

CXK Limited

Community learning and skills

Inspection dates

18–20 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding/Good/Requires
improvement/Not previously
inspected/Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Not enough learners achieve their mathematics and English qualifications.
- Not enough learners have successfully progressed from the 16 to 19 study programme into employment or further training.
- Learners do not get sufficiently detailed feedback on how to improve.
- There are limited opportunities for learners to develop vocational knowledge and skills.
- Attendance for a minority of learners is too low.
- The monitoring and improvement of teachers' performance are not quick enough.

The provider has the following strengths

- Success and progression rates for learners on the well-managed Prince's Trust Team programme are high.
- Staff provide good support to help learners overcome significant barriers to learning and improve their personal and social skills.
- There is good use of well-planned work experience to develop employability skills.
- Learners' behaviour is good and they empathise well with the difficulties that many of their peers experience.
- Learners take ownership of recognising and improving their personal skills.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate view on the quality of the provision and work well with staff to make improvements.
- Programmes are well matched to the needs of disadvantaged learners.

Full report

Information about the provider

- CXK Limited (CXK) is a charitable organisation delivering a range of services for young people, adults and families across Kent, Essex and Sussex, although funded learning is currently only available in Kent. It was established in 2012 from a merger between the Connexions Partnership Kent and Medway Limited. Through recently introduced training programmes, CXK targets learners that have low levels of qualifications and skills, poor educational experiences and those who have experienced significant barriers to learning, such as those in foster care.
- CXK offers a 16 to 19 study programme to learners in Dartford, Gravesend, Canterbury and Ramsgate. Dartford learners are also enrolled on a well-established Prince's Trust Team programme. As part of their study programme learners in Gravesend and Ramsgate study functional skills in English and mathematics. Learners in Canterbury study for GCSE English and mathematics.
- Unemployment in Kent is lower than the national average and the number of pupils achieving 5 GCSEs at A* to C, including mathematics and English, is slightly above the national average.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Managers and teachers should ensure that all learners attend regularly to increase their chances of achieving all aspects of the 16 to 19 study programme.
- Managers must increase the proportion of learners that achieve their intended qualifications in English and mathematics.
- Teachers must ensure that when setting targets and giving feedback to learners they cover all aspects of the programme and set specific targets which challenge learners to achieve the best that they are capable of.
- Managers need to ensure that the good progress being made by current learners results in them successfully achieving their qualifications and progressing into employment.
- Managers need to monitor agreed actions with teachers, ensuring that teachers' performance improves more rapidly so that all learners benefit from good teaching and learning throughout their programme.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have introduced an appropriate range of programmes to meet the needs of disadvantaged learners in the region. They have complimented the well-established and successful Prince's Trust Team programme with a 16 to 19 study programme to extend the range and number of opportunities for learners in Kent. However, they have yet to ensure that the 16 to 19 study programme fully meets the needs of all learners.
- Curriculum management and planning require improvement. Managers have introduced a 16 to 19 study programme that ensures that all components are adequately covered. The timings of key aspects, such as work experience and the provision of careers guidance are well planned to give learners opportunities to help them progress. However, managers recognise that the employability course is not sufficiently broad enough to develop specific vocational skills aligned to an individual learner's future training or career options. Staff have not integrated the development of learners' mathematics and English skills sufficiently well into the employability course programme.
- The Prince's Trust Team programme based in Dartford is well managed and success rates are high.
- Partnership arrangements with employers are well established and effective. Learners benefit from well-placed work experience opportunities. They work alongside well-informed employers who have a clear understanding of CXK learners and know how they can further support learners' development.
- Managers correctly identify through their lesson observations that the quality of teaching and learning requires improvement. They agree appropriate actions for improvement but do not adequately monitor the impact of these actions. Managers do not quality assure assessment practice or the quality of feedback to learners sufficiently well.
- Managers' self-assessment of the programmes accurately identifies key strengths and weaknesses. Although there remain areas of weakness, managers and staff have been successful in bringing about many improvements. The low achievement and progression rates are now improving and learners on programme at the time of the inspection are making at least the progress expected of them. The very low achievement rates in 2014/15 for women have improved and women now achieve equally as well as men.
- **The governance of the provider**
 - Trustees have a clear understanding of the quality of CXK's 16 to 19 study programme and recognise that aspects of the provision are not yet good enough. Collectively they have a broad range of appropriate skills and knowledge. They challenge effectively, and support and work well with the leadership team to improve the provision and to ensure that all learners benefit from the training offered.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**
 - Safeguarding is effective and managed well. Support for vulnerable learners at risk is good and staff closely monitor their on-programme progress. Managers have effective links with a range of safeguarding agencies.
 - The leadership team understand how to safeguard learners and arrangements to identify and support learners at risk are effective. All trustees, managers and staff are appropriately trained in the safeguarding of learners and how to recognise and report those at risk of radicalisation or extremism. Learners have an appropriate understanding of how to keep safe but their understanding of the potential risks of radicalisation and extremism is not sufficiently well developed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Managers and teachers need to improve the standards of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that more learners achieve their qualifications and progress to further learning, education and employment.
- Teachers do not set learners sufficiently challenging or specific qualification targets, such as aspects of mathematics or English that need improving. While learners actively set and review well the development of their own personal skills targets, they and their teachers do not focus enough on progress towards the achievement of their qualifications.
- The quality of feedback to learners by teachers does not ensure that learners know exactly what they need to do to improve. For example, although teachers use verbal feedback in lessons well to praise and encourage learners, other feedback lacks sufficient clarity on how learners can specifically improve their work.

- Staff monitor the progress learners make towards developing their personal skills well. However, they do not monitor learners' progress towards achieving their qualifications with the same rigor and accuracy. The review of learners' progress by teachers does not give sufficient detail as to what learners have achieved so far and what they still need to do. A minority of learners make slow progress, particularly in developing their English and mathematics skills.
- In the majority of teaching sessions, learners engage and participate well in activities. Teachers plan sessions well, with a good variety of activities to stimulate learning. They take care to meet the needs of all learners of differing abilities and all learners make good progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson, learners were able to complete progressively more difficult activities in line with their ability. Staff promote learning well through the effective use of wall posters of learners' work, subject information and agreed rules of behaviour.
- In less effective sessions, teachers do not ensure that all learners are fully engaged or contribute enough. More confident learners are allowed to dominate discussions and activities. Teachers do not adequately check learners' understanding before moving on to new topics. Teachers do not always sufficiently plan and develop learners' English skills in lessons.
- Learners receive very good personal support from staff, which helps many of them to overcome their barriers to learning and improve their confidence. Staff have a good understanding of learners who experience difficulties in their lives and effectively build trust and good working relationships.
- Learners who fully complete their work experience benefit well from good-quality placements, with supportive employers who provide good on-the-job training. For example, a learner in a catering establishment learns about food preparation, hygiene, customer service, waitressing, and teamwork and communication skills. He is more confident and his understanding of the world of work has much improved. However, too many learners choose not to take full advantage of work experience opportunities.
- Learners receive a detailed English and mathematics assessment at the start of the programme. This accurately identifies their starting points and staff use this well to place learners on the appropriate level of qualification. However, staff do not use assessment results sufficiently well to plan individual learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

- The majority of learners develop their personal and social skills well and many develop appropriate employability skills. Learners become much more confident and improve their communication and teamwork skills well in lessons and on work placement. Learners develop a clear understanding of equality and diversity, and employment legislation and, in this context, understand their roles and responsibilities well.
- The attendance in lessons of a minority of learners is too low and too many learners arrive late. However, the attendance by Prince's Trust Team learners is high. A minority of learners fail to attend all the work experience arranged.
- Too many learners do not develop their vocational, mathematics and English skills sufficiently well. The number of learners progressing to further training or employment is increasing but remains too low.
- Most learners are actively involved in setting and monitoring their own personal targets. Many explore the barriers to their learning and progress to date and take greater responsibility for their study programme and planning their future.
- Learners demonstrate good standards of behaviour and respect for their peers and staff. Learners are particularly supportive and understanding of others who experience difficulty in their personal lives. Teachers are quick to challenge inappropriate language and effectively use these outbursts to explore and discuss learners' perceptions and to minimise repetition.
- Learners are safe at the learning centres and on work placements. They have a clear understanding of health and safety requirements at work and know what to do should they have any concerns. Staff take care to ensure that learners understand the risks that exist in relation to communication on social media, and issues to consider when sharing personal images and information. Staff are quick to respond to any instances where learners might be at risk. However, learners do not have a sufficiently clear enough understanding of what constitutes bullying, harassment and abuse. This has been recognised by managers and is planned to be included in the next learner induction. While staff have been trained in relation to the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, learners have not.

- A majority of learners have been adversely affected by poor prior learning experiences or have to contend with disruptive personal lives. At CXK, learners develop greater self-belief in their own abilities. They have a much greater clarity as to how to overcome their barriers to learning, how to succeed and what skills they need to develop to improve their opportunities to progress.
- Although progression rates in 2014/15 were too low, the majority of learners on programme at the time of the inspection are making at least the progress expected of them and a significant minority are making good progress from their starting points. Many learners studying functional skills and GCSE mathematics and English at the time of the inspection have improved by at least one level from when they started the programme.
- The standard of most learners' work meets awarding body requirements and for a few, standards of work are good. Progression into employment, further training or employment for learners on the Prince's Trust Team programme is high.
- Success rates for the Prince's Trust Team qualification are consistently high. Achievement rates in 2014/15 for the newly introduced employability skills programme and functional skills in English and mathematics qualifications were too low. In the same period, achievement rates for men far exceeded those of women. However, at the time of the inspection, both men and women are achieving at a similar rate.
- Managers' use of data on the relative achievement rates of learners with different barriers to learning, such as those with mental health disabilities or those that were previously not in education, employment or training is insufficiently well developed.

Provider details

Type of provider	Not-for-profit organisation
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	77
Principal/CEO	Mr Matthew Roberts
Website address	www.cxk.org

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+	
	34	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	
	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
	0	0	0	0	0	0			
	Number of traineeships		16-19		19+		Total		
			0		0		0		
	Number of learners aged 14–16		0						
Funding received from		Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:		■ N/A							

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Richard Beaumont, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gary Adkins	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the assistant director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; 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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