

Inspection of Building Crafts College

Inspection dates:

28–31 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Education programmes for young people

Requires improvement

Apprenticeships

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Information about this provider

The Building Crafts College is in the London Borough of Newham at two sites close to Stratford station. The original college, founded by the Carpenters' Livery Company, dates to 1893.

At the time of the inspection, there were 84 apprentices on level 2 and 3 apprenticeships. Around three quarters of these are on standards-based apprenticeships. These include bench joinery, form work, site carpentry and bricklaying. The other apprentices are on framework apprenticeships in stone masonry and maintenance operations. There were also 62 learners on education programmes for young people. Most were on bench joinery and stone masonry courses at level 2 and multi-skills at level 1.

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

Tutors are skilled artisans who are passionate role models for their learners. They relish sharing their trade knowledge and expertise with learners, who value their tutors highly.

Learners are proud to attend the college and take pride in their achievements. They are taught and develop the practical skills they need for employment or promotion at work.

Learners feel safe at the college. They know who to turn to if they are concerned about their own safety and welfare or the safety of their peers. Staff create a welcoming and supportive environment at the college. They go out of their way to help students if they have any problems.

Apprentices and young people work together well. They support each other in their learning. For example, they check each other's machine settings to ensure accuracy. Apprentices ask each other practice mathematics questions to help them prepare for their examinations.

Learners on education programmes for young people do not develop well enough the behaviours they need for study or work. Too many do not take notes to record the content of classes. They struggle to remember some of the basic concepts they have been taught. The attendance of young people, while improving, remains too low.

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

Governors do not have sufficient insight into the quality of education that young people receive, which has declined since the previous inspection. Over the past three years, too many young people have not completed their course. Governors have failed to act quickly to arrest this decline. In recent years, a reduction in management posts has meant that there has been a lack of action to ensure good-quality teaching in all aspects of the curriculum.

Managers do not ensure that the training, primarily on education programmes for young people, is of consistently good quality. They do not consider whether the sequencing and delivery of training are done in the best way to support learners. For example, teachers are not skilled enough at teaching theoretical topics on education programmes for young people. Similarly, teachers do not incorporate work placements adequately into young learners' programmes. As a result, learners do not fully develop their behaviours for work or reinforce what they learn at college with practical experience on site.

Leaders and managers ensure that the breadth of courses provides learners with a clear pathway into the construction industry. Many learners go on to higher-level

training and paid employment. Nearly all learners who complete their course achieve the qualification they need to achieve their goals.

Tutors use their extensive knowledge and skills to develop learners' interest, knowledge and abilities in their trade. As a result, learners approach tasks with energy and enthusiasm. In practical lessons, tutors sequence learning so that learners perfect their skills in their craft. Tutors explain and demonstrate tasks clearly. They carefully check what learners know and can do.

Tutors use their expert insight to give feedback into how learners can improve their work. Consequently, learners retain their trade knowledge and build their skills well over time. Learners with additional learning needs, such as dyslexia, receive effective support from a specialist tutor. Tutors allow time for apprentices who fall behind to catch up.

Tutors often teach apprentices skills that are beyond the requirements of the qualification they study. For example, apprentices learn how to work with specialist products, such as lime, to restore historical buildings. As a result, apprentices' skills are much in demand by employers.

Most learners master the standards required and show this in the high-quality work they produce. For example, bench joinery apprentices take on new projects, such as building a corner staircase, and take care to produce professional drawings and build a high-quality product.

Learners and apprentices receive effective careers advice and guidance from tutors. They benefit from tutorials with assessors, staff and employers. This improves their awareness of the different job roles available and how to go on to their chosen field.

Tutors use their industry links with employers so that apprentices have the chance to extend their knowledge and skills. For example, stone masonry apprentices have the opportunity to build two stone ball finials in the new orangery building at Kensington Palace. Young learners, however, do not have as many opportunities like this.

Not enough apprentices or young people develop the English and mathematics skills that they need. Tutors do not sequence the content of English and mathematics lessons well enough to build upon the trade skills and knowledge that learners already have. For example, in mathematics, learners struggle to make links between what they learn in the classroom and the geometric principals they apply at work. Vocational tutors do not correct learners' written work and they continue to make the same mistakes.

Tutors do not provide learners with useful feedback on their written work. They do not highlight areas where learners have performed particularly well or guide learners to develop their knowledge further. As a result, too many learners do not produce written work of a professional standard. Managers have not put in place a suitable programme of staff development and training to improve teachers' skills in these areas.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an effective safeguarding culture at the college. Leaders and managers have in place suitable policies and procedures to safeguard learners and to fulfil their responsibilities under the 'Prevent' duty.

The designated safeguarding lead maintains good contacts with local safeguarding agencies. As a result, college staff have up-to-date knowledge of any local risks to learners. They put in place suitable training to ensure that learners keep themselves safe in the community and while travelling to college.

When there are concerns about the safety of learners, staff act appropriately. Where necessary, staff use the advice and help of outside agencies and make appropriate referrals.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Teachers should integrate work placements fully into programmes for young learners so that they reinforce what they learn at college and develop suitable behaviours for working on site.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that teachers know how to teach English and mathematics in such a way that learners are able to apply what they know and what they can do to their vocational subjects.
- Leaders and managers should put in place staff development and training that help tutors develop their skills as teachers, in particular to teach the theoretical components of courses.
- Governors should improve their oversight of the programmes so that they are aware of the quality of training. They should provide firmer support and challenge to hold leaders and managers to account for any drop in standards.
- Leaders and managers should help young learners develop the behaviours they need for study and work. This includes improving their attendance at college.

Provider details

Unique reference number	50888
Address	Kennard Road E15 1AH
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Website	www.thebcc.ac.uk
Principal	Len Conway
Provider type	Not for profit
Date of previous inspection	3 February 2014
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality manager, 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

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