

Trinity Specialist College Ltd

Independent specialist college

Inspection dates

30 January–1 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Senior leaders and trustees have successfully rectified most of the areas for improvement from the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders' appointment of key members of staff has led to significant improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, and the progress of learners.
- Managers have developed a curriculum that meets individual learners' needs. Entry-level learners benefit from employment pathways which support their next steps.
- Most learners develop valuable skills and knowledge needed for the workplace and independent living. This supports them with the decisions they need to make about their future goals.
- Teachers and staff use effectively the information on learners' starting points to plan and provide individualised targets and challenging activities.
- Teachers provide frequent and constructive feedback to learners. Learners improve their English, mathematics and vocational skills through everyday situations and activities.
- Teachers and staff use very effective behaviour management strategies to support learners to manage their behaviour, access learning and take part in their communities.
- Most learners are proud of their work, which is of a good standard.
- Teachers, support assistants and therapists work well together to support learners. Most learners make good progress and improve their communication skills.
- Managers and staff have not ensured that learners and families have sufficient access to external and impartial careers education, advice and guidance.
- Senior leaders, trustees and managers do not identify in sufficient detail how they will bring about further improvement. Managers do not sufficiently monitor the impact of the actions they have taken.
- Leaders and managers have not yet ensured that the English and mathematics strategy is improving achievement rates in these subjects.
- Leaders and managers do not sufficiently analyse outcomes for learners in relation to gender, race and disability. As a result, staff are not able to take action to reduce achievement gaps.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Trinity Specialist 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 and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- The college provides provision on two sites in Sutton Coldfield: The Lindridge and Clifton Road Youth Centre. College learners live in Birmingham, Walsall, Warwickshire and Solihull. There are currently 26 on programme. All current learners are aged over 19. Learners study from pre-entry level to entry level 3. The college also offers a life skills day service for young people aged 25 or over, or for those who are no longer receiving education funding. This provision is funded through the social care and health budget and was not in scope for this inspection

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all learners receive impartial careers education, advice and guidance to enable them to make informed choices about their next steps, in good time to support their transition into adulthood.
- Ensure that quality improvement and strategic plans focus in detail on improving provision further, and enable leaders and managers to measure the impact of the actions taken.
- Ensure that learners are supported to achieve the English and mathematics qualifications of which they are capable.
- Ensure that managers improve the analysis of learners' outcomes in relation to gender, race and disability to help them narrow achievement gaps for different groups of learners.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and trustees recognise that they had not made sufficient progress at the previous inspection. Senior leaders and trustees have engaged with highly experienced partners to identify good practice and make rapid changes to the provision. Senior leaders and trustees' actions have successfully addressed most of the recommendations from the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders have made significant investment in resources. Senior leaders have recruited staff for key roles in teaching, learning and assessment and parent liaison roles. These appointments have led to significant improvements. Learners now benefit from good-quality teaching, learning, assessment and support. Most learners make good progress from their starting points and enjoy their learning.
- Senior leaders, trustees and managers are ambitious for their learners. Leaders and managers are developing good relationships with partners, local employers, specialist colleges and local housing associations. Managers are using partnership work to improve progression for learners. Learners are increasingly moving on into supported living, further training and work-related activities.
- Leaders and managers have successfully developed a curriculum based on the individual needs of learners. Managers and staff use their expertise well when working with learners with complex needs. Managers plan programmes for learners to ensure that they can achieve their potential. Learners at entry level and below who are looking to move into work have benefited from a refreshed employment-focused curriculum. Teachers plan programmes to support learners towards work and independence. The large majority of learners are well prepared for life after college.
- Leaders and managers provide frequent and well-planned training for staff. Managers use the information from their regular observations to identify staff training needs. Teachers, learning support assistants and staff are well qualified. Therapists are highly qualified and trained. Teachers and staff use their expertise well to identify strategies for supporting individual learners.
- Managers set high expectations of teachers and staff through performance management. Leaders and managers have acted to address the underperformance of staff. This has led to significant and sustained improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Senior leaders and managers do not identify in sufficient detail how they will bring about further improvement. Managers do not monitor the impact of the actions they have taken through quality improvement and strategic plans.
- Leaders and managers have been slow to introduce an English and mathematics strategy. Too few learners who are able to do so are studying English and mathematics qualifications.
- Managers and staff have not ensured that learners and families have sufficient access to impartial careers information, advice and guidance. Of those learners who are due to leave the college this year, a small number do not have an agreed transition plan in place.

The governance of the provider

- Trustees are well qualified and highly experienced. They use their expertise well to drive improvements at the college. Trustees meet frequently. However, a small number of trustees have low attendance at meetings. Senior leaders and trustees have acted to develop the expertise of the board. Additional trustees with specialist knowledge of education have recently been appointed.
- Trustees are committed to driving improvements for learners. The trustee with responsibility for safeguarding regularly reviews the single central register and support for learners. The chair of trustees attends the monthly student council meetings. Managers receive support from trustees to act on learners' feedback and make improvements. Trustees regularly undertake learning walks with managers.
- Trustees receive frequent and detailed reports from leaders and managers. They use the information they receive to challenge leaders and managers and to hold them to account.
- Trustees are ambitious for the college. Trustees and senior leaders have not yet identified key actions to improve further the quality of provision. Senior leaders' quality improvement and strategic plans are not yet agreed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, managers and trustees participate in regular safeguarding training. Managers provide annual update training for all staff on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Staff have recently been trained in the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty strategies when working with vulnerable adults. As a result, they use appropriate safe working practices. Staff have a good understanding of potential risks to learners and take appropriate measures to keep learners safe. Managers have recently attended safeguarding training which included updates on 'county lines' training to improve their understanding of local risks to vulnerable young people.
- Staff use the college online system methodically to report safeguarding concerns. Staff receive helpful feedback from managers on how to identify potential risks to learners. Managers take swift action to raise concerns with external partners and receive helpful advice and support. As a result, learners are successfully safeguarded.
- Learners develop their understanding of how to stay safe in the community. Entry-level learners develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and how to develop appropriate personal relationships. Most learners recognise the different types of abuse and the risks posed to them. Learners have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Teachers prepare detailed risk assessments prior to external visits and practical work settings. Learners are aware of health and safety risks and take action to keep themselves safe. Learners in practical sessions and workshops work safely when using tools and equipment.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and learning support assistants effectively plan and provide learning to meet the individual needs of learners based on their starting points. Teachers and staff conduct regular reviews of the progress learners are making. Most learners make good progress towards appropriately challenging targets.
- Teachers use extensive information on learners' starting points to plan highly individualised programmes. Teachers use results from the assessment of learners' English and mathematics skills alongside behavioural and therapy reports to develop individual targets. As a result, learners improve their communication, vocational skills and behaviour in preparation for their next steps.
- Teachers and support staff provide well-coordinated standards of care and support for learners. Teachers plan learning well to build on previous learning and enable learners to become more independent.
- Teachers and support staff provide frequent and constructive feedback to learners. Staff provide helpful encouragement and detailed written feedback to enable learners to improve. Teachers support learners to review their progress. Learners work well with staff to identify how they can improve using the 'even better if' activity. Teachers use the information from this activity to set new targets. As a result, most learners gain confidence and develop their skills further.
- Teachers plan activities that develop learners' mathematics skills effectively. Learners routinely develop budgeting skills when planning the ingredients for cooking a meal. They can shop, pay for the items and calculate the correct change. Learners measure and weigh ingredients before cooking. Learners develop skills that will be useful in their daily lives.
- Teachers support learners well to improve their English and communication skills. Learners are able to prepare and cook a pizza by following instructions using symbols and images. Teachers provide frequent feedback to learners on the standard of their written work. Most learners improve their written English skills.
- Teachers adapt resources and approaches to meet learners' individual communication needs. Learners use their preferred method of communication effectively to engage with their learning.
- In a small number of sessions, teachers do not extend learning sufficiently. A few resources are not age-appropriate. A small number of teachers and support staff do not integrate therapeutic targets into learning activities well enough. Consequently, a few learners make slower progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners behave well. They respect each other in sessions and in the community. Learners work well together to prepare meals at lunchtime. Most learners improve their behaviour and are able to share food and drink with others during breaktimes and lunchtimes. A minority of learners support other learners. Learners develop their social skills well.
- Learners receive good support to improve and manage their behaviour. Teachers and

staff use very effective strategies to develop learners' understanding of their behaviour. Staff behaviour management has significantly reduced the number of behavioural incidents. Most learners improve their ability to take part in activities in college and in their local communities.

- Learners enjoy their learning and participate well in sessions. The large majority of learners demonstrate positive attitudes to work. Most learners' attendance is very high.
- Most learners successfully develop their skills and knowledge through work-related activities. Learners who are not yet ready for external work placements develop their understanding of the workplace well. Learners take turns in undertaking the role of manager and deputy manager at the Clifton Road Centre. Learners develop their understanding of managing a reception area and the skills required when receiving visitors to the centre. Learners increase their confidence and independence in preparation for future work placements.
- Teachers and staff carefully plan external work placements. Teachers work closely with employers to ensure that learners benefit from challenging tasks. Learners working at a local horticulture placement improve their knowledge of plant growth and compost to ensure healthy plants. Learners develop their understanding that the division of one plant leads to extra plants for sale. Learners develop the skills they need to enable them to continue into supported employment and further training.
- Learners develop good independent living skills. Learners improve their skills in cooking meals for themselves and others. Learners have a good understanding of personal care, health and hygiene. Learners who are moving into supported living develop their understanding of budgeting and the essentials they will need for everyday life. A small number of learners become independent travellers in readiness for supported employment. Learners are well supported to make choices and to become independent.
- Learners frequently give their views to drive improvements. They take part in regular student council meetings. The student council successfully lobbied for improved wi-fi access for learners who are not based on the main site. Staff respect learners' choices and preferences and use feedback from them to plan and improve learning and resources.
- Learners on entry-level programmes demonstrate a good understanding of British values. Learners gain an understanding of the rule of law, the impact of breaking rules, and the meaning of democracy through visiting the Houses of Parliament and hearing Members of Parliament speak.
- Learners and families do not yet have enough access to impartial careers information, advice and guidance. A small number of learners who are due to leave the college do not yet have their transition plan agreed.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Learners make good progress on their programmes. Teachers and support staff frequently review and recognise the small steps of progress made by learners with complex needs. Teachers and support staff provide constructive feedback to learners and set new targets to improve learners' skills further.
- The large majority of learners improve their English, mathematics and vocational skills

through everyday situations and activities. As a result, learners are making expected or better progress against their individual targets and from their starting points.

- Learners are proud of their work. The large majority of learners' work is of a good standard. Learners improve their behaviour. Most learners participate well in activities and increase the time they spend in their local communities.
- Learners successfully complete additional qualifications in relation to their interests and employment pathways. Learners on placements in the college kitchen complete food hygiene and food safety programmes. Learners undertaking work placements in horticulture work towards an appropriate 'routes to horticulture' qualification. Learners develop the skills and knowledge required for the workplace.
- Managers have significantly improved progression planning for learners. Teachers and staff plan learners' programmes well. Teachers ensure that learners improve the skills they will need for the future. A small number of learners who completed work placements in a local garage are successfully working towards a motor vehicle qualification at a local college. The majority of leavers continue into further training, supported living and work-related activities. Most leavers successfully sustain their supported living and work placements when leaving college.
- Managers do not sufficiently analyse outcomes for learners in relation to gender, race and disability. Staff have not taken action to narrow the gaps for different learner groups. Female learners continue to achieve significantly better than males.
- Leaders and managers have not yet ensured that the English and mathematics strategy is improving the achievement rates for learners.

Provider details

Unique reference number	141703
Type of provider	Independent specialist college
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	26
Principal/CEO	Sally Evans (MBE)
Telephone number	0121 378 3242
Website	www.trinityspecialistcollege.co.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 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	-	26	-	-	-	-	-	-
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 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	26							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the operations manager, as nominee. 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 learners 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.

Inspection team

Andrea Dill-Russell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martin Ward	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Gay	Ofsted Inspector

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