

Lakeside Early Adult Provision – LEAP College (Wargrave House Ltd)

Independent specialist college

Inspection dates

13–15 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Governors and leaders have not developed a sufficiently ambitious and effective vision for the college that sets high expectations across all aspects of students' learning.
- Leaders have not focused sufficiently on the individual needs of students to ensure that they make the progress of which they are capable and reach their full potential.
- Governors and leaders do not use self-assessment and quality-improvement processes rigorously enough to identify accurately the strengths and weaknesses in the provision and to bring about swift improvements.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement to enable all students to make good or better progress.
- Processes to monitor students' progress and achievement are too complex and do not lead to a clear understanding of how successfully students are progressing and what they have learned over time.
- Governors do not challenge leaders rigorously enough to improve the quality of the provision so that it meets the needs of all students.

The provider has the following strengths

- Leaders and staff develop very good relationships with parents, employers, community groups and external agencies that are highly effective in supporting students and meeting their needs.
- Students access and benefit from meaningful work experience and activities that help them to develop good independence and work-related skills.
- Students and parents receive effective guidance and support about students' next steps that help the vast majority of students to progress to meaningful destinations.
- Students' communication and social skills improve significantly during their time at the college and they are able to make choices that are appropriate for their needs and interests.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Wargrave House Ltd is a non-maintained day and residential special school and college for children and young people diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). It is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The school offers provision for students aged 5 to 19 years. Lakeside Early Adult Provision – LEAP College is part of Wargrave House Ltd and offers entry-level provision for students aged 19 to 25 years. This report relates to the inspection of LEAP College only.
- LEAP College opened in 2012 in purpose-built accommodation separate from the school. The leadership team manages both the school and the college. At the time of the inspection, 16 students were enrolled at the college, two of whom were residential students. Students are recruited from north west local authorities.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers and teaching support assistants plan and deliver stimulating lessons and learning activities. Ensure further that these engage all students and help them to make good or even better progress
 - teachers and teaching support assistants implement more effective teaching and learning strategies. Ensure that these focus on the individual needs of students to ensure that they make the progress of which they are capable
 - interventions from staff allow students opportunities to complete tasks independently. Ensure that students learn for themselves and further develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Develop an effective and ambitious vision for the college and the specific needs of the young adult students. Set high expectations across all aspects of students' learning that help them to achieve their full potential.
- Strengthen the self-assessment and quality-assurance arrangements. Ensure that leaders and governors monitor closely the impact of actions to improve swiftly the quality of the provision and outcomes for students. Ensure that the quality-assurance arrangements provide leaders and governors with a detailed and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the college's provision.
- Simplify the processes for monitoring students' progress and achievements. Ensure that leaders and managers have a clear understanding of how successfully students are progressing overall and what they have learned over time. Ensure that this information allows leaders and managers to compare and evaluate students' performance in-year and year on year.
- Strengthen the governance arrangements so that governors and trustees provide rigorous challenge to leaders and managers to ensure that the provision improves rapidly, is of a high quality and meets the needs of all students.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The quality of the provision requires improvement, as identified at the previous inspection. Leaders and governors have not developed a sufficiently clear vision for the college that focuses specifically on the provision of high-quality learning and achievements for this particular group of students. As a result, their ambitions for what these students can achieve are too low. The head of education has not had a formal appraisal or review since July 2016. Neither the head of education nor the director of services was set objectives at the start of their leadership roles. Consequently, it is not clear how governors and trustees expect them to bring about rapid improvements to the provision.
- Quality improvement arrangements are not rigorous enough. The self-assessment process is not identifying weaknesses in the provision accurately. In the self-assessment report, leaders have overestimated the extent to which their actions have led to an improvement in the quality of the provision since the previous inspection. Evidence of quality-improvement planning, including the tracking of progress made against quality-improvement targets, is limited. As a result, the impact of actions taken has not brought about improvements to the quality of the provision swiftly enough.
- Leaders and teachers have implemented an extensive suite of tracking and monitoring systems to measure the progress of students. However, these systems are too complex. Students' progress is tracked across many different systems and documents that do not link together explicitly. Systems do not provide a centralised record to support timely and thorough progress reviews across all areas of the curriculum. As a result, leaders and teachers do not know how successfully students are progressing overall and the extent of their knowledge and skills development over time. They are not able to compare students' overall performance and evaluate the quality of the provision in-year and year on year.
- Improvements to the processes for performance management and the observation of teaching, learning and assessment have not resulted in sufficient and timely improvements. The senior management team identifies quickly teachers and teaching support assistants who require improvement. They have introduced regular performance-management meetings and annual appraisals for all staff that include information on students' outcomes and feedback from lesson observations. However, action plans and support to address underperformance have not led to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, students do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders utilise the funding for students with high needs effectively. Students benefit from a wide range of interventions and resources that support their learning and development. These include direct and indirect support from the multidisciplinary team, access to sensory resources, work-experience placements, community activities and personalised equipment where necessary. As a result, students receive good support to develop their behavioural, communication and social skills.
- Leaders have recently increased significantly the strategic priority that they give to English and mathematics. They have raised their expectations of all students in these

subjects and have introduced accredited qualifications for those students who have the ability to gain them. The impact of this action will be evident in the summer of 2018.

- Leaders and staff develop good partnerships with colleges, employers and community groups. As a result, students benefit from accessing an array of external activities and purposeful work placements. Parents speak positively about the support that they receive from staff and the progress that their son or daughter has made in the development of their communication, personal and social skills.
- Leaders have implemented innovative strategies to prepare students well for adulthood in modern Britain. For example, students visited the 'Coming Out' exhibition at a local art gallery to help them explore sensitively issues around sexuality, including their own. In their English lessons, students discuss and develop successfully their understanding of words such as 'prejudice' and 'stereotype' and how they relate to the diverse society in which they live.

The governance of the provider

- Governance of the college remains an area for improvement, as identified at the previous inspection. Governors and trustees have not identified sufficiently the impact that quality-improvement actions are having on improving the quality of the provision. They have not ensured that improvements are made swiftly. The quality of reports that the senior management team provides for governors and trustees has improved. However, governors' challenge to them is insufficiently rigorous and consistent.
- Governors and trustees recognise that there are gaps in the skills of board members. They are in the process of finalising a two-year review of the overall governance structure of Wargrave House Ltd. They have now recruited a new governor for the college's governing body who has experience of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is due to join the governing body shortly.
- Governors are passionate about the college and its students. They are supportive of the work that the leaders, managers, teachers and support staff do. Since the previous inspection, governors have introduced a standards working group to focus on quality improvement. As a result, governors visit the college more frequently, go into lessons, and talk regularly to staff and students. During these visits, they review the quality-improvement processes and discuss the intended outcomes for each student. However, these activities lack impact on improving the quality of the provision. Governors are insufficiently experienced in judging the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Effective processes are in place to keep students safe. Students feel safe in the college and are supported to keep themselves safe online, in the community and during their work-experience placements. Leaders have developed innovative activities that help students to understand what they need to do if they have concerns about themselves or others.
- Leaders, governors and staff understand fully the potential vulnerability of students with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They receive regular and appropriate training on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Staff are clear about the procedure for reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures. The assistant head of education is leading the development of a national strategy to protect vulnerable students from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. As a result, staff use effective activities in the tutorial programme to equip students with the understanding and skills to protect themselves from the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

- Leaders follow safe recruitment practices, including the completion and recording of disclosure and barring checks. Leaders must ensure that the minor administrative errors identified in the single central register during inspection do not occur in the future. Leaders corrected them swiftly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not plan their lessons effectively to meet the individual needs and abilities of all students. As a result, teachers do not challenge the most able students well enough so that they develop higher-level skills and deepen their understanding. Teachers do not deploy teaching support assistants and therapists effectively in lessons so that students remain focused and participate fully in their learning activities. For example, in an English lesson, two teaching support assistants and a speech and language therapist were used to help students write a sentence about what they had done at the weekend. The support was general across all students. It did not focus on students' individual needs and abilities, and did not apply the skills of the staff effectively. As a result, students did not complete the activity to the best of their abilities.
- Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what students can achieve in classroom-based lessons. These lessons lack pace and learning activities are not ambitious enough to engage all students in the group. Students often sit around waiting while the teacher asks one student a question before receiving further instructions on what they need to do next. This leads to low-level disruptive behaviour by a minority of students.
- Teachers and teaching support assistants do not ask sufficiently detailed questions to check students' understanding and extend their knowledge and skills. They expand too readily the answers to their questions themselves rather than encouraging students to provide more complex responses or to develop more advanced practical skills.
- Staff are well qualified and experienced in teaching and supporting students with ASD. They undertake a wide variety of mandatory training that develops further their understanding of ASD and managing challenging behaviour. However, teachers do not use their knowledge and experience routinely to plan teaching and learning activities to ensure that they engage students with ASD fully. As a result, students do not make at least the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not use their comprehensive knowledge of students' starting points and long-term goals sufficiently to set meaningful, personalised targets for students. For the majority of students, their targets are the criteria used to assess the achievement of the qualification. Consequently, these targets do not develop students' wider skills or link students' learning and progress directly to their individual long-term goals.

- A well-qualified and experienced multidisciplinary team supports students successfully to develop knowledge and skills that complement their programmes of study. For example, they help students to develop a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities, including around sexual health and relationships, and staying safe. The multidisciplinary team facilitates a successful social-inclusion programme at a local general further education college. As a result, students improve their social and communication skills effectively through joint activities with students in the college.
- Students develop new and highly relevant skills through their work-experience placements. Employers value their work and the contributions they make to their businesses. Students demonstrate successfully that they can carry out complex tasks and manage their behaviour consistently in unfamiliar environments. For example, in an open-plan office at a large construction company students log onto the company's computer system independently and follow instructions from the manager. They scan, print and search websites for information, send information via email and produce information booklets. One student produced a series of posters to improve staff's understanding of office sustainability. These were displayed subsequently on an office notice board to provide information for staff.
- Students benefit greatly from practical and community-based activities. They particularly enjoy this style of learning. Students demonstrate high levels of concentration and focus fully on tasks and activities. In these sessions, students work independently or in pairs. Consequently, they develop good communication skills and improve their confidence. For example, in a practical gym session all students were actively engaged. They demonstrated that they could manage their own time and follow instructions from gym staff effectively. One student showed his peers how to use the equipment safely. Students experimented confidently with new equipment. Where they were given a specific time to exercise on equipment that did not have a 'timer', they demonstrated highly effective problem-solving skills to identify how much time had elapsed. In another session, students prepared a salad after choosing their own ingredients. They discussed reasons for their choice and linked these to healthy eating. Students were able to use knives to slice and chop ingredients confidently, competently and safely.
- Staff promote equality of opportunity successfully. For example, through the rights and responsibilities programme students understand that they have ASD but that they are equally able, where appropriate, to work, take part in community activities and make their own decisions. They recognise fully the responsibilities they have in being active members of their communities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Information shared with parents does not explain sufficiently which skills students have developed competently and which skills they are working on currently. Too many messages are vague and do not identify the skills that parents and carers could reinforce and support students to practise at home. For example, one entry in a student's daily diary described fully what he had done in his work-experience placement at a hotel, including helping to make a bed and removing dirty towels. Another entry on a different day for the same student identified that he had looked in a mirror and tucked in his shirt.

As a result, learning is not reinforced sufficiently outside college activities.

- Teachers and teaching support staff do not support routinely the development of students' independence skills. They do not allow students to complete tasks for themselves. For example, in a catering lesson a student who was capable of starting to cook independently was made to wait while the teaching support assistant did preparation tasks for him. Another student who was demonstrating a high level of skill in preparing snacks for customers was replaced by a teaching support assistant who took over his role.
- Students do not develop knowledge and skills routinely to support the development of good habits in their everyday living. For example, during a lunchtime session students were not encouraged to use cutlery and eat politely. However, they do understand the importance of good hygiene and the need to wash their hands before preparing food.
- Attendance and punctuality in lessons are good. Students enjoy their programmes and demonstrate good behaviour in lessons. Staff deal with any behavioural issues quickly and effectively.
- Staff prepare students effectively for life in modern Britain. Students develop a good understanding of the issues they may face living in a diverse society. Initially they learn by considering their own differences carefully and sensitively. They apply this understanding respectfully to the variety of people they meet in the community and when on work experience. Students are taught effectively the differences between right and wrong by considering codes of conduct in a variety of situations, for example at college and at work. However, teachers do not use associated learning materials consistently in lessons to develop students' understanding of these issues further.
- All students attend work-experience placements according to their needs, preferences and abilities. Staff have been successful in securing regular short placements with local employers that provide challenging work activities for students and link to their future aspirations. College staff provide detailed information about the students prior to the start of the placement so that employers know how they can support the students fully to develop effective work-related skills. For example, a member of staff explained to workers in a construction company what ASD is and how it affects those who have it. As a result, staff in the company have supported students to integrate successfully into their normal industrial routines and to be effective and respected members of their teams.
- Transition arrangements to prepare students for their destinations when they leave the college start early and are effective. Students and their parents receive good support, information and guidance about the options for students' next steps. The majority of students progress into supported work placements, many of which are linked to the work placements they attend while at college. The multidisciplinary team works very effectively with parents and external agencies to support the transition of students into and out of the college. For example, the multidisciplinary team helped one long-term residential student to move successfully from the safe environment of the college to supported accommodation. During the course of this transition, the student was able to make informed choices about where he would like to live and how he would like his bedroom to be decorated.
- Students know how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They enjoy attending the gym and swimming sessions regularly at local leisure centres and engage with these activities confidently. They use the sessions to implement effectively some of the skills they learn in

lessons, for example personal responsibility. In one session observed, all students remembered to bring their membership cards, appropriate clothing for the activity and money to pay for their entrance to the leisure centre.

- Students feel safe in the college, during external activities and at their work placements. They are confident about talking to their teachers if they feel concerned. Through their drama-therapy classes, a group of students developed a high-quality and informative video to promote and explain the 'uh oh' feeling. This has been effective in helping students to understand what to do if they have a concern about themselves or others. The use of this video has been extended to help children in the school to understand how to express their concerns about themselves and others.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- Targets set for students are not sufficiently personalised. In particular, those linked to accredited qualifications are often too generic. As a result, students are either not challenged enough in their learning or they are not working towards individual steps that allow them to make personalised progress over time. Students with higher abilities make slower progress in their learning than their peers because teachers give all students the same activities and work to complete, regardless of their ability or individual learning needs.
- The majority of students make slow progress in developing their English skills. Teaching focuses on achieving units of accreditation rather than on developing students' wider knowledge, skills and understanding sufficiently. In classroom sessions, students work on similar tasks that do not match their individual needs and abilities, for example answering a general question on whether they have a pet.
- Leaders' focus on introducing accredited provision for students after the previous inspection has resulted in the majority of students repeating activities that they can already complete competently. As a result, students are not developing additional knowledge, skills and understanding that will enhance further their ability to live independently.
- Teachers do not record clearly and coherently the performance and progress of their students. Published data and college data on students' achievements do not correlate. In a small minority of examples seen, teachers had inputted information on students' progress incorrectly. In other examples, all students were achieving their targets at the same rate. Consequently, it was not clear from the data which students were making sufficient progress in their lessons and over time.
- The vast majority of students complete their courses successfully. Prior to 2016/17, students followed non-accredited programmes although, according to the college's records, a small number of students took accredited qualifications and achieved them.
- Students enjoy all aspects of their learning experience. They learn how to make friends and to interact confidently with each other and with staff. Students demonstrate high levels of respect for each other and for the staff and visitors.
- Students develop and improve their communication and social skills significantly during their time at the college. As a result, they are able to make choices that are appropriate

to their needs and interests. For example, one student who was unable to interact with others previously is able to participate fully in supported work experience, including stacking shelves, dealing with customers and working with money. Another student, who was identified as a 'scared rabbit' by his parents, has developed his confidence significantly and has progressed successfully to supported work experience with the local authority.

- Students progress to positive destinations. In 2016/17, the vast majority of students progressed into supported work placements. Plans for destinations at the end of the current year indicate that transition arrangements are rigorous and that students' destinations are planned effectively. Parents and agencies are involved fully in the process and students' preferences are taken into account.

Provider details

| | |
|---|---|
| Unique reference number | 139251 |
| Type of provider | Independent specialist college |
| Age range of learners | 19+ |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 15 |
| Principal/CEO | Simon Davies |
| Telephone number | 01925 224899 |
| Website | http://www.wargravehouse.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 or above | |
|---|------------------|-----|----------|-----|---------|-----|------------------|-----|
| Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships) | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ | 16–18 | 19+ |
| | – | 16 | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 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 | 16 | | | | | | | |
| At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | – | | | | | | | |

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of education, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the college'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 college.

Inspection team

Suzanne Wainwright, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Gay

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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