

Inspection of Health Education England

Inspection dates: 10–12 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Health Education England (HEE) provides supported internships for learners who have high needs, through a programme called 'project choice'. There are currently 127 learners across 14 local authorities. Most are based in the north-east and Yorkshire, with 12 learners undertaking the programme in Hampshire. Managers work closely with nine National Health Service (NHS) trusts to provide learners with the opportunity to complete up to three substantial work placements, most of which are in hospitals. HEE makes subcontracted arrangements with local learning providers for the English and mathematics component of the supported internship.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

HEE and NHS leaders and managers form highly effective partnerships, and staff work together closely to deliver supported internships which meet the individual needs of learners. Consequently, learners improve their self-confidence and skills to make a significant and valued contribution in the work placements they complete. An ethos of social inclusion and equality of opportunity underpins the programme and informs staff interactions with learners. Learners feel welcome and identify that they can ask for help whenever they need it. They love going to work, and their enjoyment of life improves as they rightly feel that they are being prepared well for a safe and secure future.

Staff ensure that learners benefit from a curriculum that promotes emotional and physical well-being. Learners develop their knowledge of healthy eating, the importance of sleep to mental health, the dangers of alcohol, and healthy and safe sexual relationships. Learners enjoy these lessons greatly as they are relevant to their daily lives.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Staff gather a broad and helpful range of information about learners at the start of their programme, which they use effectively to plan the supported internship. They share this information well with most workplace mentors to enable learners to settle quickly and start work in a placement that interests them. Most workplace mentors receive helpful training from managers to ensure that they understand how to help learners who have high needs develop their knowledge and skills.

Workplace mentors and coordinators provide helpful coaching, so learners develop the knowledge they need to be effective in their work roles. For example, learners who work in placements that involve cleaning duties develop a detailed knowledge of infection control and why it is important.

Workplace mentors organise work for learners that requires them to apply their knowledge and skills in increasingly complex ways. They arrange useful shadowing opportunities for learners and supervised working with colleagues before leaving learners to work independently. As a result, learners are confident and carry out tasks, such as checking wages or visiting workstations to resolve printing issues, accurately and responsibly.

The way in which coordinators and workplace mentors support learners to develop their workplace behaviour is exceptional. They work together to promote high expectations of learners, and on the rare occasions that learners fall short of these standards, they take swift, supportive and effective action. Learners rarely repeat any lapses. They regulate their own behaviour and attend regularly and punctually. Learners are polite and engaging when interacting with their colleagues and members of the public. Consequently, learners are very well prepared for the world of work.

Staff ensure that learners who require workplace adjustments to be effective in their placement receive beneficial specialist support. For example, speech and language therapists help learners to use applications on their phone to convert text to speech, which improves the quality of their communication. As a result, learners become self-confident and outgoing.

Staff carefully plan the content of the taught employability curriculum. They ensure that it contains important topics to prepare learners for work and successful adult life, including helpful careers advice. Coordinators use interesting activities, such as calculating shopping bills, to teach money management. Expert and skilful guest speakers help learners use their personal experiences to understand the difference between passive and assertive behaviour, to manage workplace relationships successfully. Staff thoughtfully alter the order in which they teach the topics to meet the needs of their learners.

A high proportion of learners successfully move into work, take up volunteering roles or move into further education. In many of the local areas, the proportion of learners who move into an apprenticeship or employment is very high. In a small minority of the NHS trusts in which learners complete their supported internship, too few learners who are capable and ambitious to do so secure paid employment or apprenticeships.

Leaders and managers have created a high-quality supported internship programme which challenges learners to be ambitious for their future and for what they can achieve. Leaders' oversight of the work placement aspect of the curriculum is particularly effective. Those acting in a governance capacity provide helpful support for leaders and managers to ensure that they provide the staff and resources to deliver most aspects of the curriculum to a high standard.

Leaders and managers have not managed the subcontracted English and mathematics provision well enough. They do not monitor the quality of the curriculum that learners receive. Consequently, this aspect of the supported internship lacks ambition. Staff in these areas of the curriculum do not have high enough expectations of learners' ability to develop new knowledge and skills. Too often, these tutors use resources that are not relevant to learners' experiences or lives. Learners enjoy this part of their programme least and make much slower progress in advancing their knowledge of important mathematics and English topics.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff recruitment processes are robust, and no new staff start work until all appropriate checks have been completed. All staff have the training they need to keep learners safe. The process for reporting safeguarding concerns is thorough, and staff support learners well if they experience any safeguarding or welfare issues. Coordinators work effectively with workplace mentors to ensure that learners are healthy and safe in the workplace.

Learners have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, learners know that they should not disclose personal information when they are using social media or engage in online conversations with strangers.

Learners adhere to safe working practices in their work placements. They know how to use sanitising procedures to avoid the risk of spreading diseases.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Improve the management and oversight of the English and mathematics provision to tackle the weaknesses and improve the quality of the curriculum that subcontractors provide.
- Ensure that the curriculum provided for learners in English and mathematics is ambitious and develops the knowledge that learners need to use in their workplaces, in their daily lives and for their next steps.
- Ensure that in the few areas where learners are less successful in securing employment, leaders work with trusts to improve the opportunities available for learners when they complete their programme.

Provider details

Unique reference number	144813
Address	Fell Tower Medical Centre Durham Road Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE9 5EY
Contact number	07768 793537
Website	https://hee.nhs.uk/
Principal/CEO	Kirk Lower
Provider type	Independent specialist college
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	Autismable CIC Basingstoke College of Further Education Doncaster College Hartlepool College of Further Education J and K Training Limited North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council The Sheffield College Trinity Academy YH Training Services Limited

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the national programme lead, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Rachel Angus, lead inspector

Neil Clark

Tracey Mace-Akroyd

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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