

DV8 (Sussex) Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		21–24 April 2015
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:

- too many of the curriculum and quality improvement actions are at an early stage of progress
- learners' attendance at sessions and their achievement of qualifications require further improvement, particularly in English and mathematics
- teaching and learning require improvement in performing arts and media, and are not helping to improve learners' progress and achievement
- the range of industry reference materials and online resources is not sufficient to promote learners' independent learning and enhance their technical and theoretical skills
- teachers do not always manage behaviour well in classrooms
- the number of work placements is insufficient, particularly in the Bexhill area
- teachers' planning for individual teaching and learning is not routinely informed by sufficient information on learners' personal circumstances
- learners are not developing a full understanding of, and insight into, equality and diversity matters in the workplace.

This provider has the following strengths:

- DV8 is a highly inclusive place to learn and learners are treated with care and respect; learners work well collaboratively and support and respect each other
- partnership working with a range of external agencies, employers and organisations increases the range and effectiveness of support for learners, prepares them well for employment and meets local and national objectives for bringing young people back into learning
- despite often highly challenging personal circumstances, including homelessness, the vast majority of current learners are progressing well in their studies
- learners improve their creative, practical, personal and social skills very well compared to their starting points and a high proportion progress to further training or employment.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Prioritise methods to sustain and increase the pace of improvement in learners' attendance and achievement of qualifications, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Review and refine all aspects of the quality improvement system and curriculum management process so that teaching, learning and assessment improve further.
- Ensure that all teachers are equipped to manage the few instances of poor behaviour in the classroom effectively and promptly through teacher training and sharing good practice.
- Encourage learners to develop independent learning skills by expanding significantly the provision of printed industry reference materials and online resources that advance learners' technical and theoretical learning.
- Improve teachers' planning for individualised teaching and learning by ensuring that information gathered from learner support activity is always shared with teachers, subject to the maintenance of appropriate confidentiality.
- Ensure that equality and diversity themes promoted in classroom sessions include a much greater examination and discussion of the wider aspects of equality and diversity that learners will experience in the creative sector and employment generally.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DV8 (Sussex) (DV8) provides 16 to 19 study programmes for the 16 to 18 age group at its Brighton and Bexhill centres. The subject areas reported on and graded are performing arts, media at levels 1, 2 and 3 and foundation English and mathematics at entry level and level 2. Provision in art and fashion design is also offered under the study programme. DV8 offers apprenticeships and a foundation learning programme under a subcontracting arrangement; neither of these was in scope for this inspection. ▪ The majority of learners are keen to learn and have developed a positive attitude to learning and personal achievement at DV8. A very high proportion of learners have poor previous experiences of education and learning and just under half have no prior qualifications. Despite often highly challenging personal circumstances, including homelessness, the vast majority of current learners are progressing well in their studies. ▪ Learners develop their personal and social skills very well compared to their starting points, notably improved self-confidence, initiative, team-working and communication skills. Learners' behaviour and their attitude to teachers and staff in classroom sessions and more generally around the two centres were good. ▪ Since the start of the current academic year in September 2014, retention on the study programmes has improved significantly compared to the same period in the previous academic year. ▪ In 2013/14, the vast majority of learners on level 2 media and live events programmes completed their courses and achieved their planned vocational qualifications. However, on the other vocational courses and levels, the number of learners who stayed and achieved their qualification is more variable. In particular, too few level 1 music learners stayed to the end of their courses and achieved their qualifications. DV8 data indicate the potential for an improvement in achievement by the end of this academic year, but this cannot be guaranteed and the pace of improvement is slow. ▪ Too few learners attended and passed their functional skills qualifications in English and, particularly, mathematics in 2013/14. Learners' attendance at discrete English and mathematics 	

sessions has improved significantly during this academic year, but this is from a very low base and still requires further improvement. Provider data indicate a very recent and substantial increase in the proportion of learners entering and achieving English and mathematics qualifications.

- A high proportion of learners who complete their programmes at all levels progress to further learning or employment. Of these, the majority move to further learning, either at DV8 or another provider, and a smaller number goes into a range of paid work.
- Learners acquire useful employability skills through a classroom-based employability programme, but not enough pass their qualification, and the number and range of practical work placements available to them are insufficient, particularly in the Bexhill area. There is no significant variation in the achievement of different groups of learners.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Much teaching, learning and assessment in classroom sessions is good, but none is outstanding and too much requires improvement. High quality teaching, learning and assessment have not had sufficient impact on improving the rate at which learners achieve qualifications on all courses.
- The better sessions are characterised by learners' high energy, enthusiasm and focus while completing challenging and interesting project work set by teachers. Teachers use effective questioning to check learners' understanding. Discussions are lively and learners' views well informed. Learners work constructively in small and large groups to solve problems and complete projects.
- In sessions requiring improvement, the pace of learning was often too slow because teachers did not pay sufficient attention to learners' varying abilities and attainment. In other instances, teachers failed to check the extent of learning during the session. The few instances of poor behaviour observed in classroom sessions, such as learners' persistent use of social media, were not always managed effectively or promptly and caused low level distraction and irritation to other learners. In a very few cases, low attendance and poor punctuality inhibited the effectiveness of group and project work.
- Learners have a good rapport with teachers and one another in the majority of sessions, which helps promote an environment for learning. Several learners commented to inspectors that it was the first time they had ever felt their individual contributions in class, their effort and progress actually mattered to teachers. Staff are highly focused on helping learners to achieve.
- Learners enjoy coming to the centres because they like the teaching and support staff; they enjoy their learning and enjoy gaining employment skills. They particularly enjoy the practical aspects of teaching and learning, but are often less interested in theoretical elements.
- Teachers are mostly very well qualified and highly experienced current practitioners in music production, fashion, craft and events management. The range of classroom-based teaching resources is good, but very basic technology, such as cabling to link digital equipment together, is sometimes scarce. Rehearsal spaces for musicians are rudimentary in both centres.
- Interactive learning technologies support teaching and learning well in both centres, but learners cannot easily gain access to online feedback on their work. DV8 does not have an online virtual learning environment (VLE), which hinders learning and the development of independent learning skills. Few digital tools such as those used by creative industry professionals for online collaboration are available to learners, except the small number established on their own initiative by learners and teachers.
- Individual learning plans are used well by a minority of teachers, but less so by others, and target setting is not sufficiently specific or measurable to help learners improve their work. The quality of teachers' formal assessment of learning is variable and it is not always timely. Too little work is marked and commented upon, and when it is, the quality of written feedback is not always good enough to support each learner's progress.

- Teachers give learners plentiful oral advice and guidance. Learners have good and frequent access to specialist external creative and careers advice and they receive good support to make choices about their future training and career paths. Visiting industry practitioners provide up-to-date insights and help inspire learners. Taster workshops run by current teaching staff and learners capture the interest and involvement of prospective new learners.
- Specialist learning support in the classroom and the provision of more general personal support are particular strengths of the provision. A very high proportion of learners benefit from support and they speak highly of its effectiveness. However, the links between the support and teachers' planning for individual teaching and learning are not well developed because basic information on learners' circumstances is not being shared routinely with teachers.
- Promotion of equality and diversity during classroom sessions requires improvement. DV8 learners develop only a basic understanding of, and insight into, equality and diversity. For example, there is insufficient discussion of wider equality concepts, such as working conditions in the creative industries or employment generally, pay rates, stereotypical gender roles, the role of interns and volunteers, all of which they may encounter in employment in the creative industries.

Performing arts and media

16-19 study programmes

Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in performing arts and media require improvement because:

- teaching, learning and assessment are not good enough and the proportion of learners achieving their vocational qualifications is too low; too few learners complete their qualifications in level 1 music technology and level 2 fashion
- the quality of learning resources requires improvement and the lack of industry-related publications, virtual learning environment and dedicated rehearsal and performance spaces limits the potential for learners to research, rehearse and showcase their work; the range of work experience is not sufficient to meet demand
- too few teachers have enough knowledge of learners' initial assessment and support needs in order to plan each individual's learning goals
- too little individualised feedback is provided to improve learners' progress in tasks being explored in lessons; too often teachers will solve a learner's technical problem rather than supporting learners to do it themselves
- most learners are not adept at managing their work or their time and teachers spend too much time guiding and re-focusing learners during sessions
- learners' wider understanding of equality and diversity in the creative industries is not well developed.

In performing arts, media and crafts the provider has the following strengths:

- teaching and learning are characterised by consistent care, encouragement and support from teachers; teachers' coaching methods encourage learners' participation and ensure that individual contributions are seen and heard to be valued
- DV8 staff forge particularly strong partnerships with external agencies to support learners' personal and social needs and have developed programmes that enable those learners to develop their artistic expression
- teachers are imaginative and creative, with rich expert subject knowledge about the subjects they teach; they use materials and teaching methods and design vocational working briefs that meet learners' needs and interests

- visits from industry practitioners, such as producers, young entrepreneurs, photographers, TV editors and fashion public relations employees, provide specialist insight into current commercial contexts and prompt learners to develop industry-relevant production, technical and creative skills which will help them progress in their careers
- links with local festivals, recording studios and venues are good and many performing arts and events learners are able to get involved directly in a range of activities, notably in Brighton
- DV8 is a highly inclusive place to learn and learners are treated with respect; they work well collaboratively and support each other's work and ideas.

Foundation English and mathematics

16-19 study programmes

Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in Foundation English and mathematics require improvement because:

- teaching and learning have not had enough impact on raising learners' historically low achievement of qualifications in English and mathematics
- although there is recent evidence that actions to improve achievement are having a positive impact, achievement rates are still too low
- learners' retention and attendance at discrete English and mathematics sessions are not yet high enough, even though they have improved during this academic year
- not all teachers correct learners' mistakes in spelling and grammar routinely and the development of learners' English and mathematics skills is not adequately integrated into vocational project work
- learners are developing English and mathematics skills to a lower level than their practical attainment; while the standard of learners' written work mostly improves while they are on their course, it is frequently not good enough to meet the standards expected by employers which puts DV8 learners at a disadvantage when applying for jobs
- improvement in the quality of learning and level of achievement in mathematics has been too slow, hindered particularly by a high turnover of teaching staff at the Brighton centre during the past year; staffing in mathematics may have entered a period of stability but it is too early to be certain.

In Foundation English and mathematics the provider has the following strengths:

- much of the English and mathematics teaching and learning is good, in particular for the entry level learners who comprise the majority of learners in sessions
- sessions involving mixed ability groups are successful, because they are planned very carefully to meet the needs and abilities of learners
- learners engage very well with their teachers and the subject matter during sessions, working intently and purposefully on a wide range of interesting and enjoyable English and mathematics related tasks
- sessions are explicitly and carefully designed to boost learners' skills and confidence in taking and passing examinations; almost all learners have had highly demotivating past experiences of sitting and failing examinations, particularly in English and mathematics, and their increasing confidence in examination skills is demonstrable from their approach to, and achievement of, practice papers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Senior DV8 managers have a strong vision of what they want to achieve, how to achieve it and how to improve; they have planned very well for the future, but many actions to improve are at an early stage.
- Partnership working with a range of external agencies, employers and organisations is a particular strength of the provision. Its breadth increases the range and effectiveness of support for learners and expands their options for employment. DV8 has some very good working relationships with local employers, although this is stronger in Brighton than Bexhill.
- Leaders are strengthening further their relationships with local and regional creative industries and groups, including the local Chamber of Commerce and the Local Enterprise Partnership. The provision addresses priorities in local and national creative industries well. DV8 managers plan learning programmes well in partnership with local authorities and carefully encourage participation by young people who are at risk of leaving education as well as those who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Senior managers recognise the need to improve the impact of teaching, learning and assessment on achievement and progress in all programmes. An improvement strategy has been developed but has not yet been fully implemented, nor will it be until later this year following the arrival of a newly appointed Head of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.
- The observation of teaching and learning process requires improvement; observation staff are too often busy teaching to carry out sufficient observations of other teaching staff. The quality of observations is variable; a minority of records have a good focus on learning, but many do not. Managers have implemented a staff performance management system, but it is too early to judge its effectiveness.
- Leaders are good at identifying what needs to be done better, but are not using a coherent and prioritised approach to continuous quality improvement. Self-assessment is detailed, but at the expense of simple clarity about key strengths, areas for improvement and, specifically, action planning. While there has been good measurable improvement in learners' retention, attendance and, to some extent achievement, progress has not been fast or comprehensive enough. The data available for performance monitoring and management are fit for purpose and have improved in range and quality over the past year.
- Managers deploy limited resources and the company budget efficiently; what is available is managed well. Providing a library and a virtual learning environment are aspects which should be prioritised.
- Too few learners on study programmes have sufficient opportunities to take part in meaningful external work placements to enhance their work readiness and employment prospects.
- Arrangements for equality and diversity are good, but a small number of aspects require improvement. Equality and diversity are strongly embedded throughout the organisation, with a clear focus on meeting specific individual needs. Teachers challenge stereotypes well in the course of all taught sessions. Managers are particularly good at widening participation in learning among young people at risk of leaving education or who are NEET, but recognise that they need to do more to increase the number of learners from under-represented minority ethnic groups. Learners do not all have a good understanding of wider equality and diversity matters in the workplace.
- DV8 meets its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding learners. Safeguarding arrangements are good and many learners receive very effective support to deal with challenging personal difficulties. Staff are well aware of their roles and responsibilities and promote safeguarding, including e-safety, very well at induction and during the programmes. Managers assess risk well, with appropriate assessment and regular training for staff. A designated manager has close links with the local safeguarding children's board to ensure best safeguarding practice and is working with 'Prevent' to provide specific staff training in this aspect later this year.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

DV8 (Sussex) Ltd

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	-	-	-	-	-
	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
Performing arts	3
Media and communication	3
Foundation English and mathematics	3

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	104							
Principal/CEO	Dan Wallman							
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected							
Website address	www.dv8sussex.com/							
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+
	44	-	59	-	11	-	-	-
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:	None							

Contextual information

DV8 Training (Sussex) runs classroom-based study programmes for learners age 16 to 18 in performing arts, digital media, fashion, events management, and art. Its main campus is in Brighton, with a second centre in Bexhill. Learners come from Brighton, Bexhill and the surrounding areas. DV8 also offers apprenticeships through subcontracting arrangements with two colleges and a project funded by the European Social Fund, neither of which were in scope for inspection. DV8 (Sussex) has considerable experience in working with young people who have not previously enjoyed or benefited from their education experience and many of the learners are from challenging backgrounds.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Nicholas Crombie HMI
-----------------------	----------------------

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the DV8 Operations 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. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the past two years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and partners; 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:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. 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 and 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 <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/user>.

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

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

