

The Orpheus Centre

Independent specialist college

Inspection dates		21–22 October 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
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:

- the development of students' English and mathematical skills is not yet good
- not enough of the teaching, learning and, particularly, assessment are good or better
- teachers' reviewing and recording of all aspects of students' progress are not sufficiently comprehensive to judge the full extent of the progress students make over time
- the range of work experience and appropriate qualifications is not yet sufficiently broad to enable all students to develop the skills they may need to support their longer term independence
- the management of staff performance and training is ineffective and does not enable all teachers and support staff to improve their practice quickly enough
- quality assurance processes are insufficiently rigorous and have yet to bring improvement in all areas of the college's work
- the board of trustees does not review important aspects of the college's work in enough detail; often managers do not provide them with all the information they need to ask probing questions about standards and performance.

This provider has the following strengths:

- the vast majority of students who take accredited qualifications achieve them and progress to the next level of study
- students make good gains in their personal and social skills through the range of arts, music and drama enrichment
- the standard of most students' work across the expressive and creative arts subjects is good.
- students display good attitudes to learning and develop high levels of self-confidence.
- students receive good levels of personal support.
- senior leaders use good partnerships within the arts world effectively to broaden opportunities for students and enable them to get involved in a wide range of creative projects.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the teaching of English, functional skills and particularly mathematics is of a high standard, and that teachers set students challenging targets to develop these skills so they can apply them in everyday life. Ensure students can gain accreditation in these subjects, particularly where this will support their future progression.
- Raise teachers expectations within all learning activities and set ambitious targets for all students. Ensure teachers record comprehensively the progress that students make so they gain an accurate picture of learning over time. Monitor the quality of teachers' assessment frequently.
- Strengthen quality assurance of teaching, learning and assessment so that managers can direct staff development more effectively and more quickly. Ensure all observer feedback to teachers is precise so that teachers and support staff are clear about exactly how they can improve their practice.
- Sharpen the analysis and use of data and/or information, to review and report more effectively on the quality of provision, including achievement by different groups of students, safeguarding, and the impact of staff training. Leaders must ensure this takes place before the college increases student numbers.
- Implement plans for extending the curriculum within this academic year, and widen opportunities for internal and external work experience within and outside of the world of expressive arts and ensuring work experience is formalised for part-time students.
- Improve the quality of written feedback on students' work so that students are clear about what it is they should do better.
- Ensure the board of trustees provides greater challenge on the the effectiveness of managers' actions, and on the robustness of target setting within the quality improvement plan to ensure improvement is accelerated.
- Improve the collation, analysis and presentation of safeguarding information so senior managers and trustees have a cohesive picture of all safeguarding matters and can easily review patterns over time.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The college's entry level study programme is designed appropriately for learners with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is now in its third year. The programme includes teacher-led classroom-based learning and external enrichment events supported by learning support assistants. These sessions develop students' independence through the expressive arts. ▪ Outcomes for students require improvement. Students' targets were not sufficiently specific or detailed in 2013/14 to enable staff to review all aspects of students' progress over time. ▪ Most students are steadily developing reasonable skills to support their future independence. For example, one student disliked undertaking domestic tasks at school but now enjoys cooking and cleaning. ▪ Students develop good personal and social skills, such as being able to listen to others and collaborate in group work. They are encouraged to enter competitions to help raise their aspirations. For example, one student in 2013/14 successfully got to the final of a national creative writing competition. 	

- College data show no significant differences in achievement between groups of students. However, managers do not adequately analyse achievement between all groups, such as between day students and those in supported living.
- The standard of students' music and drama work is mostly good. Students gain high levels of confidence through their performance work, often performing to large audiences on local and national stages.
- Students' understanding of English, such as the use of language, reading and writing skills, and their development of mathematics skills, require improvement. The college does not offer any formal qualifications in English and mathematics, and this is disadvantaging the small number of students who are capable of achieving these to better support their future progression.
- All students who completed their programme in 2013/14 achieved their arts award qualifications and progressed on to the next level of the qualification this year. A small number of students have recently begun accredited units to develop their skills for employment, and one student has started a course in music technology this year, but it is too early to judge outcomes of these newer qualifications.
- Students are beginning to develop the skills they need for employment, such as being able to plan travel and to understand how to behave in work situations.
- Because of new provider status, it is too early to judge how successfully students will progress once they leave Orpheus.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. Teachers' setting and recording of targets are not yet comprehensive enough to show how well students make progress in all aspects of their learning programme. As a result, staff do not know whether all students are reaching their potential, particularly in relation to English, mathematics and developing sustained independence.
- Most teachers have high expectations of what students can do in their music and drama work. They do not always, however, reflect these high expectations in other aspects of the students' learning programme, such as in the development of students' day-to-day functional skills or in promotion of aspirations outside of the arts world.
- Many extracurricular music and drama sessions help students to extend their learning by effectively enabling them to share ideas and interpret their feelings. For example, in one session, students were discussing words relating to emotions, through topics such as 'What does it feel like to be lonely?' The teacher facilitated the discussion well and used single, low, musical chords and harmonies enabling students to gain a deeper understanding of what it means and feels like to be isolated.
- Teachers encourage students to be self-critical and reflective and in a minority of sessions manage the development of these skills particularly well. For example, in a drama session, students acted out a short scene and were asked by the teacher to review what had gone well and less well. Students were able confidently to give each other some constructive feedback and then re-perform the scene with these points in mind.
- Setting, recording and assessment of targets was insufficiently rigorous in 2013/14, but managers have revised processes for the current year. Teaching teams now collaborate more closely to produce a clear, more ambitious long-term goal for each student. Students are better involved in discussing and setting their own short- and longer-term targets. However, at the time of inspection it was too early to assess the full effectiveness of this new system.
- Students receive good oral feedback on how well they have done, but the quality of teachers' written feedback requires improvement. Too little written feedback provides, students with clear, detailed instructions about what they can do better and how to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar.

- Teachers are beginning to promote English, mathematical and functional skills through their lessons. For example, a lesson discussing syllables and phraseology was usefully translated into a music lesson on rap to reinforce these complex concepts to students. In most cases, teachers emphasise the use of technical language well, but the planned promotion and development of students' numeracy skills are less prominent.
- While English, mathematical and functional skills are a part of the learning programme for each student, currently insufficient discrete teaching of these subjects means that a small number of students are unable to make progress towards their next level of study.
- Students receive good levels of personal support. They enjoy their work and attend well. Their attitudes to learning are good, as is their interaction with each other and with staff.
- The new transitions team has improved the quality of advice and guidance, which is now good. Discussions with students about what they aspire to do when they leave are now undertaken much earlier in the year. This enables staff to plan programmes of study more effectively and to better support students' long-term goals.
- Staff promote values of respect and tolerance well, such as the importance of taking turns and listening to others. Events such as world music week are beginning to help students to appreciate differences and understand diverse cultures. In independence sessions, students develop useful understandings by looking at how human rights and fair trade impacts on shopping habits.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Whilst outcomes and teaching have improved and have some positive features, they are not consistently good. Staffing gaps during 2013/14 reduced the college's management capacity.
- The board of trustees does not challenge senior managers, or the recently formed learning sub-committee, with sufficient rigour to assure themselves that enough progress is being made in all areas of the college's educational work. However, the board of trustees does closely review the college's finances.
- The chief executive officer is clear about what is needed to improve the college. Senior leaders are currently revising the college's newly drafted strategic plan to ensure it is more ambitious, with sharply focused targets, by which they can measure progress towards the college's vision.
- Arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are not sufficiently robust to bring about swift improvements to teaching practice. Managers observe the quality of teaching and learning, but actions following observations are not pursued quickly enough.
- The breadth and range of staff training to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate. All teachers now have, or are working towards, a recognised teaching qualification. However, managers have planned little other formalised training or development over the past two years, either on an individual or group basis, to help teachers and learning support staff improve their practice. As a result, the quality of target setting and assessment is not good enough.
- The college's self-assessment report was mostly accurate in identifying what is required to improve. Senior managers are aware that quality improvement processes need strengthening across the college in order to bring about more rapid change and improve teaching, learning and outcomes.
- Managers do not yet analyse or report all data and information thoroughly enough to help them to monitor all aspects of their work. As a result, they are less able to pinpoint and prioritise improvements as effectively as they could.
- The curriculum is steadily improving. All students have a personalised programme of study, with an increasing focus on supporting their future independent living. All full-time students have some form of appropriate external work experience and/or work-related activity to help them

develop many of the skills they will need for life after Orpheus, but these opportunities are not formalised for part-time students.

- Senior managers are working more closely with the local council, schools and employers to provide more opportunities for students to undertake work-related projects and placements. Links with further education colleges have yet to be firmly established.
- A range of arts projects and initiatives enables students to develop a reasonable understanding and appreciation of people's differences, faiths and cultures. These projects are beginning to prepare students well for living and working in modern Britain. For example, students performed at the national probation office conference. They wrote their own songs about what it means for others to be disadvantaged in the world and performed this to an audience of over 300 people.
- The college's arrangements for safeguarding require improvement. Students work safely in sessions and feel safe. The large majority of staff has received recent safeguarding awareness training which includes safer recruitment training. Managers recognise more explicit training is required on e-safety and plans are in place for this term. Staff systematically record incidents, accidents and 'near misses' and other information relating to health and safety. However, the quality of this reporting and evaluation is not sufficiently comprehensive, making it difficult for managers and trustees to easily gain a cohesive overview or spot any emerging patterns over time.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

The Orpheus Centre

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	3	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-
Outcomes for learners	3	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Independent living and leisure skills	3

Type of provider	Independent specialist college							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	5							
Principal/CEO	Mr Graham Whitehead							
Date of previous inspection	June 2007							
Website address	www.orpheus.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+
	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
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 14-16	-							
Full-time	-							
Part-time	-							
Number of community learners	-							
Number of employability learners	-							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

Contextual information

The Orpheus Centre is a small specialist independent college based just outside Godstone in Surrey. It provides education for students with moderate to more complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) funds twelve of the 48 students, the remainder are funded by social services. Most students are White British. Some seven students are based in supported housing at the Orpheus Centre and the remainder attend the college on a day-release basis. Five students attend on a part-time basis. The centre opened as a new provider in September 2012. Since summer 2014, the chief executive officer has also taken on the operational role of head of learning, directly overseeing the centre's educational work. A new head of learning has now been appointed and is due to start in November 2014.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by the chief executive officer 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 students' 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 students 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 EFA funded 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 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



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

To find out more go to www.employerview.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

