

Milton Keynes Christian Foundation

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		9–12 June 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- Learners make very good progress in the development of their employability, personal, and social skills.
- Very effective care and support meet individual learning needs well.
- Cooperative and respectful one-to-one coaching in real working environments is particularly effective.
- Assessment and reviews of learning are particularly effective in ensuring learners understand the progress they are making and how to secure improvement.
- Leaders and managers have clear values, a well-considered strategic vision and direction and have high expectations of learners.
- A wide range of social enterprise projects meets the needs of learners and the local community very well.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Rates of progression to further education and employment are not yet high enough.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the few group sessions is not of a sufficiently good quality.
- Performance management of staff is not uniformly well implemented.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve learners' rates of progression to employment by developing links to more employers.
- Ensure all forms of teaching and learning are consistently of good quality by further developing group teaching skills for all staff and by ensuring better planning and delivery of information and communication technology (ICT) training.
- Fully implement the performance management processes for all staff and ensure that they work to clearly identified targets that managers frequently review.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Outcomes for learners are good. Success rates for vocational courses and for functional skills in 2012/13 compare favourably with similar providers for learners aged 16 to 18. The previous gap between female and male success rates is closing effectively so that no significant differences in success rates exist for any particular groups of learners. Just under half of the learners have learning difficulties and they achieve their qualifications at a very high rate. Most of the current learners are making good progress towards the achievement of their learning aims.
- Managers at Milton Keynes Christian Foundation (MKCF) collect and use data well to monitor learners' progress and compare performance across the different social enterprises. They frequently and carefully review the rates of attendance, progression and qualifications.
- Learners make very good progress in the development of employability skills, particularly in relation to their starting points. Since the previous inspection, staff are putting much greater emphasis upon setting individual and challenging targets for learners, the progress of which they monitor carefully. Learners are given incremental targets to achieve particular skills, such as using catering equipment. As they achieve these skills, they then move on to additional tasks, becoming effectively multi-skilled.
- Rates of progression into further education and employment have been improving since the previous inspection, and learners do now have a much better understanding of the opportunities that are available to them. However, MKCF does not yet do enough to maximise learners' opportunities to progress, particularly into employment, including apprenticeships. Where learners leave before the planned end of their learning, it is often because of personal circumstances, such as pregnancy or moving home.
- Learners achieve a good standard of job skills, whether learning to bake cakes, use cash tills, develop graphic design skills to produce information leaflets, or helping to supervise young children in the crèche. Learners also develop good communication and teamwork skills, as well as improving their customer service skills, and they enjoy working in the good quality real working environments.
- Rates of attendance are improving, and now match those for similar provision nationally; learners better understand the importance of good attendance in relation to their job roles. Learners become more mature in their attitude, and increase in confidence, becoming more positive about their future. The gaining of a recognised first aid certificate at the start of programme gives learners an early sense of achievement and builds their confidence and motivation well.
- The majority of learners are making good progress in their understanding of the importance of English and mathematics skills in relation to their work. They effectively take advantage of the many opportunities available to them to practise these skills, such as in portion control in

catering, counting daily takings, or planning and organising an external trip for childcare clients. Whilst achievement of functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics remains at a good level, too few learners achieve their ICT qualifications, and they have insufficient opportunities to practise these skills in their job roles.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, focus well on meeting learners' emotional, social, cognitive and vocational needs, and reflect the good outcomes in the development of their personal and employability skills. Staff celebrate learners' achievements very well through specific events, in presentations of certificates and through encouraging written comments in a 'celebrations' section in the review process.
- Staff have high expectations of learners and encourage them well to achieve high standards. Frequent team meetings provide a useful vehicle for formal sharing of information on learners' progress. Staff monitor attendance and punctuality closely and ensure learners are aware of the need to develop these, and other, key employability skills. Coaching and one-to-one support are particularly effective. However, in the small minority of group sessions, the development of learners' skills and knowledge is less effective.
- Staff promote cooperative and respectful working environments and ensure learners develop their skills well. For example, learners at the urban farm grow vegetables and sell them to the public through a vegetable e-box scheme, and directly to local food establishments. As part of this initiative, they develop their social skills well by interacting with other workers at the farm, including volunteers and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learners work collaboratively alongside staff in a range of very high quality vocational enterprises.
- Assessment of learning is good. Frequent meetings to appraise learners' progress have resulted in a much more focused approach to reviewing learning than was the case previously. Learners now have a clear understanding of the areas they need to develop and the steps to take to ensure they successfully achieve their outcomes. An improved initial assessment of learners' English and mathematics skills, and an assessment of their personal barriers to progress give staff having a clear understanding of learners' starting points. Feedback on written work is generally useful and supportive. However, in a small minority of cases, staff do not correct mistakes and their comments do not enable learners to understand exactly what they need to do to improve.
- Targets for learning are clear, relevant, and provide learners with a good understanding of the areas they need to improve. Staff break down targets into useful small steps of achievement to support this process. Learners review their progress against their targets successfully, and frequently, which supports their ability to control their own skills development. Staff and learners work well together to adjust targets over time to reflect skills development and to offer an increased level of challenge.
- The majority of learners improve their English and mathematics skills well through activities closely linked to their vocational area of learning. For example, one trainee researched bicycle usage to produce a powerpoint presentation arguing the case for a cycle park at the main premises, and supported the argument with a carefully measured ground plan. However, the teaching of ICT is less effective and does not lead to sufficiently high levels of achievement.
- A good range of social enterprise projects, including two cafés, a bicycle repair workshop, a graphics studio, a crèche and a farm, provides very good resources for learning. For example, the two cafés provide learners with excellent opportunities to improve their catering and hospitality skills. Learners work well under pressure, dealing with members of the public, and in one of the cafés they prepare daily hot meals for a local hostel. Recently introduced vocational learning manuals provide learners with clear information as to the skills required of them and support them well to improve their ability to work independently.

- Information, advice and guidance are good. Learners are clear about what is expected of them within their vocational options. Progression targets provide a clear focus on learners' next steps. Many learners gain a clearer understanding of possible career paths through the support and guidance they receive. For example, one trainee planned to progress to agricultural college to realise a long term aim of working with animals.
- Support for learners is very effective. Staff work flexibly to ensure learners' needs are fully met; for example, through reviews of learning that take place weekly to support those learners who respond better to a 'little and often' approach. Links to specialist support agencies are good. A high percentage of the learners have additional learning and social needs and staff provide them with good, targeted support.
- MKCF provides a strongly caring and highly supportive environment that promotes equality and diversity well. Staff view learners as valued team members within the enterprise projects and promote a strong culture of mutual respect and tolerance. Learners are clear about their rights and responsibilities. Staff promote equality and diversity well in many activities, for example through an exercise on marginalised communities in a functional skills English lesson.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. Leaders and managers have clear values, high expectations of learners and a well-considered strategic vision and direction that underpin all of their work with learners. A strong focus on employability and of the development of learners through their active participation in a wide range of social enterprise projects combines well with the culture of care and compassion, which permeates the whole organisation.
- The board of trustees has a good range of experience and expertise and contributes well to the shaping of the strategic vision and direction. Trustees monitor performances closely, have a good grasp of the organisation's key strengths and challenges, as well as a good understanding of the needs of the learners. Directors, senior managers and trustees have successfully led the organisation through a period of significant change.
- Since the previous inspection, the attendance of learners, the quality of target setting, of assessment practice and reviews and of the monitoring of learners' progress have all improved significantly. Learners are also benefiting from improvements in their main training in the social enterprise projects. Their achievement of functional skills in English and mathematics is good, but in ICT the quality of teaching and learning and of learners' achievement still requires further improvement.
- The small minority of training that takes place in workshop and classroom-based learning, which is usually in small groups, is insufficiently effective. The organisation's processes for observations do not fully cover this training, or identify the key areas to improve sessions and create action plans for staff development.
- The formal performance management of staff through the established arrangements for staff supervision are not consistently well implemented. While the majority of staff value the feedback and focused target setting that take place during supervision meetings, not all staff have had sufficient opportunities to participate fully and to identify formal targets to secure improvements.
- Self-assessment is inclusive and accurately identifies the majority of key strengths and areas for improvement. The quality improvement plan is detailed, frequently monitored and updated and supports improvements effectively. The pace of improvement has increased significantly over the past six months. Learners have good opportunities to provide feedback informally and in their timely meetings with staff. However, more formal opportunities to gather all learners' views are not sufficiently systematic or frequent.

- The introduction of the study programme by managers and support staff has been successful. They give careful consideration to the needs and interests of learners, local and national priorities and related employment and training opportunities. Productive partnership working enhances and extends opportunities for learners. Work experience in the wide range of social enterprise projects provides good opportunities for learners to develop their employability skills, as well as their personal skills and confidence. However, MKCF is aware of the need to develop further links with additional employers to provide wider work experience and progression opportunities.
- MKCF provides learning environments that are inclusive, welcoming, and supportive and it has at its heart the meeting of learners' individual and often-complex personal and learning needs. The provider has a strong focus on dealing with bullying and discrimination of any kind. The organisation recognises that there is still more work to do to train staff to enable them to promote equality and diversity in teaching and learning routinely and with greater confidence.
- Policies and procedures on safeguarding are clear, thorough and implemented well. The safeguarding of learners has an appropriately high profile and the organisation meets its statutory obligations for safeguarding learners. Staff have strong and effective links with relevant local agencies, which enable them to provide good levels of support for learners.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Milton Keynes Christian Foundation

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Outcomes for learners	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Employability training	2

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16–18							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 115							
	Part-time: 0							
Principal/CEO	Mr G Ghaleb - Director							
Date of previous inspection	December 2012							
Website address	www.mkchristianfoundation.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 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	31	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	-							
Part-time	-							
Number of community learners	-							
Number of employability learners	32							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

Contextual information

Based in Wolverton, Milton Keynes, the provider contracts with the Education Funding Agency to provide the new study programmes for learners aged 16 to 19. It recruits learners from the local area as well as from the wider area of Northamptonshire.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Gary Adkins

One lead inspector and two additional inspectors, assisted by the Training 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 past 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 learning sessions, 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 all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

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>

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[Piccadilly Gate](#)
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