong strategic partnerships has ensured that the provision reflects the needs of the local community very well.

Full report

Information about the provider

- The Harington Scheme (the scheme) is a registered charity based in Highgate, north London. It was established in 1980 by local people to advance the education, training and social development of young people with learning difficulties, learning disabilities, behavioural difficulties or mental health needs by providing employability, life skills, horticultural and retail training. The scheme currently has 37 learners, of whom 29 are adult learners and eight are under 19 years of age.
- The number of pupils at schools in the area achieving five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, is above the national rate but below that for school pupils in inner London. Just over half of the employed residents in Haringey work within the managerial, professional and technical sectors. Unemployment is lower than that reported nationally and the proportion of people of working age with advanced level qualifications is above the national rate, as are average weekly earnings.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that managers identify those learners at risk of not achieving and improve the planning and coordination of the support provided by learning support assistants so that all learners receive appropriate and timely individual support. Teachers and support staff should be made more accountable for learners' rates of progress.
- Use the results of initial assessments to plan learning and ensure that learners have detailed, and clear short- and medium-term learning targets, so that they are aware of the progress they are making and can plan their work.
- Ensure that the development of learners' English and mathematics skills is well planned to meet their individual needs by using the results from initial assessment better to match learners with an appropriate level of qualification that meets their needs and ability.
- Ensure that all teachers regularly test and confirm learners' knowledge and understanding in both theory and practical sessions by encouraging less-confident learners to contribute more fully to planned activities and respond more frequently to questions raised by staff.
- Ensure that the self-assessment report accurately identifies all key strengths and areas for improvement and leads to a detailed quality improvement plan with clear actions to rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and learner achievements. The self-assessment report and the improvement plan should be subject to robust challenge and regular oversight by the board of trustees.
- Ensure that trustees, leaders and managers have access to timely, robust and accurate management information in order to:
 - accurately identify how well learners are achieving and progressing over time
 - monitor any variations in the performance of different groups of learners
 - enable swift and timely management intervention to improve the quality of provision for all learners.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The scheme has a clear and well-communicated vision for its learners, many of whom have had an unsatisfactory experience of mainstream post-16 education. However, initiatives introduced by leaders and managers since the previous inspection have not ensured that learners achieve well; performance and standards have declined.
- Business and strategic planning supports the scheme's day-to-day operations effectively. However, further development work is urgently required to improve the use of management information and ensure that leaders and managers have an accurate and precise understanding of how well learners are achieving, and whether any differences in the achievement of different groups of learners are reducing over time.
- Staff appraisal and performance management requires improvement. Leaders have not yet been successful in ensuring that all managers use the appraisal scheme effectively so as to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment are good or better. Targets to improve teaching and learning and the use of learning support assistants are not ambitious enough. For example, the performance targets set for learning support assistants focus too much on minor individual tasks. The targets do not reflect the importance of planned support in helping learners to achieve and make good progress.
- Staff are well qualified and experienced and leaders provide them with continuous professional development which ensures that they keep up to date both vocationally and professionally. However, leaders and managers do not always evaluate the usefulness of staff development activities effectively, particularly when gauging the resulting improvements in the quality of experience for learners.
- Self-assessment requires improvement. The current self-assessment report is too descriptive and lacks sufficient evidence to support some of the key judgements. Leaders and managers failed to recognise the significant decline in outcomes for learners and consequently have an overgenerous view of the quality of the study programme.
- Quality improvement has not ensured that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Although managers have recognised some of the issues identified by inspectors, action plans arising from self-assessment do not identify all the key actions managers need to take to bring about necessary improvements; for example, improving the weak management information system. Leaders have very recently revised their approaches to raising standards, key to which has been the appointment of new English and mathematics teaching staff. However, it is too early to judge the effectiveness of these initiatives.
- Resources to support learning are good; leaders and managers have prioritised available funding appropriately to support and enhance the educational and training experience for learners. Recent refurbishment to classroom accommodation, the purchase of new information, communication and technology resources and the recent lease of new retail premises to provide enhanced work placement opportunities to learners have added greatly to the quality of the experience received by learners.
- Leaders have used good and productive partnerships with employers, local authorities and schools to provide a curriculum that meets learners' needs and interests appropriately. Managers and staff use local and regional network meetings effectively to identify gaps in provision and to develop individualised programmes that successfully engage vulnerable learners and facilitate their smooth transition onto the scheme. Learners benefit from access to a range of high-quality and supportive work placements and participate in a good variety of work-related activities that prepare them well for the next stages of their careers.
- Leaders have ensured that learners benefit from a welcoming and inclusive environment that enables them to successfully become re-engaged in education and training. Specialist behavioural and other welfare support staff successfully help teachers to manage the sometimes challenging behaviour of a few learners. Staff promote equality and inclusion well in lessons and during

vocational activities; as a result, learners say they feel welcomed and safe in an environment where bullying and harassment are not tolerated. However, although aspects of equality and diversity are regularly discussed at management meetings, managers' analysis of the differences in achievement between different groups of learners is superficial.

■ **The governance of the provider**

- While the board of trustees has successfully used its members' extensive and wide-ranging business and commercial skills to secure the financial viability of the provision, they have not given sufficient attention to the sharp decline in learners' achievements or held managers to account for the quality of teaching and learning received by learners, both of which require improvement. The key performance measures that trustees use to monitor the quality of provision do not provide a robust set of indicators by which trustees can objectively judge how well learners learn and achieve.
- Trustees and leaders have established a clear and well-communicated strategic vision relating to the purpose and future of the scheme; they are unequivocal about their role in providing education and training to young people who have learning difficulties or disabilities to enable them to lead fuller lives and to participate more fully in the community and the economy. This vision underpins a strong, and organisation-wide, ethos of inclusion, tolerance and respect that directly benefits learners and the communities the scheme serves.

■ **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**

- The scheme supports vulnerable learners particularly well and ensures that risks are minimised and managed appropriately. During learners' induction there is a strong emphasis on safeguarding, including raising learners' awareness of the dangers associated with being online, including cyber bullying and friendship groups accessed through social media. However, the learner handbook does not give sufficient emphasis to e-safety.
- Learners feel physically and emotionally safe, and arrangements for keeping them safe when attending the centre or while out on work experience are very effective. Accurate contact details of parents and carers are kept on file for all learners.
- Appropriate policies are in place covering safer recruitment practices and appropriate checks are made on all staff, volunteers and trustees, including the accurate recording of all Disclosure Barring Service checks undertaken.
- Staff receive compulsory training in safeguarding and their knowledge has been extended through the completion of approved online radicalisation and extremism training to ensure that they have confidence and are alert to any changes in learners' behaviour that may give early cause for concern. However, the safeguarding policy has not been updated to reflect the latest requirements relating to radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement to remedy the decline in learners' achievements over the last two years. While most learners make at least the expected progress in gaining vocational skills, few make good progress in the development of their English and mathematics skills. In addition, a small minority of learners do not benefit from more-demanding learning tasks and activities that correspond to their level of ability.
- Learners benefit from thorough initial and diagnostic assessments that accurately identify their starting points and specific support needs including English, mathematics and ICT. However, teachers do not always use the results from assessments to set appropriately challenging targets for learners.
- While teachers, support staff and job coaches are appropriately qualified and have up-to-date subject knowledge, delays in placing learners on appropriate qualifications in English and mathematics have contributed to low achievement rates. Managers have recognised this issue and have recently established a new functional skills team and introduced a wider range of stepping-stone qualifications to more precisely match learners' abilities in English and mathematics. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of these very recent initiatives.

- In classroom sessions, teachers do not routinely plan learning that meets all learners' needs or make the best use of learning support assistants. Learners do not benefit from sufficient personalised support to practise using, and further develop, their newly gained knowledge.
- The learning targets set for learners are often too vague and do not set appropriately challenging expectations for learners, or ensure that they are routinely encouraged to develop their skills at an appropriate pace and to a good standard. For example, the targets set for learners to improve their literacy skills do not identify in sufficient detail the specific steps of how they will improve their handwriting skills, such as holding a pen correctly, formulating letters well or by writing words legibly and clearly. In sessions where learning is better planned, learners quickly gain confidence in how to write creative pieces of text, as well as recognise the importance of mathematics to everyday activities, such as accurately following quantities and ratios in recipes when preparing ingredients to cook a meal.
- Teachers do not regularly test and confirm learners' knowledge and understanding in both theory and practical sessions before new learning activities are introduced. In a number of instances, the questions used by teachers are directed to all learners, resulting in responses from only a few of the more-confident learners. Less-able learners receive little encouragement to answer questions or to contribute to the lesson.
- Teachers' monitoring of learners' progress towards the completion of agreed learning targets requires improvement. The outcomes achieved by learners both at the training centre and while they are in the workplace are not always recorded on a regular basis and few learners are aware of their progress or targets for completion
- Teaching in practical vocational sessions is good; learners quickly develop a good range of skills that successfully prepare them to cope with the demand of work placement. For example, in horticulture, learners are supported well to complete a range of tasks such as weeding, trimming, pruning, moving mulch and preparing soil for planting. As a result they develop a good understanding of seasonal changes in plant growth.
- The majority of teachers use technology well to broaden learners' knowledge of, and confidence in using, electronic media, as well as ensuring that resources are accessible to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learners use computers in the classroom confidently and independently to build their skills and complete learning tasks.
- Most learners benefit from well-organised, high-quality work placements where they develop valuable employability and life skills. For example, gaining the confidence to travel independently using public transport, preparing specialist types of coffee for customers in cafes, rotating fruit and vegetables in supermarkets to comply with sell-by dates and safely using gardening machinery to maintain clients' gardens.
- The majority of teachers promote equality and diversity well and learners quickly gain a good understanding of inclusion, tolerance and respect. In many lessons, teachers prepare activities and make use of resources that further develop learners' understanding of life in multicultural Britain. While on work placement, learners quickly gain confidence and become more adept at communicating with a range of diverse customers in shops, supermarkets and cafes.
- Learners benefit from particularly effective transition arrangements as a result of the productive links the scheme has developed with schools, colleges and partner organisations. These ensure that a coordinated approach to learners' welfare is maintained while they are placed onto a suitable programme that meets their needs and interests.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills and are well prepared for employment and further learning. Job coaches organise high-quality work experience placements, build and maintain positive relationships with a range of supportive employers, and help learners find sustained employment.
- Learners quickly become more confident and self-assured and operate with greater independence in the workplace. Those on placement develop a range of employability skills, for example communicating with customers about the range and location of products in a supermarket, and

demonstrate their newly acquired customer care and retail skills by preparing, sorting and pricing stock for sale.

- Information, advice and guidance prepare learners well for their programmes, ensuring that they have a clear understanding of the expectations and responsibilities involved. As a result, they are able to make informed choices about available vocational and employment pathways by participating in taster activities at the centre before they start their learning. Specialist support staff provide therapy, counselling and coaching at entry and during the programme, which ensures that learners quickly receive the support they need to address any potential behavioural concerns.
- Volunteers provide valuable support on an individual basis; for example, a former actress supports learners to improve their speech so that they can communicate more effectively in everyday exchanges with other learners, and when interacting with members of the general public. A good range of well-organised enrichment activities help learners to build their personal and social skills as well as their confidence; for example, learners regularly participate in yoga and benefit from a residential trip that develops their social and teamworking skills.
- The large majority of learners are well behaved, work well together and staff keep learners interested and concentrating well in most sessions. Learners and parents are very positive about the conducive, tranquil and specialist horticulture setting in which the scheme is based.
- Learners develop a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities; for example, learners recently discussed differing political parties and identified which political group represented their views best. Learners are encouraged to express their views and opinions in an open forum and teachers promote well fundamental British values of respect and tolerance for others as part of the learning programme. Learners have an appropriate understanding of the importance of safeguarding themselves while online and using social media. They feel safe and know how to report any concerns that they may have to job coaches, teachers and support staff.
- The punctuality of a few learners at the start of the day and between sessions requires improvement to ensure that learners do not miss essential learning. Delays and disruptions while learning support assistants locate and escort a few learners to lessons hinder the learning of others.
- The quality and effectiveness of learning support in teaching and learning sessions varies too much, with some learners being overdependent on learning assistants, who do not encourage learners to operate independently and to perform tasks with greater autonomy.

Outcomes for learners

require improvement

- Outcomes for learners require improvement because achievements for learners have declined over the past two years and are now low.
- Although learners make at least the expected progress towards gaining vocational skills, the proportion of learners who successfully complete their functional skill qualifications in English and mathematics is small.
- There are no significant differences between the achievements of learners when analysed by age. However, learners with mental health difficulties perform less well than other learners and their peer group nationally.
- Learners develop good vocational skills in the two main areas of provision of horticulture studies and retail. Learners quickly learn the importance of self-respect and tolerance from the positive examples set by teachers and as a result they develop valuable personal and social skills that help them to grow in confidence. Work experience is incorporated well into programmes for all learners and they have a good range of opportunities to learn and develop highly relevant employability and interpersonal skills that help them to gain employment or move on to other larger post-16 educational settings. Employers who provide work placements are positive about the learners' skills and attitudes to work.
- The majority of learners successfully progress into sustained employment, volunteering or further learning in other settings.

Provider details

| | |
|--|--|
| Type of provider | Not-for-profit organisation |
| Age range of learners | 16+ |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 42 |
| Principal/CEO | Joanna Baxter |
| Website address | www.harington.org.uk |

Provider information at the time of the inspection

| Main course or learning programme level | Level 1 or below | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | | Level 4 and above | |
|---|--|-----|----------|-----|---------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ |
| Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships) | 8 | 29 | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age | Intermediate | | Advanced | | Higher | | | |
| | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | | |
| | – | – | – | – | – | – | | |
| Number of traineeships | 16–19 | | 19+ | | Total | | | |
| | – | | – | | – | | | |
| Number of learners aged 14–16 | None | | | | | | | |
| Funding received from | Education Funding Agency (EFA) | | | | | | | |
| At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ None | | | | | | | |

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Victor Reid, lead inspector

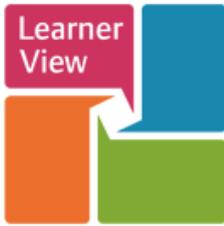
Kanwaljit Dhillon

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the scheme manager, as nominee, and carried out the inspection at short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of students and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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