

Brian Jackson College of Open Learning

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Sheila Boyle

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Brian Jackson College is an independent special school now operating solely from Vision House, a modern facility in the town of Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire. It was originally registered for 64 students occupying two sites in the district of Kirklees. At the time of first inspection in June 2009 both sites were in operation. Following that inspection the site in Huddersfield was closed down. The present site is registered for up to 48 boys and girls aged 14 to 16; currently there are 22 students on roll, two have a statement of their special educational needs relating to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The college is owned by The National Children's Centre charity. It works closely with the local authority to provide medium- and long-term placements for students who have been excluded or are at risk of being excluded from their mainstream schools. Additionally the school makes temporary provision for up to five students who are solely registered in local authority schools from which they have been temporarily excluded. The school aims to provide an alternative education for students to help them to obtain basic qualifications and acquire educational skills to better fit them for life.

Context of the inspection

This is the second monitoring inspection since the school was inspected in June 2009 when it failed to meet a number of regulations relating to the curriculum, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, welfare, health and safety and the premises and accommodation. At the time of the last monitoring inspection in March 2010 the school was judged to have made satisfactory progress in relation to the welfare, health and safety of students but inadequate progress on issues relating to the curriculum, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the premises and accommodation. No action plan was submitted following that inspection. This present inspection was undertaken to evaluate the progress made by the school in addressing the outstanding issues identified by the last monitoring inspection.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

At the time of the last inspection in March 2010 a number of regulations were not met. The college did not provide full-time supervised education for all students of

compulsory school age and it did not provide sufficient scientific and technological education. In order to address these issues relating to the curriculum and the provision of full-time education for all students, the college, in consultation with the local authority, revised its provision including the staffing structure to ensure that it had sufficient staff and resources to provide full-time education for all of its students. There are now a suitable number of qualified and experienced staff to provide full-time places for the number of students on roll, and the curriculum provision now offers them relevant experiences in the all required areas of learning. Accreditation is available in all subjects taught including personal social and health education (PSHE). To provide scientific and technological education on site, the college erected a mobile classroom with resources and appointed a permanent teacher to teach vocational courses in motor vehicle maintenance and woodwork. It also secured the services of a specialist science teacher one day per week to enable all students to have discrete lessons in science. This aspect of the curriculum is further supplemented by food technology lessons. One of the classrooms has been converted into an information and communication technology (ICT) room with an interactive whiteboard. Students now have discrete lessons in ICT. Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing this identified area of weakness.

The last inspection found weaknesses in the provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The limitations of the curriculum impacted negatively on attendance and restricted opportunities for students to develop self-confidence and self-esteem and to show initiative. To address this issue the college revised the curriculum and introduced a wider range of accredited courses for students including vocational courses with resources for practical experiences. Students are now provided with taster courses in vocational subjects such as motor vehicle maintenance and woodwork and it is planned that this provision will increase to include courses in construction when the refurbishment of a disused mill on site is complete. The number of support assistants has increased and each student has a mentor to whom they can turn if they need help. Opportunities for work experience off-site are now established and students are involved in self-evaluation tasks through the PSHE programme. They have a greater say on how they should learn as the college moves toward personalised learning programmes. The attendance of the majority of students has improved significantly and feedback from them indicates that they are more interested in coming to the college regularly because of the range of experiences on offer and the good support they receive. Good progress has been in addressing this identified area of weakness.

At the time of the last inspection the college premises did not include facilities for scientific and technological education and although there were plans to convert a disused building on site into teaching units for design and technology and vehicle repair workshops, no timescales had been set for this work to be completed. To address this issue the college erected a mobile classroom with facilities to enable students to have taster lessons in motor vehicle maintenance and woodwork. It also converted a classroom into an ICT suite. Part of the food technology room has been set aside with some facilities for teaching science. Work is underway to refurbish the

disused building on site to provide practical lessons in vocational courses as well as facilities for art and aspects of science. It is envisaged that this facility will be in use in the summer term 2011. Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing this identified area of weakness.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements.

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special day school for students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties		
Date school opened	October 2005		
Age range of pupils	14-16 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 19	Girls: 3	Total: 22
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 2	Girls: 0	Total: 2
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,328		
Address of school	Vision House Units 1-6 Grove Mills High Street Heckmondwike WF16 0AD		
Telephone number	01924 408306		
Email address	peter.joseph@nccuk.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Peter Joseph		
Proprietor	National Children's Centre		