

Inspection of Langdon College

Inspection dates:

16–18 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Provision for learners with high needs	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Information about this provider

Langdon College is part of the Langdon Foundation; a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. The college is a registered charity in its own right. It is a small residential and day college that provides education and support primarily for Jewish students who have a variety of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Around half of the students have autistic spectrum disorder. The college has two centres. One centre is in Salford, Greater Manchester; the second centre is in Edgware, north London. Leaders have recently moved from the previous campus to larger premises in London. They have continued their partnership arrangements with a Jewish school in London for a few students. These students attend the Edgware centre.

At the time of the inspection, eight students attended the Salford centre and 28 attended the centre in Edgware.

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

Staff have created an inclusive and nurturing environment where students feel safe and can be themselves. Students told us that staff promote kindness and teamwork. They learn how to take turns and are polite and respectful to others. For example, students are confident enough to ask their peers not to interrupt others when they are speaking.

More-able students benefit from resources relating to real-life situations that help them to prepare effectively for adulthood. For example, in mathematics, tutors use customer guides from large banks to teach students about money management. They understand about credit cards, debt and the risks of borrowing from un reputable sources.

Staff use a variety of strategies to help students to successfully self-regulate their behaviour. For example, they use 'screen time' in lessons to give students a short break from learning activities and use 'zones of regulation' effectively to help students to identify and manage behavioural triggers. Consequently, students are well-behaved for most of the time.

Staff focus considerably on supporting students' physical and mental well-being. They encourage students to eat a balanced diet and to keep fit. For example, students consider which foods and drinks are higher in fats and sugars. They take part in 'the active mile' initiative. This resulted in a few students successfully completing a 10-kilometre run. Others have found that they can now walk much further without getting tired or breathless.

Students access a reasonable range of additional activities, such as swimming and dance that staff use effectively to support and build on students' social interaction skills and self-confidence. Staff supplement these activities with trips, which include a local Royal Air Force museum and an exploration of Chinatown.

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

Leaders and managers have not developed an ambitious enough curriculum that helps students to fully achieve the outcomes that they are capable of. The curriculum rationale for the different learning pathways is unclear. Leaders and managers cannot explain clearly how these pathways develop and build on students' knowledge and skills over time. While students make good progress in a range of skills such as communication, social development, resilience and confidence, they do not have an individualised, well-structured programme of learning that focuses on the knowledge and skills that they need for their next stage in education, employment or independence.

Students' targets are too broad. Targets do not directly reflect students' individual needs and abilities, or the activities they complete. All students work on two knowledge/skills targets per month even though some students could achieve more. Targets do not routinely include the redevelopment of skills such as travel training and social skills that students lost due to the national restrictions during the pandemic. As a result, tutors do not have a sufficient oversight of the progress that students make or could make over time.

Tutors do not plan students' development of English and mathematical skills clearly and logically enough. While they integrate English and mathematical skills into a wide range of activities across the college, this approach relies heavily on the effectiveness of tutors' skills. More-experienced English and mathematics tutors personalise learning for the range of students' abilities in their group. However, in other instances, for example in pre-entry level lessons, reading and comprehension resources are too complex. Students are only able to answer questions correctly when they are heavily supported or prompted.

Students benefit from comprehensive sensory, occupational, and speech and language therapy assessments. Staff use the resulting personalised therapy programmes effectively to support students' needs in a range of lessons and activities that they build on over time. For example, into music lessons and practical activities such as arts and crafts. These specialist therapies help students to progressively reduce their barriers to learning. Therapists provide support to parents/carers to help them to understand their young person's needs. This has a positive impact on students' lives outside college, such as being able to attend a local café on their own.

Tutors and support staff work effectively together. Learning support assistants (LSAs) provide useful prompts for students that help most students to participate fully in lessons. Staff help students to understand and cope with difficult situations both in and outside college. For example, they used role play to help students problem-solve a disagreement over insufficient seating space when students shared a taxi to the college. Staff reduce students' support over time as students develop their independence.

Tutors and LSAs do not always ensure that they challenge the more-able students to extend their learning beyond a basic understanding of the topic. For example, in English and mathematics lessons, a few learners are working in groups with others of a lower ability, yet they are completing the same tasks. They are therefore unable to broaden their knowledge in these subjects.

Attendance is high. Most students are motivated and keen to learn in their lessons. They are confident to speak out to answer questions, or to share an idea. The standard of most students' practical work is high. They develop useful life skills such as budgeting and understanding how to shop for specific ingredients.

Staff promote the values of tolerance, fairness, and individual liberty successfully in

lessons and activities. They encourage students to embrace difference. For example, tutors use their rich range of international heritage to help students to understand about different cultures. Students discuss a range of pertinent topics such as Black History month and the impact of influential figures, such as Rosa Parks. They are very respectful towards each other and show an acceptance and understanding of each other's disabilities. Students run an active student voice group with teacher support that helps them to influence leaders' decisions. Student representatives are voted in democratically by their peers. Recent requests from the group for more computers and more tables in the social area have been actioned by managers.

Students receive impartial advice and guidance throughout their programme. While this is generally effective, careers advice is not always sufficiently timely for the small number of students who want to gain employment. As a result, students are not always as prepared as they could be. For example, the curriculum does not focus on developing the specific knowledge and skills that students need to secure their preferred job role or more ambitious employment options.

Governors have revised their membership to ensure that they have the skills and experience required to be an effective board. They are well informed about actions that leaders take to improve the quality of students' experiences across both campuses. They communicate regularly with all staff and students to develop a good understanding of life at the college. However, their knowledge and understanding of an ambitious curriculum is limited. They cannot explain the rationale for the current provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, governors and staff place a high priority on safeguarding their students. Designated safeguarding leads, staff and governors across both centres are appropriately trained. Leaders have implemented comprehensive safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty policies and procedures that they update regularly. For example, leaders have included specific references to the prevention of sexual abuse, including peer-on-peer abuse.

Leaders have established effective partnerships with external agencies to ensure that students are fully supported if they have any concerns. They use innovative activities to help students to understand how to keep themselves safe, for example developing students' confidence to speak to police officers and using an external puppet company to explain safeguarding concepts. Staff ensure students have an appropriate understanding of what constitutes healthy relationships, including sexual relationships and consent. Leaders carry out the necessary checks to ensure the suitability of new staff to work at the college.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should develop a coherent curriculum with a clear rationale that helps students to fully achieve the outcomes of which they are capable.
- Leaders and tutors should ensure that students' knowledge/skills targets are individualised, ambitious and help students to achieve the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need for their next stage of education, employment or independence.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that tutors plan an English and mathematics curriculum that meets the needs and abilities of each student. They should ensure that it helps students to develop these skills at the pace and level of which they are capable.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that tutors and LSAs consistently challenge the more-able students to extend their learning beyond a basic understanding of a topic.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that students receive appropriate careers advice when it is needed so that students develop the specific skills they need for the job roles they are capable of securing.
- Governors should ensure that they understand the curriculum rationale for the learning programmes they offer so that they can hold leaders to account for the quality of education students receive.

Provider details

Unique reference number	131910
Address	9 Leicester Avenue Salford Langdon College Manchester M7 4HA
Contact number	01617405900
Website	http://langdoncollege.org
Principal/CEO	Jane Baker
Provider type	Independent specialist college
Date of previous inspection	11–13 December 2017
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the assistant principal (Salford), 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 visiting learning sessions, scrutinising students' work, seeking the views of students, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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