

Brogdale Community Interest Company

Independent Specialist College

Inspection dates

11–13 March 2019

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement	Provision for learners with high needs	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement		
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Managers have not monitored the quality of teaching and learning thoroughly. As a result, they have insufficient knowledge of weaknesses in provision.
- Tutors do not consider the individual learning needs of the students sufficiently. As a result, students do not develop their skills and knowledge as well as they could.
- Too few students achieve their functional skills qualifications in mathematics.
- Managers have not ensured that students receive impartial careers guidance to enable them to plan for their next steps after college.
- Too few students have external work placements and staff do not monitor these sufficiently.
- Managers do not assess students' starting points closely enough, so they cannot measure their progress accurately.

The provider has the following strengths

- Recently appointed trustees had identified and begun to act on the major weaknesses identified at this inspection.
- Students develop good practical vocational skills.
- The achievement of vocational qualifications is good, and many students progress from Level 1 to Level 2.
- Managers and governors have developed new provision very well in response to an identified local need. They develop provision that successfully engages students experiencing difficulties in attending and participating in learning.
- Managers and teaching staff pay exceptionally good attention to equality and diversity, to safeguarding and to health and safety, so that students feel, and are, safe.
- Tutors use their considerable occupational expertise well to inspire students and widen their understanding of the vocational area.
- Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the approaches and strategies that enable students with complex mental health needs to attend college and participate in learning.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Brogdale Community Interest Company (Brogdale CIC) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. It is located in Kent. It provides pre-apprenticeship education and training for young people who have not been in education for several years because of exclusions and/or complex mental health needs. It was registered as an independent specialist college in 2017.
- The college comprises five rural sites located in five areas of Kent: Swale, Faversham, Ashford, Dover and Sittingbourne. All sites are small with up to six students in each. Currently 26 students study vocational qualifications from Entry level to level 2 and students choose from horticulture, creative craft and hospitality. Most students study horticulture.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Managers should monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning more closely so that areas for improvement can be identified and support can be provided where required.
- Managers should make sure that teaching staff consider the needs of individual students and use specialist learning and communication aids more effectively.
- Managers should develop more effective arrangements to establish students' starting points, so that they can capture their progress over time.
- Managers should make sure that more students have external work placements and that these are visited more frequently to ensure that students are adequately supported and developing their skills well.
- Managers should make arrangements for students to have impartial careers guidance, and start planning earlier for their transition from the college.
- Managers should improve the provision for English and mathematics, with a clearer understanding of the connections between the vocational sessions, taught English and mathematics sessions and work placements.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Governors and managers recognise that quality improvement arrangements require further development. Although the arrangements for carrying out staff supervision and appraisals are good, managers have not monitored the quality of teaching and learning closely enough. They have not accurately identified significant areas for improvement and consequently the quality of teaching and learning is still not good enough.
- Managers have not provided students with impartial careers advice. Students do not receive sufficient information about their possible future options.
- Managers are responsive to local needs and have a clear vision, based on a good understanding of the needs of students who have a history of low attendance, exclusions and bullying. The staff work particularly successfully with students who have a long history of fragile mental health.
- Managers have based provision on five small sites strategically placed across a wide geographical area so that students can travel easily. This means that many students previously excluded, or too anxious to attend, have succeeded in participating in an educational programme.
- Managers have developed a good range of partnerships with a range of charities and small employers. These benefit students by providing work-related experience opportunities.
- Tutors benefit from training that includes mental health and safeguarding. They have very high levels of occupational expertise and experience in their vocational subjects. Managers encourage tutors to improve their own levels of qualification in vocational subjects to update their skills. They also support all teachers to achieve teaching qualifications to a higher level.
- Managers use their funding well to provide students with a programme that engages students who have previously had very poor attendance. The students benefit from the practical nature of the curriculum which builds on their interests and encourages participation.

The governance of the provider

- Governance is effective. The main board of Brogdale CIC has enthusiastically overseen the development of the new college and has supported the staff well. College provision has very recently become a sub-committee of the main board. Trustees of this new sub-committee have had one full meeting. The membership includes trustees with highly relevant specialist knowledge and experience of the further education sector.
- At the first meeting of the sub-committee, held a few days before the inspection, the trustees received essential current information about the college. They identified accurately the key areas for improvement and are currently developing an implementation strategy.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers focus particularly effectively on health and safety across their five sites. They carry out comprehensive risk assessments so that parents know the students are safe. Students are very knowledgeable about their safety on the sites.
- The safeguarding policies are up to date and comprehensive. Managers work closely with the local council to make sure the staff training is current. All staff are vetted appropriately. Health and safety incidents are recorded carefully, and appropriate action taken. Managers respond to safeguarding incidents appropriately.
- Students feel safe. Aspects of safeguarding and British values are routinely included in the teaching programme.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. Tutors do not consider sufficiently the individual learning needs of the students, so they do not make as much progress as they could. Tutors and support staff do not always encourage students to extend their skills and knowledge. Too often, tutors and support staff focus on task completion and do not provide sufficient time to allow students to process information when answering questions or carrying out tasks. They sometimes intervene too soon, limiting the students' development of independence. Tutors do not use questioning effectively to probe knowledge or to check students' understanding.
- Staff do not have enough information about students' starting points. The current arrangements identify the level of course, but do not focus sufficiently on personal development, such as managing behaviour or independence. Tutors track units of accreditation well but the individual targets they set for students are too broad. Consequently, progress is difficult to monitor.
- Tutors do not integrate English and mathematics into practical subjects well enough. They do not link vocational applications of English and mathematics to the individual needs of students or to formal English and mathematics lessons. Tutors do not routinely correct spelling and grammatical errors. This limits the extent to which students develop their English skills. Tutors' own written work contains spelling errors, sometimes in documents on public display.
- Tutors know their students well and provide a wealth of commercial and industry experience. Students benefit from their enthusiasm and expertise on the subject. As a result, the majority of students make progress with their vocational qualifications, improving their confidence and self-esteem. They enjoy developing new practical skills and are able to sell items they have made commercially. For example, produce grown in horticulture is then sold in the café and farmers' market, which is open to members of the public. They also identify the most appropriate items suitable for composting and how that will help with harvesting quality produce.
- Tutors ensure that students learn skills, techniques and terminology they will encounter as they progress into an external workplace. For example, students learn how to operate lawnmowers safely to industry standards. They understand the relevance and importance

of health and safety terms.

- Tutors give helpful feedback to students in practical subjects, and they mark assessed work frequently. The feedback on students' work in English and mathematics provides helpful advice on how students can improve their work.
- Staff develop students' understanding of safeguarding, equality and diversity and British values very effectively. For example, in a creative crafts lesson, students had drawn a mind map as a way of understanding the different types of bullying and discrimination for specific groups of people, as enshrined in the Equality Act 2010.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Too few students develop their English and mathematics skills during the college day as well as they could. Tutors do not always embed these effectively. For example, in a horticulture session, support staff wrote out labels to identify plants, instead of encouraging the students to do it. Students do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their skills in information and communication technologies.
- Too few students take part in a meaningful work experience programme. All students take part in group or individual work-related experience, but fewer than half of the students have external work placements. Staff do not monitor the placements sufficiently after the initial checks on health and safety, and so students are not always transferring skills from college to work experience.
- Students do not develop employability skills in areas such as CV writing and interview techniques. Tutors do not prepare students well enough for their transition from the college. Progress discussions start too late in the academic year.
- Tutors do not provide sufficient support for the small number of students who find expressive language challenging. They do not ensure that students who use Picture Exchange Communication always use these pictures in sessions in the college and in work experience.
- Students' attendance was satisfactory during the week of inspection, reflecting the extent to which students with a long history of non-attendance are improving their rates of participation. Managers make positive and successful interventions when students are absent to help them to continue in learning.
- Students speak positively about the college. They feel they are making progress and would like to stay on next year. They agree a code of conduct with the tutor at the start of the academic year and comply with all behaviour expectations well. They learn to become tolerant of each other and work well as a team when required to. They are polite and friendly towards each other.
- Students with complex mental health needs are supported well to overcome their barriers to engagement in learning. They improve their self-esteem as a result of the nurturing college environment. Students are safe and report feeling safe in college. They are able to identify ways they keep themselves safe and can identify areas of the site that are dangerous and out of bounds. They keep themselves safe when working in practical sessions by always wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and following instructions.

- Students take pride in their work, and show good levels of perseverance and engagement in practical sessions. They explore personal, social and ethical issues well and they look at themes such as life in wider society and in Britain. They learn to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- Managers do not have sufficient data about students' progress from their starting points. They track the achievement of qualification units, but do not know how much progress students have made in other areas such as independence and behaviour management.
- Managers recognise that although in 2017/18 a few leavers progressed successfully to some form of employment, too few leavers progressed to positive destinations that built on their experience at the college.
- Too few students achieve functional skills qualifications in mathematics. However, their achievement of qualifications in speaking and listening is good.
- Students progress well from level 1 to level 2 and develop good standards of work in horticulture. For example, they learn to dig ponds and lay the pool lining.
- There are no differences in achievements between different groups. Retention is good overall, although a few students leave early because of pregnancy or illness.
- Students become more confident and more self-assertive, and develop self-esteem. Most engage successfully in a learning programme for the first time for several years.

Provider details

Unique reference number	144797
Type of provider	Independent Specialist Provider
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	26
Principal/CEO	Rebecca O’Neill
Telephone number	01795 844 849
Website	www.brogdalecic.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)	14	5	4	3	0	0	0	0
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
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:	None							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy head 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 learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions and looked at initial assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Joyce Deere, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Bramley	Ofsted Inspector
Ben Walsh	Ofsted Inspector

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