

BOSCO Centre

Independent learning provider

**Inspection dates**

19–22 October 2015

Overall effectiveness**Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for learners	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Bosco's leaders and managers have exceptionally high expectations of staff and learners and use their enthusiasm and passion well to motivate learners.
- Learners thrive in this supportive and developmental education and community centre.
- Since the previous inspection, trustees, managers and staff have achieved significant improvements in learners' attendance, the quality of teaching and learning, and the promotion of equality and diversity.
- Learners make good progress and develop good skills and knowledge because of small class sizes and strong support by passionate staff.
- Almost all learners achieve vocational qualifications and relevant qualifications in English, mathematics and information and communications technology. The majority progress to further education, employment or apprenticeships.
- A strong culture of tolerance and respect enables learners to become self-assured, and to develop confidence in their ability to deal with life issues and what it means to be part of modern Britain.
- Staff use their knowledge of learners particularly effectively to create flexible, tailored timetables and plan lessons that meet individual needs.
- Study programme lessons are inspiring and motivate learners to produce good standards of work.

It is not yet an outstanding provider because

- Learners do not receive enough good careers guidance, or opportunities for well-planned and appropriate work experience to help them make good choices about employment.
- The curriculum does not reflect well enough the vocational areas where local employment prospects are greatest.
- Records are not always sufficiently detailed to allow managers to analyse information and identify further areas for improvement.
- Teachers do not always mark and correct learners' spelling and grammar to a high enough standard.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Bosco Centre is a registered charity based in the London borough of Southwark. It is an education and community centre comprising a nursery, an independent school for 14–16-year-olds, a training centre for learners aged 16 to 19, and after-school clubs for the young people of Bermondsey. Bosco delivers apprenticeships in youth work, administration, information technology and childcare through a subcontracting agreement with Central Training Group.
- This inspection was of study programmes for learners aged 16 to 19 who have low educational achievement. The vast majority of the 44 learners have learning difficulties and disabilities and the local authority provides additional funding for two learners with high needs.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Provide learners with more specialist careers information, advice and guidance during their programmes. Use this information to ensure that learners develop the specific skills and knowledge, including through work experience, needed to progress with confidence to further education, training, apprenticeships or employment.
- Make it clear to learners what skills they need for a work placement and how this links with their long-term goals.
- Develop the curriculum further so that learners gain the vocational and personal skills that will most likely help them gain employment locally or regionally.
- Ensure that all teachers regularly give learners sufficiently demanding activities and detailed written feedback on how to improve their skills, in particular their spelling and grammar.
- Strengthen quality improvement arrangements by:
 - systematically recording, monitoring and analysing data and management information to identify trends and areas for improvement
 - ensuring records of observations focus on the teachers' impact on learning
 - making the self-assessment report more evaluative and succinct.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Bosco's leaders and managers have an exceptionally clear vision for the centre and high expectations of both staff and learners. Their enthusiasm and passion motivate both staff and learners, who thrive in the supportive and developmental environment.
- Managers' and staff's strong focus on attendance and punctuality has resulted in significant improvements to attendance and retention rates. Managers refer potential learners who are not yet ready for a full study programme promptly to specialists who can provide appropriate support and guidance. Bosco uses its well-established relationships with local partners, such as the local authority and healthcare professionals, effectively to ensure that learners receive the expert help they often need.
- Good training and staff development, the achievement of teaching qualifications, coaching and sharing of good practice have greatly improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The study programmes are very flexible, well managed and carefully designed to ensure that learners make good progress from their starting points. All learners work towards, and mostly achieve, qualifications in information and communications technology (ICT), English and mathematics. Managers have introduced new qualifications, such as GCSEs, to meet the needs of learners. The number of external work placements has increased and more learners are able to benefit from these. However, the range of vocational options does not sufficiently match the subject areas that create the best prospects for local employment.
- All staff promote equality and diversity particularly well in and out of lessons through a culture of respect and tolerance. Established learners promote the values and ethos that pervade the centre by mentoring new learners when they start.
- The self-assessment process is not sufficiently succinct and evaluative. Record-keeping is not always sufficiently robust to enable managers to identify all the strengths and areas for improvement. Observation reports sometimes focus too much on teaching and not enough on the teachers' impact on learning. Managers have not routinely analysed and used information, such as learners' progress from starting points, to understand trends over time.
- **The governance of the provider**
 - Bosco has improved governance since the previous inspection. New trustees bring pertinent skills and expertise, which they use very effectively to support and challenge leaders and managers.
 - Trustees have been instrumental in bringing about improvements and developing staff skills.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding**
 - The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff use their updated awareness and knowledge well to ensure that learners understand how to stay safe online and to protect themselves in a variety of situations.
 - Managers deal with any concerns promptly and appropriately, recording relevant details and actions taken. For example, managers installed a new secure entrance to the centre at the request of the student council.
 - Senior managers have taken the initiative to develop effective policies and raise staff's awareness of the Prevent agenda. Learners confidently discuss current news items relating to radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers make very good use of their knowledge about learners to plan interesting lessons and activities that closely match individual needs. As a result, learners at all levels make good progress. Classrooms are full of lively and inspiring displays. These motivate learners, who enjoy seeing this celebration of their work.
- Learners receive very good individual support in lessons. This enables learners to develop good vocational knowledge and sound study skills, such as keeping well-organised files and using a dictionary. Teachers' effective focus on exam preparation builds learners' confidence so that they are more successful in tests.
- Teachers use initial assessments and discussions about learners' aspirations well to ensure that they have a programme of study that meets their needs and provides progression from their starting points.
- Enthusiastic staff use their good teaching and coaching skills well to plan and deliver sessions that interest and motivate learners of all abilities. Learners value highly the efforts of their teachers; many learners who lack confidence in their ability make better progress than they believe they can, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and English. In a small minority of cases, learners are not sufficiently interested in the

learning activities and for short periods do not take part in lessons.

- Learners benefit from thorough and thoughtful monthly reviews of their progress. These meetings provide good, detailed feedback. Teachers set subject-based targets that are carefully followed up at the next meeting. Staff share these useful reports with parents and guardians. However, a minority of learners do not sufficiently refer to their targets between reviews and make slower progress in meeting them.
- Learners benefit from plentiful verbal and written praise that motivates them to work hard in and out of lessons. Teachers' encouraging feedback in learners' files and lessons helps learners apply themselves to their learning. They also voluntarily help each other with difficult tasks.
- Teaching and learning are particularly effective in raising learners' awareness of issues affecting them in modern Britain. Teachers use every opportunity in lessons to develop learners' understanding of different cultures and democracy and, as a result, learners work very well with their peers and staff, and demonstrate personal values of tolerance and acceptance.
- Learners develop their English and mathematics skills and knowledge very well. The development of English skills in mathematics lessons is particularly good. All staff focus keenly on the development of learners' employment-related skills, such as dedication to work and good timekeeping, and this effectively develops learners' positive attitudes to work and to their studies.
- Although feedback on learners' work is regular and motivates learners well, teachers' rigor and confidence in systematically correcting and developing learners' spelling and grammar are insufficient. A few documents produced by staff also contain errors.
- The majority of lessons make effective links to vocational routes. However, these do not relate specifically enough to learners' career aspirations so there is little discussion to help learners make the connection between work they do in lessons and their possible future job prospects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

- Learners are confident and self-assured. They are articulate, and due to the good support they receive, they develop their confidence and ability to deal with life's challenges.
- Learners focus well on their learning and are keen to progress. They have a clear pride in their work and are being prepared well to become independent learners, demonstrating effective research skills.
- Bosco staff provide good additional support for learners to help them overcome barriers and achieve their goals. They provide a weekly allowance to learners, subject to good attendance. They work extremely well with learners to inform them about the benefits to which they are entitled and ensure that they have access to these. Bosco provides a crèche for learners with young children. There are many examples of staff working effectively with learners when they experience significant challenges in life. As a result, these learners stay on their programmes and achieve their goals.
- Learners' attendance improved significantly in the previous year and is now very good. Staff focus well on timekeeping and learners are very rarely late for lessons.
- Learners develop their English and mathematics skills well. They understand clearly the need for these skills in both their work and personal life.
- Learners develop an extremely good understanding of equality, diversity, respect and tolerance. Staff challenge unacceptable comments or actions, creating a constructive and supportive learning culture where learners feel safe to challenge and be challenged, and to correct others and be corrected.
- Through excellent support and guidance from staff, learners develop very good awareness in keeping themselves safe and understanding issues such as radicalisation. They have produced informative and thought-provoking wall displays from their own research. As a result, they have a clear understanding of what it means to be part of modern Britain.
- Learners develop good social and employability skills. Personal development is a key part of their study programmes, although staff do not always record specific objectives well enough in learning plans. For example, staff do not record why learners are not yet ready for work experience and what behaviours and skills they need to demonstrate before finding them a work placement.
- Learners are not always sufficiently clear about their longer-term career goals, in terms of where they might gain employment and the specific skills needed for a particular job. Initial careers guidance is effective but staff do not review learners' aims as they develop skills and learn more about their options.
- Learners who start their programmes with appropriate skills for employment carry out meaningful work experience with suitable employers, which ensures that they understand the skills needed for a particular career or job. Staff work well with learners and employers to evaluate the impact of work experience and the usefulness of each placement. Learners who are not yet ready for work experience are unclear what skills they need to develop and the type of work placement that would help them progress towards their

long-term goals.

- On a few occasions, learners are not sufficiently ready to study as they do not always bring pens or other equipment with them and have to borrow them from staff.

Outcomes for learners

are good

- In 2014/15, almost all learners successfully completed their study programmes and achieved a good range of qualifications. This demonstrates a significant improvement compared with previous years.
- The achievement of vocational certificates in childcare and youth work at Level 1 as well as information technology qualifications at Levels 1 and 2 is outstanding.
- The vast majority of learners make good progress and achieve qualifications in English, mathematics and ICT at a level above their starting point. In the current year, an increasing number of learners are working towards GCSE in English or mathematics.
- The vast majority of learners leaving the study programme progress onto further education and training, employment or an apprenticeship.
- The small number of learners with high needs successfully develop their personal skills, gain increased levels of independence, and complete qualifications in English and mathematics.
- Learners' work is good and shows good progress over time. For example, in mathematics workbooks, learners' work shows clear improvement in their use of fractions. In a few cases, learners are working to a higher level than needed in their study programmes.
- Differences in the performance of a small groups of learners identified in 2013/14 are reducing and little variation is now apparent.

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	14+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	131
Director	Sister Cecily Dunn
Website address	www.bosco.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	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	24		16	1	3	0	0	0
	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	16-19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
	1							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
	■ N/A							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:								

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Joy Montgomery, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Derrick Baughan	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philip Elliott	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the director, as nominee, and carried out the inspection at short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and parents; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

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