

# Trinity Specialist College Ltd

Independent specialist college

<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–16 March 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for learners	Inadequate
Provision for learners with high needs	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings

### This is an inadequate provider

- The arrangements for safeguarding are ineffective; directors and managers have not ensured that the college meets its responsibilities in relation to the 'Prevent' duty.
- Governance arrangements are inadequate.
- The self-assessment of the college's performance is inaccurate; leaders and managers do not use self-assessment sufficiently well to identify aspects of teaching, learning and assessment and safeguarding that require improvement.
- College action plans do not include sufficient detail on how improvements will be achieved or how success will be measured.
- Too few tutors are sufficiently qualified. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is poor.
- The assessment of students' starting points does not capture all their abilities and achievements and therefore does not provide a suitable basis for the setting of sufficiently challenging targets.
- Too few students make the expected progress from their starting points in their learning, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Managers have not observed the quality of teaching, learning and assessment that takes place across the range of learning settings.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Students enjoy their experience at the college and work within inclusive, caring and supportive learning environments.
- Students' attendance is very good.
- During their time at the college, many students develop and improve their behaviour so that they can engage more effectively in their learning.

# Full report

## Information about the provider

- Trinity Specialist College (the college) opened in September 2011 for young people with learning disabilities and/or autism with challenging behaviour, as appropriate provision was not available locally. In August 2015, the college was successful in gaining independent service provider status from the Education Funding Agency (EFA).
- The college offers provision on two sites: The Lindridge and Birmingham Metropolitan College, Sutton Coldfield campus. College students live in Birmingham and in other local authorities with their families, in adult foster care and in residential homes. The college also offers a life skills day service for young people aged 25 or over or for those who no longer receive education funding. This provision is funded through the young people's individual social care budget and was not in the scope of this inspection.

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

- As a matter of urgency leaders should:
  - ensure that the college meets its responsibility in relation to the 'Prevent' duty by ensuring that all leaders, managers and staff are trained and have a good understanding, and ensure that they promote the duty to all students
  - ensure that the protocols in relation to the administration of medication are sufficiently robust and that the staff are trained and updated on them often enough
  - protect all students on work-experience placements by ensuring that all employers have employers' liability insurance cover.
- To improve the effectiveness of safeguarding leaders should:
  - ensure that managers provide them with a high-level overview of the behaviour and safeguarding incidents that have occurred in all learning settings, in order to enable leaders and managers to monitor, measure and identify the reasons for the incidents and to identify and implement the training required by college staff.
- To improve governance leaders should:
  - review the fitness for purpose of current governance arrangements
  - recruit and appoint a board of trustees with the relevant skills and expertise to support and challenge managers, and to hold them to account for the quality of the provision.
- To improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment leaders should:
  - increase the number of qualified, specialist teaching staff
  - ensure that observers/managers who carry out observations of teaching, learning and assessment cover all aspects of the curriculum and the full range of settings where learning takes place, in order to check on the quality of the students' skills development and to improve their rate of progress
  - ensure that all learning sessions focus on well-planned and stimulating activities that engage and challenge each student in the group, help them to improve their communication skills, their levels of engagement with the wider community, and their development towards greater independence
  - improve the quality and breadth of the baseline assessment of students' starting points by ensuring that it captures all aspects of students' abilities and achievements, and use the information as a reliable basis for setting students sufficiently challenging targets that enable them to achieve their medium- and long-term goals, including those in English and mathematics
  - re-assess the arrangements for the tracking, monitoring and frequency of reviewing students' progress from their starting points
  - engage students more in learning in the workplace and the community; record the learning taking place and the progress students make and use it to inform the planning of teaching, learning and assessment.
- To improve the accuracy and rigour of the self-assessment process leaders should:
  - ensure that the self-assessment report is sufficiently detailed and accurate to inform and substantiate reliable judgements about the quality of provision and safeguarding
  - ensure that trustees, parents, carers, professionals and all staff are involved in the self-assessment process; ensure that leaders and managers use the quality improvement plan rigorously and consistently to keep track of actions they have taken and to measure improvements in the quality of provision over time
  - visit other provision to identify good or better practice and to learn from other practitioners.

# Inspection judgements

## Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Directors and managers have used their initiative by establishing a new college for students with high and complex needs, having identified a gap in local provision. However, very few students leave the college to engage in voluntary work and open or supported employment. Managers recognise that they have yet to assure the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in all settings.
- Leaders' and managers' self-assessment of the overall effectiveness of the college is inaccurate. They failed to identify the improvements needed in teaching and learning, in the initial assessment of each student's starting point and in the monitoring of students' progress over time. Managers do not manage data effectively to measure the college's performance.
- Leaders and managers do not use the quality improvement plan well enough to inform and monitor improvements in the quality of provision; the plan lacks detail about the actions taken and their impact to date. Managers do not use the plan as a working document. They do not provide dates in relation to the targets they set, achieve or amend. Outcomes stated in the plan do not quantify success and lack milestones for achievement.
- The curriculum does not meet students' needs well enough. Students work towards achieving qualifications in developing their independence skills by following one of four learning programmes. However, students do not have the opportunity to undertake formal qualifications in English and mathematics or to work at higher levels in order to develop further other skills or interests they might have. Managers have identified this as an area for improvement in the self-assessment report but have made little progress in rectifying this.
- Managers' observations of teaching, learning and assessment are too variable in quality, do not cover all of the settings where students learn and do not enable them to raise standards sufficiently. Managers plan to observe each tutor formally once a term; this has not yet happened this year due to staffing and operational issues.
- Leaders' and managers' actions to secure and sustain improvements in teaching, learning and assessment are ineffective. Managers have recently made improvements to the allocation of students to learning groups and introduced more variety to learning programmes with new staff and more learning settings. However, these improvements have not had sufficient impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Tutors do not have the appropriate expertise in teaching, learning and assessment to support students effectively. Tutors do not receive ongoing expert advice and support from speech and language and occupational therapists to tailor the curriculum and to improve the learning environment and teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students. Tutors do not provide the learning support assistants with enough guidance on the levels of support they provide. Learning support assistants intervene too quickly in support of students and as a result do not give students the opportunity to work independently. Consequently, students are working below the expected levels.
- Learning resources are poor. Tutors rely too much on paper-based worksheets designed to meet accreditation requirements. As a result, teaching lacks variety and does not challenge each student sufficiently; this means that students often make slow progress. Staff do not use students' individual communication strategies and resources consistently well to support learning; consequently, students do not improve their communication skills as rapidly as they could.
- Managers use the views from parents well to make improvements to the provision, such as the increase in the variety of work-experience opportunities to meet the interests of students. Feedback from parents during the inspection confirmed that communication between college staff and parents is frequent and helpful. For example, parents use the information recorded by staff in the home/college books regarding improvements in the young person's personal skills to support and develop further learning at home.
- Leaders and managers collaborate well with employers and other partners to develop provision that meets the needs of students. As a result, the higher-functioning students engage in a good range of work experiences. However, more work experience options are required to ensure that all students have the same opportunities.
- Learning support assistants and tutors support students well. Students are protected from harassment, exploitation, bullying and discrimination on all college sites and when on work experience in the community. Students feel safe and know that the college will act on their concerns when they are raised.
- **The governance of the provider**
  - The college does not have a governing body or a board of trustees. One of the three college directors

meets regularly with college managers and is strongly committed to improving the quality of provision. However, these meetings do not focus sufficiently on teaching, learning and assessment, on the progress that students make from their starting points and on safeguarding. The director acknowledges that the college now needs a board of trustees to support its development further.

- Directors have not ensured that safeguarding is effective.
- The director acknowledges that leaders and managers are not doing enough to tackle poor teaching, learning and assessment.

#### ■ **The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective**

- Directors and managers have not complied with the 'Prevent' duty and do not have an implementation strategy. No one has undertaken the required training to ensure that students are protected from extremism and radicalisation.
- Updating of safeguarding training is insufficient. Directors have not ensured that the designated safeguarding lead has undertaken sufficient training since 2013 so that he can update staff effectively. Too much training at staff induction is delivered online; as a result, staff do not have an in-depth understanding of safeguarding and a few do not adopt safe practices consistently in all learning settings.
- Managers train all staff in managing the behaviour of students, and staff record all incidents and accidents. However, managers do not have any summary data about incidents to enable them to monitor the effectiveness of their actions in reducing incidents, preventing escalations and enabling students to manage their own behaviour.
- Managers do not always ensure that staff follow best practice in health and safety.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is poor and consequently students make too little progress in many lessons.
- Tutors' expectations of students are too low. Learning targets are insufficiently challenging and frequently reflect the skills students already have, rather than stretching them to achieve new and higher levels of learning. As a result, students make insufficient progress.
- Staff do not measure the starting points of students in sufficient detail. For example, students who achieved the highest scores possible on their pre-enrolment assessments for mathematics and English were not given a more demanding test later to assess accurately their higher level of literacy and numeracy skills. Tutors are not always aware of the outcomes of the assessments. Consequently, they do not use them to plan learning which meets students' individual needs and potential. Too much lesson planning is based on meeting the requirements of external examining bodies rather than meeting the individual needs and goals of students.
- In the large majority of lessons, all students follow the same activities despite their very different needs. For example, in a mathematics class, a learner with good existing skills in subtraction completed the same worksheet as a learner who was having difficulty making basic calculations. He completed the worksheet in just a few minutes and then sat patiently while waiting for the others in the group to complete the task. As a result, his progress was slow and the other students' learning was limited.
- Tutors do not record students' progress in sufficient detail. Tutors monitor progress against students' targets, but as these targets are not based on an accurate assessment of pre-existing skills, it is not possible for them to assess their subsequent progress. Formal progress reviews take place too infrequently to measure the small steps of progress students make. Learning objectives in employability lessons are too broad to enable meaningful recording of learning and progress.
- Tutors do not set targets for students to achieve during their work experience. Staff do not formally record the progress students make at work. Employers state that many students grow significantly in self-confidence and improve their communication skills during their work experience, but this is not documented in student files or used by tutors to build on learning.
- Tutors do not use learning support assistants effectively to support learning. Learning support assistants frequently do not allow students sufficient time and space to explore possible answers. They are too keen to provide answers or give too much guidance towards the correct answer which prevents students from fully developing their own problem-solving skills. Tutors themselves do not have sufficient confidence to intervene and give the learning support assistants relevant guidance on the levels of support that they should give to students.
- Tutors do not have adequate training or experience to teach students with complex needs. Too few tutors have a recognised teaching qualification beyond a first level award. No tutors or managers have a

specialist qualification, or any specific training, in mathematics or English. However, tutors and learning support assistants manage behaviour well, which enables students to participate in learning with minimal distraction from others.

- In a minority of lessons, students engage effectively with learning and make adequate progress. In an art lesson, students reviewed each other's work and communicated their judgement using 'like' and 'dislike' cards. In a personal progress lesson, students took responsibility for aspects of their learning by putting their own files away at the end of the lesson and tidying the room ready for the next class. In this session, the teacher consolidated learning well at the end of the lesson through effective questioning of students.
- A few tutors do not pay sufficient attention to the health and safety of their students. For example, in one lesson a power cable lay across the floor as a trip hazard; in a work placement, a student was working with animals, including cleaning their cages, without being provided with personal protective equipment.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

### **are inadequate**

- Students' progress in English and mathematics within discrete learning activities and across the wider curriculum is inadequate. This does not support their progression towards achieving their long-term goals and their preparation for adulthood. In one lesson, a group of students listened to nursery rhymes. In another lesson, staff intervened to prompt students to complete reading and counting tasks without giving them sufficient time to respond.
- Students demonstrate a positive attitude to their practical work at college. Two students described clearly the skills learned when preparing the planting beds and growing seedlings in gardening and enterprise projects, and how they progressed to work experience placements as a result of developing these new skills. However, in classroom-based lessons, tutors place too much emphasis on task completion, rather than on promoting new learning. As a result, the standard of students' work is poor and does not reflect students' different abilities.
- The majority of students have work experience placements organised by the college, which provide them with effective tasters of work; a few placements are based on students' interests and aspirations. Students develop confidence in carrying out a range of workplace tasks and develop well their independent travel skills. However, managers have correctly identified the need to provide students with additional community learning opportunities. The quality of verbal feedback given by staff and the recording of progress in the workplace is insufficient. As a result, students do not always know their strengths or how to improve their skills.
- Detailed and appropriately updated risk assessments are in place for offsite activities and for individual students who require them in all learning settings; control measures or strategies effectively support the safe management of these situations. However, staff do not always update assessments when new risks are identified. The college does not have evidence of employers' public liability insurance for all work placements.
- Students feel safe at college, they recognise the steps to take if they have concerns about bullying and report that staff listen to and respond appropriately to their concerns. Students develop adequate awareness of how to keep themselves safe online, they learn to recognise risks and understand a few actions to take to prevent themselves from harm. For example, a student explained that they would not meet up with someone they had met online and that they would not share their personal details. A minority of students require medication to be administered during the college day. The protocols in relation to the administration of medication are not sufficiently robust and staff training is not regular and up to date.
- Students have insufficient support from the multi-disciplinary team. Although individual profiles and training are in place, staff do not use support strategies consistently to support students with complex needs and these students do not make progress in learning and communication at the expected level.
- Students benefit from a broad range enrichment activities at college. One learner explained his ambition to become a disc jockey, he practises his skills during his time at the college. The college also supports a wide programme of leisure and community engagement activities out of term time. For example, walks in the community for sensory stimulation and to improve students' road safety; serving dinners to members of a local church group and engaging in the termly college fair held for students and local residents.
- Students develop a good understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and the benefits of exercise. They participate in a wide range of physical activities. For example, weekly visits to the local leisure centre and primary school to swim and use the gym, and to a large indoor play arena to work on their gross motor skills in a safe and dynamic environment. Students gain an appropriate understanding

of sexuality and relationships and the most-able students gain a more in-depth insight into maintaining sexual health.

- Students develop an appropriate understanding of their rights and responsibilities as young adults. They learn to respect others in college, the work place and the community. They follow college rules and respond well to direction from staff within lessons and in informal settings. Although the college ethos is one of respect, the college has taken few steps to promote awareness of fundamental British values and has not undertaken work with students to develop awareness of the risks of extremism and radicalisation.
- Planning for students' next steps when they leave the college starts too late in the students' learning programme. It does not provide sufficient opportunity for students to explore fully the progression options available and contribute fully to the planning process. Most students progress from the college to day care services within the organisation. One previous learner now has paid employment within the college as a gardener and handy-person and acts as a positive role model for those working towards employment.
- Students enjoy their time at college; they develop their independence and confidence well within the college, community and work settings. Higher-functioning students access learning at Birmingham Metropolitan College. They learn to navigate the new site with increased independence and develop new skills in managing their own behaviour. Most students access community facilities with greater confidence and are now able to enjoy a wider range of activities at college and at home.
- Students' attendance is very good.

## **Outcomes for learners**

## **are inadequate**

- The tracking and monitoring of progress are weak. Managers and staff do not review students' progress frequently enough. Reviews lack specific detail regarding what a student can now do as a result of attending the college.
- Results from the baseline assessment of students' starting points are not sufficiently robust or accurate and do not take sufficient account of prior attainment. The work given to students is not sufficiently challenging and, consequently, they make slow progress over time relative to their starting points.
- Students develop and attain appropriate personal learning goals such as improvements in managing their behaviour and in their ability to travel independently. For example, one student is now more confident in public spaces, so the family can now undertake visits to community venues together.
- Staff do not set sufficiently challenging academic learning goals, particularly in English and mathematics. As a result, students make insufficient progress in the development of these skills.
- Managers do not monitor and compare the progress made by different groups of students.
- Staff and students treat each other with respect throughout the college.
- Staff expectations of students are too low, particularly for the students with the highest level of need. The standards of work they expect from students in numeracy and personal, social and health education classes and in the sensory classes are too low. However, standards of work are appropriate in the employability classes for the most-able students.
- The students who undertook accreditation last year were successful. However, students working at entry level or above do not work towards achieving English and mathematics qualifications.
- Too few students develop the skills they need to progress into voluntary work and open or supported employment. Seven of the students who left last year moved into the social care provision at the college, and one learner is now employed at the college as a part-time gardener and handy-person.

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Independent specialist college
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	26
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Sally Evans
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.trinityspecialistcollege.co.uk">www.trinityspecialistcollege.co.uk</a>

## 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+
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	0							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	None							

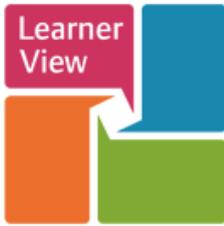
## Information about this inspection

### Inspection team

Denise Olander, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Joyce Deere	Her Majesty's Inspector
Allan Shaw	Ofsted Inspector
Bernadette White	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the education manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. 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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