

# Groundwork South Tyneside and Newcastle

Independent specialist college

**Inspection dates**

13–15 June 2017

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement	

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not of a consistently high standard. Teachers do not provide sufficiently challenging work to enable learners to reach their full potential.
- Leaders and managers do not ensure that learners make sufficient progress in developing their English and mathematics skills; too few learners achieve their functional skills qualifications.
- Although improved, attendance and punctuality are too low.
- Teachers do not use information about learners' progress over time to set ambitious academic targets.
- Quality assurance arrangements, including the lesson observation process and the use of accurate data, are not rigorous enough; leaders and managers have not tackled all areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.
- Trustees do not receive sufficiently accurate information to enable them to challenge managers effectively and to hold them to account for improvements in learners' achievements.
- Learners do not have sufficient understanding of how the dangers of radicalisation and extremism can impact on their daily lives.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Leaders and managers have nurtured effective working relationships with external partners; these provide learners with opportunities to develop good independent living skills and make a positive contribution to the local community.
- Leaders and managers provide learners with a wide range of opportunities to develop their personal and social skills.
- Staff celebrate diversity well and promote a culture of mutual respect; as a result, learners demonstrate excellent standards of behaviour at college and on work experience placements.
- The large majority of learners achieve their personal social targets, and independent living qualifications.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Groundwork South Tyneside and Newcastle is an independent specialist provider and a registered charity. It is part of the federation of independent charities which make up the Groundwork Federation. Each Groundwork trust is a member of the federation and signs up to a set of common aims and strategies, including changing lives, improving people's prospects and developing sustainable communities.
- Learners are aged 16 to 24 and recruited from the surrounding local authority areas. They attend daily on vocational programmes from entry level to level two. Most of the learners are funded for high levels of support.

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers and support staff:
  - plan and use activities that take account of learners' needs and starting points and challenge learners so that they achieve their potential
  - improve the setting and monitoring of learners' personalised learning targets to ensure that they make good progress both in class and over time
  - improve the development of English and mathematics skills so that a greater proportion of learners achieve their functional skills qualifications.
- Rapidly improve learners' attendance and punctuality.
- Strengthen quality assurance arrangements, including the rigour of the lesson observation process and use of accurate data, to ensure that all areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection are addressed.
- Ensure that trustees receive accurate information that enables them to challenge rigorously and hold leaders and managers to account for improving the provision.
- Ensure that learners understand how the dangers of radicalisation and extremism can impact on daily lives.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have been slow to implement improvement actions to address the issues identified at the last inspection. As a result of a staff restructure and changes to the quality improvement processes, managers now monitor the learners' experience more closely. Although these actions have resulted in improvements to management systems and the curriculum, learners are still not making good enough progress.
- Leaders and managers do not track and report on learners' progress and achievement well enough. Management information systems do not provide accurate reports and, as a result, leaders and managers are unable to monitor closely enough learners' progress or the achievement of qualifications and personal targets.
- Leaders and managers do not use self-assessment well enough to set precise improvement targets. The self-assessment report accurately identifies several of the areas for improvement identified by inspectors. However, evaluation is often too positive and improvement actions do not result in improved learner achievements.
- Managers evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through lessons observations, and use the outcomes of observations to manage and improve quality and enhance the performance of staff. However, they do not set clear improvement targets for staff following observations or in appraisal documents. The actions that staff need to take and the support that they need to improve their practice are not clear. Consequently, staff do not improve their professional practice sufficiently. They do not challenge the most-able learners in lessons or develop learners' English and mathematics skills well enough.
- Leaders, managers and trustees use funding for learners with high needs well. The curriculum focuses appropriately on developing learners' work-related skills through purposeful work placements in a range of settings such as a community coffee shop, a sustainable garden project and a local removal company. Learners develop appropriate skills that help to prepare them for their next steps. They become more independent and a large proportion make a positive contribution to the local community.
- The college provides an opportunity for learners with a wide range of learning difficulties and personal barriers to learn in a supportive and inclusive environment. Leaders, managers and staff successfully promote equality and celebrate diversity. Learners receive information throughout the year on subjects such as hate crime, healthy living, substance misuse, respectful behaviour in the community, tackling bullying and understanding other cultures. All staff promote a culture of mutual respect and tolerance for others. This results in learners demonstrating these attributes well when engaging with each other and with staff at the college and on work placements.
- Leaders and managers have a clear strategic plan and have developed effective partnerships with the local authority, employers, community teams and other learning providers. This results in a broad range of projects and opportunities for learners to develop their skills such as a heritage hall and museum site and community craft and market fairs, and through recycling with a large supermarket. These activities support learners to improve their job prospects and to live in a more sustainable way.
- Staff provide good support and care when learners join the college. They ensure that

learners have a smooth transition into college and, as a result, learners settle in to their studies quickly and become more independent.

## **The governance of the provider**

- Trustees have a clear strategy for the college and the role it plays in the community. They support leaders to achieve corporate, educational and social mobility objectives. The trustees are well-qualified and have a wide range of expertise and skills that they use well. They support managers to maintain a focus on improving processes, and they influence policy through, for example, enhancing human resource and safeguarding arrangements and providing local enterprise contacts to develop the curriculum.
- Trustees have high expectations for learners, but these expectations are yet to be realised. They hold senior leaders and managers to account in relation to finance, staff, resources and project developments. However, they are unaware of learners' progress and achievements and, consequently, do not provide rigorous challenge or hold leaders to account sufficiently on these aspects.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Trustees, leaders and staff give safeguarding a high priority. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, and staff use them effectively to protect learners who are at risk from harm. A safe recruitment procedure is followed, and all staff receive annual safeguarding training.
- Learners are confident about who they should contact if they have concerns. Learners feel safe and are safe.
- Staff make daily checks on new learning venues to ensure secure access for learners with high needs. Managers complete monthly checks on all aspects of the provision, and individual learner risk-assessments are in place for enrichment projects and work placements.
- Training is provided for learners on using the internet safely and the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Despite this investment, most learners lack sufficient understanding of the potential impact of radicalisation and extremism on their lives.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- Too many teachers do not use information on learners' starting points well enough to plan and use learning activities and assessment that challenge learners appropriately. In too many instances, teachers do not use information about learners' progress over time to set ambitious targets in lessons. As a result, approximately half of the learners do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- A small number of learners do not develop their independence skills or resilience quickly enough because, on a few occasions, enterprise activities have too many learners and not enough for them to do. This results in the work being too easy for some, and learners become bored and lose interest.

- Support staff do not have high enough expectations of learners and, as a result, often provide too much support and complete tasks or provide the answers for learners. Consequently, learners make slower progress than they are capable of.
- Too often, teachers do not set sufficiently specific targets for learners to develop their academic, English, mathematics and information communication and technology (ICT) skills. Targets for most learners are too broad and do not correspond to their needs.
- Teachers do not develop learners' English and mathematics skills well enough. They provide feedback on marked work but do not ensure that learners use the feedback to improve their writing skills further. As a result, learners continue to make the same mistakes.
- Teachers successfully support learners to overcome significant barriers and to develop their personal, social and work-related skills. This has a positive impact on the way that learners interact with peers and staff and enables most learners to progress successfully at the end of their course.
- Parents and carers receive regular and clear written feedback in relation to learners' progress and achievements against education, health and care plans.
- Teachers promote a culture of mutual respect and celebrate diversity well. Discussions about equality and celebrations of diversity are consistently of a high standard. For example, learners discuss the concept of racism and stereotyping and how this can result in inaccurate assumptions about people.
- Teachers and key workers provide learners with clear oral feedback during tutorials and one-to-one meetings and, as a result, learners understand what they need to do and the large majority achieve their personal social targets.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

- Although improving, attendance and punctuality are still too low for too many learners, which limits their progress.
- Too many learners do not make the progress of which they are capable in English, mathematics and ICT. Most teachers do not set specific targets in ICT to develop learners' skills. Staff do not use technology to support learning and communication consistently well. As a result, learners do not develop technology skills well enough to help prepare them for work and life.
- Learners receive impartial advice and guidance that enable them to make the right choices in relation to their independent living skills. However, the advice and guidance that learners receive about course options is not good enough. The programme does not cover all areas that learners are interested in, such as animal care, and this limits choice for a small proportion of learners. A very small proportion of learners are undecided about their next steps and, as a result, the work experience selected by managers does not motivate them to participate as well as they could.
- Learners speak positively about the college and the programmes they are on. Most learners report they are more confident and have more realistic aspirations about their future careers. They enjoy their programme and enrichment activities. Key workers provide effective guidance in review meetings which support learners to understand what

to expect in a particular job. Learners who would like to work in business administration are aware of the need to gain better qualifications, and develop skills in mathematics and ICT to gain a paid job.

- Learners make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. They demonstrate excellent standards of behaviour in lessons, during breaktimes and when on work placements in the community. Learners are tolerant, polite and friendly towards each other and are able to work well as a team. For example, during a jewellery-making lesson, learners complimented each other on their ability to use the correct technique when making an earring. All learners demonstrate increased confidence and skills in managing their own behaviour.
- Learners value their work experience placements, and most placements extend learners' understanding of work. For example, learners who want to work as a landscape gardener attend work placements with a local environment team. They develop very good practical skills, such as changing the spool on a grass trimmer and they take pride in their new skills. On a small number of occasions, support staff are unaware of the skills and targets that learners are working towards on their placements; this means that a few learners do not complete more complex tasks and, as a result, do not develop their skills quickly enough.
- Most learners improve their communication skills well through undertaking a wide range of learning activities at the college and in the community. They develop good speaking, listening and team-working skills and communicate effectively with their peers, staff, employers and members of the public.
- Most learners gain the necessary skills to become more independent by taking part in, for example, travel training and healthy cooking lessons. These activities improve the skills that learners need in their personal lives and improve their chances of gaining employment in the future.
- Learners feel safe, work safely and understand how to keep themselves safe in college and on work placements. Learners who participate in work placements have an appropriate understanding of health and safety. They wear correct personal protection equipment and can explain what safety measures are in place, such as the need to wear protective gloves when cleaning garden equipment and the safe handling of kitchen equipment. Learners explain the dangers of using the internet and social media and how they are now more careful when online. However, most learners do not demonstrate sufficient understanding of radicalisation and extremism and the impact it may have on their lives.
- A large number of learners confidently apply their knowledge of living in modern Britain in a range of contexts. For example, they discuss the importance of democracy and why they should vote.
- Most learners know how to keep themselves fit and healthy. The majority of learners have successfully completed an accredited module on healthy living at an appropriate level. Learners transfer this knowledge well while volunteering in the college shop. Learners talk through the reasons for selling healthy snacks and identify some of the health risks associated with eating and drinking items containing high levels of sugar.

## Outcomes for learners

## Requires improvement

- Approximately half of learners are not making sufficiently rapid progress towards their targets. Too few learners achieve their English and mathematics functional skills qualifications at all levels.
- Leaders and managers do not monitor the achievement and progress of different groups of learners well enough. They do not know which groups are performing best, or whether there are any gaps in performance.
- The large majority of learners achieve a work-related qualification in independent living which helps to prepare them for their next steps. Many learners develop good employment-related skills, such as problem-solving, communication and improved time-keeping in a range of realistic settings such as care centres, local offices and a farm garden.
- Most learners become more independent in their everyday lives, particularly in their ability to travel independently. Learners demonstrated this resilience following a recent move to a new learning venue. Learners with complex needs and barriers to learning make good progress in participating actively in learning. Learners gradually reduce their anxiety and gain the confidence and self-esteem to attend more regularly and remain in lessons.
- Almost all leavers in 2016 progressed to an organisation where they can continue to participate actively in the community. A third of learners progressed to study at a local college at a higher level. However, very few learners progressed on to paid employment. Leaders are developing the curriculum to include more progression opportunities to supported internships and traineeships.
- The college's own data indicates that all learners remain on their course and are demonstrating increased confidence in preparations for English and mathematics assessments. As a result, a high and increased proportion of learners, compared with the previous year, have already completed assessments.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	141503
Type of provider	Independent specialist college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	19
Principal/CEO	Andrew Watts
Telephone number	0191 4281144
Website	<a href="http://www.groundwork.org.uk">www.groundwork.org.uk</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	6	13	-	-	-	-	-	-
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 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	17							
Funding received from:	Education and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							



## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality and compliance lead, as nominee. 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 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.

## Inspection team

Tracey Mace-Akroyd, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Denise Olander	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ben Walsh	Ofsted Inspector

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