

Inspection of Luminare Education Group

Inspection dates: 26 to 29 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Education programmes for young people	Good
Adult learning programmes	Outstanding
Apprenticeships	Good
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Luminare Education Group is a very large general further education group with three colleges: Leeds City College, which operates across a number of college campuses, Keighley College and Harrogate College. Each college and campus has a dedicated principal. At the time of the inspection, there were 6,893 learners on education programmes for young people, 7,034 learners on adult programmes, 1,585 apprentices and 674 learners with high needs. In addition, there were 251 full-time learners aged 14 to 16 years. Of these, 45 young people were studying at the Mabgate campus, where only specialist vocational education for young people aged 14 to 16 is provided. The provider works with seven subcontractors.

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

Learners and apprentices benefit from studying in environments that are well resourced and up to date. For example, motor vehicle apprentices use industry-standard computer technologies to carry out four-wheel alignment correctly. Level 3 graphic design learners use 3D rendering computer-aided design programmes, which helps them to understand the professional skills expected of experienced designers. Learners and apprentices value the opportunity to train in well-equipped and safe workshops.

Learners and apprentices feel welcome, safe and secure at all college sites. They are frequently provided with age-appropriate information about working safely in different environments, such as in workplaces. Staff have a zero-tolerance culture towards bullying and harassment, and learners are confident that any occurrences of intimidating behaviour will be dealt with swiftly. Learners and apprentices have access to a wide range of support mechanisms should they feel the need to report a concern to a member of staff, such as using a 'Report-it' button made available on learner portals.

Learners and apprentices enjoy participating in a wide range of enrichment activities, and many gain additional skills and qualifications. They are encouraged to take an active part in social enterprise initiatives and to contribute positively to their college and their communities. For example, on Wednesday afternoons, learners and apprentices study subjects such as sign language and driving theory, which enriches their personal development. Others take part in projects that help to improve the lives of others, such as running sessions with the Leeds Rhinos Netball club to boost young people's physical fitness and well-being.

Learners benefit from very well-structured careers education, information, advice and guidance that prepare them well for their next steps. Careers staff work very closely with curriculum teams to help learners and apprentices understand the potential routes available to them, such as higher-level apprenticeships, further and higher education programmes and employment. Consequently, learners on A-level programmes, for example, have a firm understanding of the expectations and demands of higher-level academic study. Adult learners studying courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) are prepared well for job interviews, which results in them securing better paid work.

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

Leaders and managers successfully provide education and training that meet the aspirations of learners and apprentices and widen participation in education and training. Learners benefit from accessing suitable education programmes that cover a range of entry levels, and leaders take care to ensure that they reduce any barriers to learning. For example, leaders have taken steps to identify the support

needs of adult learners who are refugees or asylum seekers and have developed a wraparound support service which helps these learners to access education.

Leaders and managers work closely with a range of employers and stakeholders, such as the National Health Service (NHS), local councils and small business enterprises, to understand the changing employment demands of a range of sectors. They select and implement education programmes that best fit the employment opportunities available in Leeds and the surrounding Yorkshire region. As a result, employers highly value the curriculum and the training that learners and apprentices receive.

Leaders have taken effective steps to promote a staff culture of accountability and ownership. Heads of department have a thorough and accurate understanding of the quality of education provided by staff in their departments. They frequently participate in performance reviews, discussing curriculum strengths and areas for improvement with senior leaders. Consequently, leaders and managers have a clear understanding of what they need to improve and take swift action to address underperformance. Leaders have taken decisive actions to tackle weaknesses in the full-time provision for learners aged 14 to 16 at the Mabgate campus and have appointed new staff to make necessary improvements. Although these actions are recent, early improvements to this provision are already being made.

Leaders and managers have effective arrangements in place to monitor the quality of provision across all campuses. Since the acquisition of Harrogate College, they have taken necessary actions to drive improvements and ensure that the revised curriculum offer is attractive and relevant to learners, apprentices and employers in the area.

Governors have a secure oversight of the quality of education provided for learners and apprentices. An effective governance model is in place that includes both a high-level group board of governors and boards for each of the colleges. Governors are actively involved in determining the group's strategic direction, with local boards making many of the key decisions in relation to each college, ensuring continuous and sustainable improvement.

Leaders manage subcontracting arrangements well with the providers with which they work. Managers carry out frequent reviews of the quality of provision for apprentices and adult learners. They provide feedback on the areas that subcontractors need to improve and support them by sharing best practice and providing training. Subcontractors value the support that they receive.

Tutors are well qualified in their subjects and use their teaching knowledge and experiences effectively, demonstrating passion and enthusiasm for education. Most tutors and assessors use a wide range of teaching strategies that help learners and apprentices to understand how to solve problems and apply new knowledge and skills to practical situations and tasks. For example, health and social care tutors support learners to develop group-work skills through discussions and debate which, in turn, result in learners knowing more about how to manage client relationships in

social care. In sports programmes, learners work in groups to create presentations, which helps them to develop the skills and qualities that successful sports coaches need.

Most tutors effectively identify what learners and apprentices can do at the start of their academic and vocational programmes, and they plan and deliver teaching and training well to build on these starting points. They steadily increase the complexity of knowledge that learners and apprentices develop over time in order to deepen understanding and enable learners to make strong links to new learning. For example, level 3 applied science learners study key concepts of physics such as the use of force. Tutors then extend their learning successfully, resulting in learners being able to calculate the movement of a rocket and then to assess the impact that forces experienced in space travel can have on the human body. However, on GCSE English and mathematics courses for learners aged 16 to 18, initial assessment is not as effective, and gaps in learners' knowledge of important basic concepts are not quickly filled so as to enable learners to acquire the new knowledge that they need. As a result, too many learners on these courses make slow progress.

Tutors provide learners and apprentices with useful information on how to improve their work. Most learners respond positively to assessment feedback and strive to improve their work and practice, using the clear targets set by their tutors. In a very few instances, however, tutors set targets for learners with high needs that are too broad or too vague. These few learners make slower progress in addressing areas identified as needing development.

Tutors on adult learning courses are ambitious for their learners. They actively promote the development of personal and social skills, which helps learners to succeed outside of the college environment. For example, adult learners studying ESOL develop practical skills which support them socially, such as interacting by telephone with professional services, arranging hospital and medical appointments, and liaising with their children's nurseries and schools. Consequently, adult learners grow in confidence and develop skills that help to prepare them for their next steps in education and employment.

Learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by qualified staff. Learners with high needs benefit from inclusive and personalised learning pathways which enable them to develop their knowledge and skills alongside their resilience and their independence. Consequently, they are prepared well for further study or employment, including supported internships. Learners with profound multiple learning disabilities receive well-coordinated specialist support, including speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, that meets their needs and enables them to engage fully in their learning.

Staff set high expectations and standards for learners' and apprentices' behaviour. Most learners and apprentices demonstrate good attitudes to learning and are polite and courteous in lessons and around the campuses. Staff expect learners and apprentices to demonstrate positive behaviours through the 'I'm in' strategy, such as being actively inclusive and embracing difference.

The attendance of adult learners is very high, which contributes to the rapid progress that they make in developing their subject knowledge. However, in too many subjects on education programmes for young people, learners' attendance is too low. Staff use and apply a range of strategies with these learners, such as swiftly following up on absence or providing online materials to help absent learners continue to make progress. In a small number of instances, learners' poor attendance impacts negatively on their progress.

Tutors actively plan the tutorial curriculum to ensure that learners and apprentices have a good understanding of fundamental British values. In early years and childcare apprenticeships, training has a significant focus on apprentices developing a strong understanding of topics that relate directly to safeguarding. Apprentices carefully link what they have learned in class to their responsibilities in their work settings in order to keep children safe from exploitation, from the risks of radicalisation and extremism, and from exposure to female genital mutilation and sexual abuse.

Staff promote an inclusive environment for learners and apprentices where they can freely and frequently discuss a range of political and cultural topics. Younger learners and apprentices are encouraged to consider the meaning of healthy relationships and how they can take responsibility for their own mental health and well-being. Learners and apprentices feel accepted by their peers and respected by staff, and they are keen to express their individuality in environments that offer a safe and nurturing space.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have in place comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures that help keep learners and apprentices safe. Staff are recruited safely, and all staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. The designated safeguarding lead and safeguarding officers are appropriately qualified and have a very comprehensive awareness of learners and apprentices who are perceived as being at risk of harm. They swiftly take appropriate actions to mitigate safeguarding risks. Learners aged 14 to 16 on full-time provision work safely in designated separate working environments to older learners.

Leaders ensure that learners and apprentices have a good understanding of risks that they may face in their communities, online and in workplaces. They provide them with useful and helpful information about sexual consent, peer-on-peer abuse and unacceptable behaviours. As a result, learners and apprentices are confident that staff would quickly respond and address any inappropriate behaviours quickly. Staff also provide learners with mental health and well-being needs with effective support, such as the provision of counselling services. They have effective and established partnership links with external agencies such as the NHS Mind Mate teams who have an active presence at college sites and offer additional support to learners.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Identify the starting points of learners aged 16 to 18 on GCSE English and mathematics courses more accurately so that tutors can plan and teach curriculum content that enables these learners to develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Ensure that tutors who work with learners with high needs set targets that are consistently specific and enable all these learners to progress quickly against identified areas for development.
- Increase attendance in the subjects where it is too low.
- Ensure that the quality of education provided for learners aged 14 to 16 on full-time provision at the Mabgate campus continues to improve swiftly.

Provider details

Unique reference number	135771
Address	Park Lane Leeds City College College House Leeds LS3 1AA
Contact number	0113 386 1997
Website	www.leedscitycollege.ac.uk
Principal/CEO	Colin Booth
Provider type	General further education college
Dates of previous inspection	6 to 9 February 2018
Main subcontractors	Norton Webb Limited NEUPC PL Projects Westrow Blue Apple Swarthmore Education Centre The Skills Network Limited

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy CEO and principal, 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 learners’ work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider’s documentation and records.

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