

Inspection of Future Finders Employability College

Inspection dates:

22 to 24 February 2023

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	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Future Finders Employability College (Future Finders) is an independent specialist college in Oldham, Greater Manchester. It provides education and support for students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Students have learning difficulties and disabilities such as physical disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and social, emotional and mental health needs. The college is a member of the New Bridge Group.

At the time of the inspection, eight students aged between 19 and 25 years attended the college. Students study a supported internship programme from Monday to Friday. They attend a long-term work placement for around three days per week. Students study level 1 skills for further learning and employment, and functional skills in English and mathematics.

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

Students appreciate the kind and helpful staff at Future Finders. They are respectful, polite and courteous to staff and each other. Staff create a calm and relaxed learning environment where students feel confident to express themselves. Students like making new friends and most of them enjoy going out on work placements. Most students attend college and work placement activities regularly and arrive on time.

Students develop new knowledge and skills on their supported internship. In English lessons, they use ambitious adjectives such as 'thunderous and strident voices' when writing a fictional account of a police raid. However, leaders do not ensure that students make the progress that they are capable of on their work placements. Although students develop new skills, their time on placement is largely unstructured. Leaders do not ensure that the activities that students carry out are always challenging enough or purposeful.

Students benefit from a curriculum that focuses on preparing them to move into paid employment or volunteering. Leaders and managers work with key partners to match work placements to meet students' future ambitions, such as working in the kitchen or restaurant in the hospitality and catering industry. A few current students have already secured part-time paid employment in the retail and healthcare sectors. The majority of the previous year's leavers progressed into paid work or volunteering.

Students feel safe at college. They feel it is a place where they can trust each other. Students have a good understanding of healthy relationships, sexual education and consent, including what these topics mean to them in their lives. They explain the dangers surrounding sexual abuse confidently and maturely.

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

Leaders, managers and directors are ambitious for their students. Following a significant curriculum review, leaders and managers have introduced a suitably challenging curriculum. Students benefit from having time dedicated to studying a personal development curriculum. They participate in planned enrichment activities including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, gym sessions and the film club.

Students develop confidence on their supported internships. They build the social skills they need when dealing with the public such as talking to people that they do not know.

Staff are suitably qualified and experienced in their roles. They benefit from attending specialist training on topics such as autism awareness and epilepsy. Staff put into practice the training they receive about conflict management when managing student behaviour. Students' behaviour is extremely positive.

Tutors sequence and plan the curriculum logically in English and employability

lessons. In English, tutors identify in detail students' previous learning and the gaps they have in their knowledge and skills. They build the curriculum around each student and monitor their progress over time. In English lessons, tutors provide useful feedback to students that they use to improve their work. Students make substantial progress in this subject. Leaders have rightly identified that they need to plan how students reinforce and recap the transferrable skills they learn in English across the other curriculums they study.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that all students benefit from a sufficiently well-planned or structured curriculum on their work placements. Students do not always consolidate the skills they are learning through repetition and recap of familiar duties. Job coaches do not provide sufficiently useful feedback to students on a regular basis so that they are equipped with the information they need to complete jobs as independently as possible. Students are overly reliant on approaching job coaches for what they need to do next. In a few more structured placements, students build skills, knowledge and behaviours in a logical fashion. For example, students on a kitchen placement develop basic cooking skills before moving on to more challenging areas such as the grill. They practise the skills they have learned while making different meals.

Leaders and managers have recently put in place a range of quality processes which they use to monitor and develop the quality of education for students. They identify weaknesses in teaching practices such as questioning techniques. Leaders put in place training for staff, but it is too soon to assess the impact of this. Leaders do not apply the same quality processes to the work placement aspect of the programme. They do not undertake visits to assess the quality of the training or the support that job coaches provide to students in their work placements. Leaders have not identified the specific improvements needed for this significant aspect of the curriculum.

Leaders do not effectively monitor the progress that students make from their starting points. They have yet to refine and embed a successful initial and baseline assessment across all aspects of their curriculum to accurately establish students' starting points.

Students benefit from the careers information, advice and guidance that they receive as part of their personal development curriculum. They attend interviews with independent external careers advisers. Students carry out job searches online.

Staff are proud to work at the college. They feel motivated to do their best, and most feel that leaders are considerate about their workload. Staff appreciate the flexible approach that leaders take in their working arrangements, such as giving extra planning and preparation time to new staff.

Experienced and knowledgeable directors provide scrutiny to leaders and managers. They challenge them on a range of topics, including safeguarding and the curriculum. However, leaders do not provide directors with reports about the progress that students make on their programme. As such, directors are unable to

provide scrutiny on or challenge this aspect of the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers ensure that the designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) are at a suitable level in the organisation to undertake their roles. The DSLs work closely with partners to keep students safe. They make appropriate referrals to partner organisations.

The DSLs keep up to date with key local safeguarding priorities such as mental health, consent and relationships. They cascade the updates to staff, who also attend training on a range of relevant safeguarding topics. Leaders and managers ensure that they include appropriate content in the students' personal development curriculum. Students benefit from visits from guest speakers, including the police who talk to them about personal safety.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should ensure that they plan a well-structured, challenging and purposeful work placement curriculum so that all students make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders and managers should embed an initial and baseline assessment to accurately establish students' starting points across all aspects of their curriculum.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that tutors and job coaches plan learning so that students recap and reinforce the knowledge and skills they develop in their English lessons across the curriculum.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that they implement rigorous quality improvement processes for the work placement aspect of the supported internship programme so that they identify weaknesses and put in place appropriate actions to bring about swift improvements.
- Leaders and managers should monitor the progress that students make from their starting points and provide directors with reports about the progress that they make on their programme.

Provider details

Unique reference number	146551
Address	77 Union Street Oldham Greater Manchester OL1 1JZ
Contact number	01615187155
Website	www.futurefinders.org
Head of college	Scott McKeown
Provider type	Independent specialist college
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of college, 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.

Inspection team

Alison Cameron Brandwood, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jane Young	Ofsted Inspector
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