

Archway Academy Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		25–28 February 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- Not enough study programme learners attend training on a regular basis and too often fail to inform the provider if they are unable to attend.
- The number of learners achieving an English or mathematics qualification has been too low.
- Staff do not always correct learners' work for errors and learners do not receive sufficient written feedback on how to improve and further develop their vocational and functional skills.
- The reviews staff have with learners do not result in sufficiently specific or measurable targets to ensure learners develop appropriate employability skills and progress towards their desired progression aim.
- The range of work experience placements does not currently meet the needs and interests of learners.
- Managers analyse data but not always in sufficient detail to establish trends over time or to identify areas for improvement relating to attendance or pass rates.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Learners improve their confidence and develop good personal and social skills.
- Tutors are enthusiastic and knowledgeable inspiring learners through well-planned sessions which are interesting and enjoyable.
- Staff are very patient and supportive, acting as good role models, helping learners develop good behaviours and show respect for each other.
- Archway Academy provides a diverse group of often vulnerable and disadvantaged young people with a safe, supportive and welcoming environment where they can learn the skills needed to progress into employment, further education or training.
- Leadership is strong and provides an ambitious vision. Managers and staff set high standards and believe learners can achieve and exceed expectations.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the strategies to manage attendance of learners more effectively by setting appropriate targets related to developing this core employability skill.
- Provide learners with regular and meaningful written feedback on how to improve their performance and further develop their vocational, personal, and employability skills and their English and mathematics.
- Ensure targets set by staff for learners are specific, measurable and time-bound and focus on learners developing skills needed to achieve their desired progression aims.
- Review the structure of the study programme to ensure it is flexible enough to meet the needs of learners and that there is a sufficient range of work-experience opportunities to help develop learners employability and vocational skills.
- Ensure management information and data is routinely analysed to monitor trends over time and to plan and measure improvements including:
 - attendance and punctuality rates for individual learners and different courses
 - reasons for non-attendance
 - overall and first-time pass rates on English and mathematics tests.
- Extend the quality assurance arrangements to ensure activities outside the classroom including monthly reviews and the marking of learners' work meet the standards expected.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
------------------------------	----------------------

- Archway Academy offers a wide range of level 1 vocational qualifications and other qualifications to help learners prepare for life and work. Many successfully complete their chosen qualifications and the success rates are comparable to the national averages for similar providers.
- Many learners have a low level of English and mathematics when they start at Archway Academy. Even though they make reasonable or good progress during their English and mathematics lessons not enough successfully achieved level 1 qualifications in the last two years of the Foundation Learning programme. A few learners progress to, and achieve, a level 2 qualification. On the new study programme success rates are improving.
- Managers at Archway Academy have a good understanding of different achievement rates for various groups of learners. A clear focus on supporting learners with learning difficulties and disabilities has ensured these learners are now just as likely to succeed as those who do not have any known additional learning need.
- Learners quickly improve their confidence and develop good personal and social skills while at Archway Academy. Staff closely monitor the behaviour of learners and prompt action is taken to address any inappropriate conduct. Parents and carers speak very positively about the personal and social development in their children.
- Tutors brief learners on what skills they need for employment during induction and specific parts of the courses. However there is insufficient focus on reinforcing these skills and developing them further during vocational courses, functional skills sessions, monthly reviews and work experience. Learners do not have specific targets or action points to help them develop and improve their employability skills.

- Attendance rates have declined since the beginning of 2014 compared to the last two years. Attendance was very low during inspection with just over half of learners attending lessons inspectors observed. Reasons for non-attendance are not analysed and learners are poor at informing Archway Academy that they will not be attending. Too few learners have attendance targets, and improvement in learners' attendance is not measured.
- The proportion of learners successfully progressing into further education, employment or training improved in the last year of the Foundation Learning programmes with around two thirds progressing. Most learners join courses at local colleges and a few gain employment. On the new study programme, half of learners who have left so far have started a further education programme or secured employment. Most learners starting on the study programme state their preferred progression aim is an apprenticeship and so far very few have achieved this.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment on the study programme requires improvement. Many learners develop good personal and social skills. Most learners achieve and make progress that is broadly in line with the national averages for similar providers. Development of learners' employability skills requires improvement and attendance is low.
- Experienced and well-qualified tutors structure lessons that help learners improve their English, mathematics, trade and service skills. A wide range of good training activities increases learners' interest and enjoyment. Good relationships in class foster an active and effective learning environment in which learners flourish. However, vocational training tutors focus more on meeting the qualification aim rather than stretching and challenging learners to reach their full potential.
- The standard of learners work is good, especially their participation in speaking, listening and vocational activities. Learners are willing to take on new and unfamiliar tasks confidently. Learners work hard and enjoy their lessons and, when they attend, most progress well.
- Many activities draw on topics that improve learners' prospect of active citizenship and personal development. Learners that take part in community projects further develop their painting and decorating skills in more realistic settings. Hospitality learners reinforce their preparation and service skills when they help prepare and serve meals for others at Archway Academy.
- Tutors determine learner's starting point using a range of initial assessment processes. However, they do not use the findings well enough to plan individually tailored programmes, or to establish foundations to measure learners' progress. Whilst tutors give careful consideration to learners' reasons for learning, too few targets help learners understand what they need to do to achieve their desired progression aim.
- Monthly reviews do not provide a sufficiently detailed summary of learners' progress or areas of continued development across all the different aspects of their learning. Few specific and measurable targets are set to help develop learners' employability skills such as timekeeping and punctuality or help them prepare for the next step in their career.
- Tutors use questions well in lessons to test learners developing knowledge and to challenge them to correct wrong answers. However, written feedback is usually limited to broad statements and does not provide learners with sufficient detail on how to improve and develop further. Some learners' work remains unmarked and learners do not always receive written feedback on what they have completed or what they need to do next.
- Learners enjoy their work placements. Employers are supportive and find purposeful activities for learners. Learners gain confidence and skills that helps them feel better about themselves and the value they have in the work place. However, too few learners attend work placements, and targets for the development of learners' skills during work experience are weak.

- English and mathematics lessons are good. Activities build on previous learning and many classes effectively combine English and mathematics with language development. By combining speaking and listening activities with writing tasks, learners engage well with each other, and with the lesson content. In mathematics, learners engage well with interactive games and enjoy the variety. However, tutors do not always make the connection between the development of English and mathematics and employability or trade specific skills.
- In vocational lessons, learners are encouraged to pronounce words properly to help improve their spelling and understanding of relevant technical language. However, tutors do not always use vocational training to reinforce the practical application of learners' English and mathematics. Not all tutors correct spelling and grammatical errors in learners' written work or ensure learners use correct mathematical methods when working with numbers.
- Learners feel well supported and safe at Archway Academy and have the confidence and trust in staff to discuss complex issues openly. However, for a small minority of learners, support prevents them from developing independence and reduces their desire to progress. Learners use good information and advice to make decisions about their future. However, learners do not always receive advice about progression options early enough in their programmes.
- All staff promote equality and diversity well, both in lessons and throughout Archway Academy. Less able learners are encouraged and guided by support workers. Tutors manage learners' behaviour well, and make prompt intervention to prevent disruption to lessons. Student profiles compiled at induction inform tutors of learners wider and personal support needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Strong, passionate leadership provides a clear vision for the provision. Senior managers have high expectations for learners and are fully aware of the multiple barriers many face. The priorities are clear and all staff strive to ensure young people develop the skills and confidence necessary to progress into further education, training or employment.
- Staff are actively encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge by attending regular training session on topics such as differentiation and embedding equality and diversity in taught sessions. Several new tutors are working towards relevant teaching or assessing qualifications. A few staff completed masters degrees and one is working toward a pertinent PhD.
- Performance management of staff is a well-defined process with annual appraisals and quarterly targets setting. However, not all staff set sufficiently specific and measurable targets for themselves or for aspects related to learners such as attendance and punctuality in lessons, achievement and progression rates.
- A well-structured and clearly defined system is in place for the observations of teaching and learning. External and internally observed sessions appropriately identify strengths and areas for improvement. However, staff do not always include the developmental action point in their quarterly performance management targets. The current system focuses on teaching sessions and does not evaluate the impact and effectiveness of other learner centred activities such as monthly reviews.
- The quality assurance arrangements do not currently include checks or audits on learners' documents to ensure staff mark work according to the policy, and that learners have specific, measurable and time bound targets for development and progression.
- The self-assessment process is satisfactory and based on a range of evidence and inputs, including feedback from learners and staff. However the report did not accurately identify several areas for improvement found during inspection. Archway Academy does not make sufficient use management information or data to identify trends over time or possible areas for improvement in relation to learners' progress during their training. In particular, data on

punctuality, attendance, pass rates for tests on different vocational courses and reasons for leaving.

- Archway Academy are making reasonable progress in changing the provision from a structured, qualification based, Foundation Learning programme to a more flexible study programme focussed on ensuring learners achieve the skills necessary to progress toward their desired aims. They have successfully introduced more subject areas including hair and beauty. However, the number and range of work placement opportunities are not yet sufficient to meet the needs and interest of learners. The processes and criteria for preparing learners for work experience and managing their progress are not sufficiently well defined.
- Archway Academy promotes equality and diversity particularly well, staff and learners demonstrate respect for each other. The behaviour of learners is a high priority and staff deal promptly and effectively with any incidents. Staff have regular training on topics related to equality and diversity through team meetings and specific workshops.
- Managers carefully monitor data relating to the recruitment and performance of different groups of learners. Managers take appropriate action to address identified variations and have a reasonable awareness of underlying issues.
- Archway Academy meets its statutory requirements for the safeguarding of learners. Robust arrangements are in place to ensure the safety of both learners and staff with CCTV throughout the training centre. Managers work very effectively with local safeguarding agencies, parent and carers. Specialist support ensures learners with complex needs are very well supported. The safeguarding officer maintains confidential records of all incidents and disclosures. Staff maintain appropriate health and safety in the workshops. Learners wear suitable personal protective equipment in the workshops.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Archway Academy Limited

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-19 study programmes
Overall effectiveness	3	3
Outcomes for learners	3	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Employability Training	3

Type of provider	Independent learning provider								
Age range of learners	14+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 58								
	Part-time: 183								
Managing Director	Jim Ryan								
Date of previous inspection	16 December 2011								
Website address	www.archwayacademy.org.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 and above		
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	
Full-time	44	2	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Part-time	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Number of traineeships	16-19			19+		Total			
	1			N/A		1			
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16	54								
Full-time	37								
Part-time	17								
Number of community learners	N/A								
Number of employability learners	N/A								
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)								
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A								

Contextual information

Archway Academy Limited is a private education and training organisation established in 2004, in Bordesley, East Birmingham. This inspection report is on the training provided to young people aged 16 to 19 on the study programme and traineeships. The education provided to boys and girls aged 10 to 16 is inspected separately under the independent schools standards. Learners receive training in English and mathematics as well as vocational qualifications including bricklaying, carpentry, painting and decoration, hospitality, art, hair and beauty, administration and information communications technology. Learners represent the diverse backgrounds of the local multicultural communities. Many learners have recognised learning difficulties and/or disabilities such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or Asperger's syndrome.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Joy Montgomery HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the quality assurance manager as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed teaching and learning sessions, and scrutinised assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the provision.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

