

Morthyng Group Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates

12–15 September 2017

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

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Trustees, leaders and managers have a clear strategy to engage and support disadvantaged young people and improve their life chances.
- Staff provide excellent personal and learning support, including through access to specialist agencies where needed.
- Leaders and managers use their very strong partnerships with employers and other stakeholders to arrange work experience and work-related activities for learners.
- Assessment of learners' starting points is thorough, and staff use the results to devise highly individual study programmes.
- Learners benefit from helpful developmental feedback on their work that helps them to make good progress.
- Impartial and effective careers information, advice and guidance help learners to formulate realistic plans for the future.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills and grow in confidence.
- Learners develop their English and mathematics skills well and achieve functional skills qualifications at a high level.
- Learners have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and the risks posed by those who promote radical and extremist views.
- A large majority of learners progress to further education, training or employment after completing their programmes.
- Most learners achieve their main qualification.
- Leaders and managers do not prioritise actions for improvement to ensure that the most important areas for development are tackled swiftly.
- Tutors do not prepare learners sufficiently well for the demands of GCSE English and mathematics examinations.
- Learners' attendance, although increasing, is too low.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Morthyng Group Limited (Morthyng) is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation that delivers study programmes, traineeships and provision for learners with high needs. It was established in 1988 with the support of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Methodist churches. Training takes place at Morthyng's centres in Rotherham, Doncaster, Corby and Birkenhead and also at subcontractors' premises in these areas.
- This inspection covered study programmes for 16- to 19-year-old learners, and included provision for the small number of learners who have high needs. No learners were on the traineeship programme at the time of inspection. Learners follow programmes in a range of subjects, including construction, beauty therapy, sport, engineering and employability skills. Morthyng specialises in providing programmes for young people who are disadvantaged due to personal, social and educational difficulties.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance at all centres so that learners benefit fully from the classroom sessions and are better prepared for the expectations of employers.
- Increase GCSE English and mathematics achievements by:
 - appointing staff to vacant posts
 - providing staff development for tutors to increase their abilities and confidence
 - extending the range of resources available to support learners and tutors.
- Improve quality improvement planning by prioritising areas for development and setting and monitoring challenging success indicators.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Trustees, leaders and managers have a very clear strategy and vision to engage and support disadvantaged young people and give them an opportunity to overcome their personal difficulties and turn their lives around. Staff share this vision, are passionate about their work and have high expectations of their learners.
- Study programmes are designed well to provide breadth and relevance for learners, helping them to formulate realistic plans for the future. Staff provide good impartial careers advice and guidance throughout the programmes.
- Leaders and managers take an active role in the region's business, education and support networks and use their partnerships well to benefit learners through work tasters and placements, and access to specialist support agencies. Staff contribute well to multi-agency working where appropriate, particularly where learners are looked after by the local authority.
- Leaders and managers have strengthened the selection and management of subcontractors and they are now very effective. In 2015/16, two subcontractors performed poorly and failed to meet their targets for the achievement of qualifications and the progression of learners. Decisive action was taken to terminate these contracts. A new senior manager with responsibility for managing subcontractors is now in post. Morthyng's expectations of its subcontractors are clearly set out and their performance is scrutinised closely at monthly visits. Morthyng supports its subcontractors very well and shares good practice and resources freely.
- Resources are good and meet learners' needs well. Learning centres are spacious and provide high-quality, professional learning environments that learners respect. Practical resources for construction, sport and beauty therapy training replicate those found in industry and prepare learners well for employment.
- Leaders and managers have created an inclusive culture where equality of opportunity and diversity are promoted very well. Monthly equality themes stimulate discussions and enable learners to explore a variety of relevant topics. Tutors develop learners' understanding of British values very effectively. Staff and learners show mutual respect and tolerance. The good contributions that learners make to community projects and their experiences in work and social settings prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and managers have improved the process for evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment following recommendations made at the previous inspection. Observers now place a stronger emphasis on evaluating learning and learners' progress and they use observations to identify staff training needs and prepare action plans for improvement. However, in a minority of cases, observers do not provide tutors with sufficient guidance on how to improve their practice further. Resulting action plans are too vague regarding the support that may be required and the agreed timescale for improvement.
- Leaders and managers use a comprehensive range of data to monitor closely the performance of each centre and subcontractor against challenging targets. They take swift action to investigate and address any pockets of underperformance. The proportion

of learners who are retained on their programme and progress into further training or employment has increased steadily over the last three years and is high. Achievement of learners' vocational and functional skills qualifications also rose sharply in 2016/17. However, GCSE English and mathematics achievements remain low; the recruitment of specialist staff has been problematic.

- Leaders' and managers' evaluation of the strengths of the provision and the areas for improvement in their most recent self-assessment report is accurate. The self-assessment process includes the views of learners, staff, parents, employers and other stakeholders. However, the associated quality improvement plan places insufficient emphasis on the key weaknesses of the study programme. Leaders and managers have not prioritised sufficiently the need to improve GCSE English and mathematics achievements and learners' attendance.

The governance of the provider

- Since the last inspection, new trustees have been appointed to the board to strengthen its capability to challenge and support senior leaders. The board of trustees includes representatives from across the education and business sectors, providing a wide body of expertise.
- Trustees scrutinise detailed management reports, including those on the achievements of learners, and hold leaders to account for their performance.
- Trustees know the provision well and understand the key strengths and areas for improvement. They visit classes to gain first-hand experience of the provision.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff implement policies and procedures for safeguarding very effectively. The safeguarding manager maintains an accurate register of staff checks. Staff, including those employed by subcontractors, have attended appropriate training on safeguarding.
- Staff record and deal with safeguarding incidents promptly and effectively, working with external agencies where appropriate. Learners can access a safeguarding telephone and email helpline, which is available 24 hours a day.
- Senior leaders have placed a strong focus on the 'Prevent' duty. Staff and learners are knowledgeable about the risks of radicalisation and extremism and how to keep safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Learners enjoy their studies and value the considerable support that staff provide. Group sizes are small, allowing for plenty of individual coaching and guidance. Learners particularly enjoy practical sessions, such as in sport, construction or beauty therapy, where they develop and practise their skills and take great pride in their achievements.
- Initial advice and guidance are thorough. Staff carry out initial interviews very sensitively, knowing that many potential learners have had negative experiences of education previously. They gain the confidence of learners and help them to make a successful

transition onto their programmes.

- Initial assessment of learners' starting points is thorough, and tutors use this information well to plan carefully tailored individual programmes. In group sessions, tutors set tasks and targets that reflect learners' individual abilities and challenge them well.
- Vocational tutors are very skilful and draw on their considerable experience to motivate learners and make learning enjoyable. For example, in a beauty therapy lesson, learners made creative use of different shapes and textures of sweets to help them visualise the structure of the skin. Learners develop good time management skills when carrying out practical tasks such as manicures, which prepares them well for workplace requirements.
- Student support officers provide pastoral support to help learners remain on their programmes and succeed. They know learners very well and understand the difficulties that many face in their personal lives. They provide practical and emotional support and work in liaison with parents and other agencies where problems arise. Support staff in classes work very effectively with learners who need additional help.
- Tutors monitor learners' progress very effectively and ensure that learners know exactly what they have achieved and what they must do next. Tutors provide learners with clear and constructive feedback on their work that helps them to improve. All tutors, including those in subcontractors, adhere to clear marking guidance on spelling, punctuation and grammar to ensure consistency; this is effective in helping learners to improve their writing skills.
- Learners have a good understanding of diversity and equality of opportunity. They show respect for one another and celebrate diversity throughout their programmes. Tutors promote British values well in sessions. For example, learners on beauty therapy courses discuss the need to respect clients and their wishes.
- Tutors do not prepare learners well enough to improve their grades in GCSE English and mathematics examinations. While they help learners to develop their English and mathematics skills within the context of their vocational and employability studies very well, they do not develop learners' specific skills and techniques to answer examination questions successfully.
- A minority of theory lessons are not sufficiently challenging. Tutors supply correct answers to questions too readily, rather than encouraging learners to work problems out or check answers themselves by, for example, using a calculator. On occasions, activities and resources are insufficiently varied, and learners lose focus and become distracted.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners grow in confidence and develop good personal and social skills that prepare them well for their futures. They become more resilient, mature and better at working with others.
- Learners behave well and treat each other and staff with respect. They comply readily with the ground rules set by staff. For example, they hand in their mobile phones at the start of sessions willingly and apply themselves well to their work. They dress appropriately, with personal protective equipment where appropriate, and adhere to professional standards of behaviour. Tutors handle the very occasional instances of learners' poor behaviour or inappropriate language firmly and clearly, reinforcing the high

standards expected of them.

- Learners develop good skills in English and mathematics, and use information and communication technology confidently. They understand the importance of these skills in everyday and working lives. Tutors make learning interesting and relevant, such as by helping learners to create a local magazine to develop their writing skills. Through debating topics of interest, such as whether cannabis should be legalised, learners develop their oral communication skills and confidence.
- Most learners benefit from a very wide range of relevant and interesting work placements and work-related activities. A group of construction learners recently carried out work experience in Belgium, and beauty therapists did so in Italy. For many learners this was the first time that they had travelled abroad, and the visit had a very significant and positive impact on their lives. Learners carry out 'mystery shopping visits' to local retailers to evaluate their customer service, have mock interviews, and are involved in community projects such as construction work at a local primary school. Hairdressing and beauty therapy learners attend trade fairs and exhibitions. However, the range of work placements for learners in Corby is too narrow, focusing mainly on experience at the football clubs.
- Learners also participate in a wide range of other activities that broaden their horizons and enrich their studies. These include involvement in charitable events such as Red Nose Day and cake bakes, laying poppies at the Cenotaph and taking part in football leagues.
- Learners feel safe and have a good knowledge of how to protect themselves from harm, including when using the internet. They know how to report any concerns they may have. Learners who have high needs benefit from secure buildings with locked and coded entry systems.
- Although improving, attendance is too low. However, student support workers follow up absences promptly and relentlessly. Support for those who are absent from lessons is very good, with substantial individual coaching to enable learners to catch up with work that they have missed. Staff use the bursary payment to incentivise attendance. They also involve parents and carry out home visits where necessary. Further action is needed to encourage learners to attend well and gain maximum benefit from their programmes.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The proportion of learners on study programmes who progress to further education, training or employment on completion of their studies has increased steadily over the last three years to a high level. Building on their attainment, learners progress to higher-level studies and apprenticeships in subjects such as construction, engineering, hospitality and hairdressing. Those who progress into jobs are employed in a range of sectors, including national retailers and the armed forces, where there are clear career progression opportunities.
- Most learners on study programmes complete their main qualification. The proportion of learners who do so has risen considerably since the last inspection and is high. Almost all learners who have high needs achieve their intended qualifications.
- In addition to their main qualification, learners gain additional awards to help them progress in their chosen career. For example, learners on sports programmes gain

coaching badges, construction learners obtain certificates to prove they have construction skills to enable them to work on sites, and those on arts programmes gain membership to the British entertainment profession's trade union.

- Learners make good progress from their low starting points. They quickly develop self-confidence, social skills and motivation. In vocational sessions such as construction and beauty therapy, they produce high-quality work.
- Learners develop their English and mathematics skills very effectively to prepare them for their next steps. They achieve functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics at a high level that exceeds the rate for similar providers and those nationally. Achievements in functional skills have increased significantly in 2016/17, compared to the rates achieved previously.
- Leaders and managers monitor data on the recruitment, progression and achievement of learners very closely. There are no significant variations in the achievement of different groups of learners. Those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve at the same rate as others.
- Learners' achievement of GCSE English and mathematics qualifications is low; few who have previously achieved a grade D in these subjects improve their grades. Tutors are not effective in developing learners' specific abilities and techniques to pass their examinations.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53422
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16–18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	396
Principal/CEO	Chris MacCormac
Telephone number	01709 372900
Website	www.morthyng.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 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	65	-	65	-	44	-	-	-
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	8							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Beechwood Community Trust ByHeart Learning Corby Town Football Club Cornerstones Vocational Training NITAL Training and Development Nuneaton Town Football Club Oracle Training Consultants Limited							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of operations, 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

Pat Hornsby, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Bennett	Ofsted Inspector
Catharine Jackson	Ofsted Inspector
Jonny Wright	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-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

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

Employer View is a 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, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, 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 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017