

# Liberty Training

Independent Specialist College

## Inspection dates

31 July–2 August 2019

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

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Directors have not made sure that the provision is monitored thoroughly. Consequently, they do not have sufficient knowledge of the quality of all aspects of the programmes.
- Directors have not ensured that the supported internship programme fully meets requirements.
- Teachers do not use the results of the assessments of learners' starting points when planning learning, so do not meet learners' individual needs sufficiently.
- Learners do not benefit from enough meaningful external work placements to gain a realistic understanding of the workplace.
- Directors have not ensured that the employability curriculum takes sufficient account of learners' prior skills and knowledge.
- Directors do not record the progress learners make over time in developing their social communication and independence skills.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Directors have responded very effectively to the local need for provision for young people who have a history of poor attendance and/or long periods out of education.
- Directors foster an inclusive environment where learners feel safe and respect each other and the staff. Learners understand how to protect themselves from harm online and in the community.
- Staff work constructively with parents and carers, intervening sensitively and patiently with learners at times of difficulty or crisis, so that learners continue to participate in education.
- Learners benefit from a wealth of enrichment opportunities and welfare support that helps them to improve their health and well-being and engage in the local community.
- Learners develop a better understanding of equality and diversity, the local environment and their role as British citizens.
- Learners benefit from timely, impartial careers advice and guidance.
- The large majority of learners achieve their qualifications and remain in learning for a second year.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Liberty Training is part of Liberty Group Ltd, which runs care homes and outreach provision for young people. Liberty Training started trading in 2013 and was registered as an independent specialist provider in 2017. It is located in Ramsgate, Kent. It provides courses for young people with mental health needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- All learners study employability and personal development at level 1, customer service principles at level 1 and functional skills up to level 2. The great majority of learners study functional skills at entry level. Of the 70 learners, 12 are on the supported internship programme. Almost all learners are funded by one local authority. The college receives funding for other courses from alternative sources, but these were not in scope for the inspection.

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

- Monitor the quality of provision more closely, so that areas for development can be identified accurately and acted upon, and support put in place as required.
- Ensure that teachers make better use of the assessments of learners' starting points, so that they take account of learners' individual goals, prior attainment and learning needs when planning and implementing the curriculum.
- Make sure that work placements are meaningful and that they provide learners with a realistic understanding of expectations in the workplace.
- Revise the employability curriculum so that it takes better account of individual learners' interests, prior skills and knowledge.
- Improve the management of supported internships, so that learners are on the right programme, are well supported by qualified job coaches and find appropriate employment.
- Capture learners' progress over time in the development of social communication skills and skills of independence.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

- Directors and managers have not monitored the provision on the college site or in the workplace thoroughly enough. Consequently, they have not made sure that the quality of teaching and learning and work placements meets the needs of all of the learners.
- Directors have not ensured that the supported internship programme fully meets requirements. Learners on the programme do not have sufficient support from job coaches and not all of the work placements are appropriate.
- The employability curriculum is not sufficiently demanding for those learners who have previously completed higher levels of vocational qualifications. Managers have not taken sufficient account of learners' prior knowledge and skills when developing the curriculum.
- Directors and managers do not have sufficiently comprehensive information about the progress of learners. This means that they cannot make timely interventions if required. They capture progress in relation to units of qualification, but do not have sufficient information about the extent to which learners develop their social communication skills and skills of independence.
- Directors have successfully implemented an ambitious strategy to re-engage young people who have not participated successfully in education programmes for some time. Many of the young people have experienced severe bullying or exclusion have been in care, or have been involved in drug or alcohol-related difficulties.
- Directors provide extensive and relevant training and development for staff, including updates on safeguarding. Teaching staff are suitably qualified, and directors encourage all staff to take further professional qualifications.
- Directors have developed fruitful partnerships with a good number of local organisations that provide additional benefits for learners, such as mentoring and counselling. They also enable learners to engage successfully in local community projects.
- Directors respond swiftly to any concerns raised, by holding daily management meetings to discuss any problems that have arisen during the day. They also listen and respond appropriately to concerns raised by learners through their student council.
- Directors foster an inclusive climate where learners respect each other and the staff, and gain a better understanding of equality and diversity. Directors use their funding well to provide opportunities for learners to understand more about their local environment and its history, as well as their role as British citizens.

### The governance of the provider

- Liberty Training does not have an advisory or governing body.

### Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior staff have had training to an appropriate level, and directors have developed

policies that are comprehensive and up to date. The staff have a thorough understanding of British values and of the ways learners need to protect themselves from anyone who may intend them harm. The staff are particularly vigilant in making sure that learners understand the potential dangers arising from online activity, and they work closely with parents or carers so that best practice is enforced.

- Staff follow up safeguarding concerns rigorously. Directors work closely and effectively with the local authority safeguarding team and the police. Staff and learners are very clear about the directors' high expectations.

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

### **Requires improvement**

- Teachers do not take sufficient account of the assessment of learners' starting points when planning learning. This means, for example, that teachers expect all learners in the group to complete the same tasks, despite significantly different prior achievements and learning needs.
- Teachers do not make appropriate checks on learning before moving on to the next activity. They rely too heavily on simple questioning. Consequently, they do not know whether learners identified as having processing difficulties are struggling to retain the information.
- Teachers do not use assessment information to develop individual short- and long-term goals for learners or to measure progress. They record units of qualification, but do not capture the progress of learners in the development of wider learning skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Staff do not provide learners with sufficient guidance on how they can improve their written work. They do not routinely correct spelling, punctuation and grammar errors, and the same mistakes occur over time in marked work.
- Teachers promote aspects of equality and diversity very well through practical activities, such as visits to local mosques and involvement in arts projects on topics such as empowering women. They include aspects of British values well through practical activities. Teachers also stress the importance of learners keeping themselves safe from those who might harm them, particularly online and in the community.
- Support staff provide good support in the classroom. They work closely with the teachers and ensure that appropriate adjustments are made to resources, such as using individual coloured overlays and different font sizes.
- Teaching staff work closely with parents and carers, often visiting homes and maintaining contact through social media. Parents and carers value this support, which enables students to remain in learning.
- Where teachers provide practical activities, such as practising interview techniques, learners demonstrate their skills well.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

- Learners benefit from the opportunity to gain additional short qualifications, such as in food hygiene, first aid and health and safety, which are valuable preparation for employment.
- Learners demonstrate very good behaviour and conduct. They abide by the organisation's expectations of conduct, have positive attitudes towards their learning and are respectful to other learners and staff. During the inspection, they were polite and helpful to inspectors.
- Learners understand how to stay safe and know who to contact if they have any concerns. They understand the risks associated with social media and how to disclose personal information appropriately. They can explain the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism and how extremist groups use online sites to radicalise vulnerable people.
- Learners receive appropriate impartial careers advice, so that are informed about their future options. This is particularly valuable where learners have not engaged in learning for some time. For example, a learner applied successfully to university, as a result of a careers guidance interview.
- Learners engage in a good range of enrichment activities, which include many external visits in the local community and further afield, such as attending the Houses of Parliament. These visits widen their knowledge of the world around them. Many learners have rarely travelled previously beyond the immediate area.
- Learners understand how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They can explain the benefits of eating healthily and the risks associated with drinking alcohol and taking drugs. Learners who access specialist support, such as counselling, know how to develop coping strategies to reduce their anxieties and manage their behaviour.
- Learners are encouraged to contribute to the management of the organisation through their student council. They have successfully requested improvements, such as increasing the availability of sporting activities.
- Learners' attendance has improved significantly, as a result of timely interventions by staff, including providing work to be completed at home. For many learners, this is an important step in re-engaging successfully in education.
- All learners participate in external work experience, but it is not sufficiently long or meaningful for them to develop a good understanding of realistic work practices.
- All learners have functional skills lessons, but teachers do not always provide sufficient opportunity for them to practise their skills in vocational lessons.

## Outcomes for learners

**Requires improvement**

- Too few leavers on the supported internship programme progressed to open employment at the end of the first year.
- Too few of the minority of learners who study functional skills in English and mathematics

at levels 1 and 2 gain the qualification.

- Although improving significantly as a result of timely interventions by staff, rates of retention are not yet high enough.
- The large majority of learners achieve their vocational qualifications at level 1.
- Pass rates for the large majority of learners who study entry level qualifications in functional skills English and mathematics were high in 2018/19.
- Many learners achieve additional qualifications, such as in food hygiene and first aid.
- Learners previously disengaged from educational provision, often for long periods, successfully re-engage, and many plan to continue for a second year.
- Learners become more confident, and their levels of anxiety decrease. Staff provide sensitive and consistently supportive interventions.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	144785
Type of provider	Independent Specialist College
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	32
Principal/CEO	Michelle Smith
Telephone number	01843 446 906
Website	www.libertygrouppltd.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)	65	4	0	1	0	0	0	0
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	70							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	–							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the programme 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 learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions and scrutinised learners' work and progress reviews. The inspection took account of all relevant provision at the provider.

## Inspection team

Joyce Deere, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Neil Clark

Ofsted Inspector

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