

# Inspection of The Michael Tippett College

Inspection dates: 26 to 28 January 2022

## Overall effectiveness

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education	<b>Inadequate</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development	<b>Inadequate</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this provider

The Michael Tippett College is an independent specialist college situated in the London Borough of Lambeth. The acting head of college has had the responsibility for leadership of the college since October 2021.

The learners at the college are young adults aged 19 to 25. They have a range of profound multiple learning difficulties or severe learning difficulties, and some learners have autism spectrum disorder. There are 41 learners. Nearly all learners are on a three-year preparation for work and life programme. Two learners are on a one-year 'bridge to work' programme designed to help them into employment. This programme offers learners the chance to undertake a work placement. All learners have an education, health and care plan and are in receipt of high-needs funding.

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

Learners do not benefit from an effective curriculum. The curriculum is poorly planned, meaning that staff do not provide learners with opportunities to develop essential skills needed for adulthood based on what they can already do. For example, learners do not have opportunities to develop their social communication skills. Consequently, they do not develop the skills they need to become more independent in their lives, and few progress to meaningful next steps after college.

Learners are not always treated with respect for their dignity. For example, when supporting learners with tube feeding and medication, staff do so in the classroom in front of other learners and staff.

Learners are happy at the college because staff are committed to supporting them. For example, job coaches offer positive encouragement to learners in lessons. Staff provide appropriate physical support to learners with mobility issues.

Learners behave well around the college and on visits because staff set clear expectations for behaviour. Learning takes place in a calm and orderly environment. Learners are mostly respectful to one another, as well as to the staff with whom they work.

Learners do not benefit from opportunities to develop their individual talents and interests beyond the activities taught in the main curriculum lessons.

Learners feel safe at the college and know whom they can turn to if they have any worries or concerns.

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

Trustees have recently appointed an acting head of college to manage the college after a period of significant instability. However, trustees have not yet developed sufficient oversight of the quality of education or safeguarding arrangements. Consequently, trustees do not provide sufficient scrutiny or challenge to leaders so they can improve the quality of the provision.

Leaders, trustees and staff do not have sufficient expertise in special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that the curriculum is appropriate and ambitious for learners with complex needs. The curriculum is poorly planned and sequenced. There is a lack of preparation for adulthood, reflecting the low expectations that staff have for learners. For example, learners do not have opportunities to develop their English and mathematical skills. When planning the curriculum, leaders and teachers do not consider learners' individual needs, aspirations or what they already know or can do when they start at the college. As a result, the quality of education is inadequate, because learners do not build the knowledge, skills and behaviours they require to achieve their full potential.

The new acting head of college and trustees have begun to improve on some of the significant weaknesses identified at the previous safeguarding monitoring visit. As a result, leaders have ensured that appropriate checks are now in place for current staff to ensure that they are safe to work with the college's learners.

Leaders do not ensure that teaching staff have the qualifications, experience or training they need to teach learners with highly complex needs. For example, teachers of the health and well-being curriculum have no coaching qualifications or prior experience of teaching groups of young adults with high needs. Teachers do not sufficiently adapt their teaching to meet the individual needs of learners. Too often, teachers do not plan activities that allow for differences in ability. As a result, tasks are often set at an inappropriate level of difficulty.

Teachers do not adequately check that learners understand what they have been taught. For example, teachers do not check that learners comprehend simple calculations when preparing for their visit to the supermarket. Consequently, teachers are not clear about the progress that learners make.

Leaders have not ensured that teachers work together effectively enough with speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and occupational health therapists. As a result, learners do not benefit from an environment that fully supports their therapeutic needs. For example, visual support aids are not in place where required to help learners access the curriculum.

Leaders and teachers have not ensured that the personal development curriculum is fit for purpose. Topics are poorly planned. Teachers teach sensitive topics such as personal and intimate care in mixed-gender groups, and activities are highly inappropriate.

Leaders do not have sufficient oversight of attendance. There are no formal processes to follow up learner absences, and no overall data is collected. As a result, leaders do not know which learners attend less well.

Leaders responsible for careers advice and guidance have correctly identified that careers provision needs to be improved. They are implementing an action plan to develop the quality of the department. For example, the new head of careers has recently started attending annual reviews, so these become more focused on planning for learners' next steps. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this work. Leaders do not adequately monitor learners' progression when they leave the college.

Leaders are developing arrangements for work experience. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed their progress. A few learners benefit from being able to learn at a riding centre, where staff are skilled in working with learners with complex needs, so that they become more confident to work with horses.

Teachers set learners useful targets for increasing their levels of physical activity. Staff record the amount of physical activity that learners undertake weekly. However,

leaders do not ensure that staff promote healthy living throughout the curriculum. For example, in the life skills curriculum, staff take learners on visits to unhealthy fast-food restaurants.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff and designated safeguarding leads do not follow their own safeguarding policy to make timely referrals to the adult services duty team when vulnerable learners are at risk. Consequently, learners remain at risk of significant harm for longer periods than are necessary.

Leaders have not developed robust policies for safeguarding learners. Consequently, staff lack guidance in their work with learners. For example, leaders have not developed policies for how staff should manage any potential incidents of harmful sexual behaviour.

Leaders do not understand the risks that learners may face in the local areas in which they live. As a result, staff have not taught learners how to protect themselves from these risks.

Too many staff and trustees have not completed safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. As a result, some staff and trustees do not understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

## **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Leaders need to improve safeguarding arrangements by strengthening safeguarding policies, as well as training all staff so that they apply these routinely in their work with learners.
- Leaders need to ensure that all staff and trustees receive safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training so that they understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the risks that learners may face in the specific areas in which they live.
- Teachers need to assess what learners know and can do at the start of their courses, so that they can design an ambitious curriculum for learners that develops the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need for independence in life and work.
- Leaders need to provide training to teachers to improve their teaching skills, so they have the expertise they need to adapt their teaching to meet the complex needs of learners.
- Leaders need to provide trustees with the information they need to hold leaders to account for the quality of the provision and safeguarding arrangements.
- Leaders need to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to provide learners with a dignified space in which to receive medication and feeding tubes.

- Leaders need to ensure that the safety and well-being curriculum is appropriate so that it prepares learners for adulthood, and that appropriate activities and groupings are used when teaching sensitive topics.
- Leaders need to ensure that learners' therapeutic needs are met by ensuring that teachers and therapists work together so that appropriate support aids are in place to enable learners to access their learning.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146042
<b>Address</b>	Belthorn Crescent Weir Road Balham London SW12 0NS
<b>Contact number</b>	0207 326 5890
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.tmts.me.uk/College">www.tmts.me.uk/College</a>
<b>Principal</b>	Perry Vlachos (Acting Head of College)
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent specialist college
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the acting head of college, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent 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 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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