

# Inspection of Regent College

Inspection dates: 16 to 18 May 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Information about this provider

Regent College is an independent specialist college based in Stoke-on-Trent. At the time of the inspection, the college had 37 learners with high needs aged 16 to 25. Learners study a curriculum based on preparation for adulthood and progression to employment. Learners with complex physical and social needs are supported by a clinical team and have access to rebound and speech and language therapy.

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

Leaders and staff create a calm and inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect. All learners take part enthusiastically in their learning. They use inclusive communication strategies to communicate with their friends and with staff. As a result, they learn about important social behaviours, such as being kind and thoughtful to one another.

Learners demonstrate positive behaviours because of their learning. Tutors and learning support workers (LSWs) provide learners with strategies to help them to manage their own behaviours, such as 'time out' and 'zones of regulation'. As a result, most learners move towards more independent regulation of their behaviours and learn to manage their anxieties better over time.

Learners develop their skills by undertaking activities to support the communities in which they live and study. They participate in a range of charitable and fundraising activities. For example, by making and selling bird boxes, learners raised funds for a defibrillator to be purchased and placed outside the college for the community to access if required.

Staff have high expectations for their learners. Learners are supported to participate in a range of activities, including preparation for independent living, work placements and volunteer work, which closely align to their personal aspirations. As a result, learners develop the skills they need to become more independent.

Learners have some knowledge of fundamental British values, for example respecting their peers. However, a few learners do not demonstrate a secure understanding of all of these topics and what they mean for their personal lives.

Learners have an appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. They are able to explain about unwanted touching, such as hugging, and what they would do should it happen. They have a clear understanding of whom to report their concerns to, and are confident that they would be helped and supported if they raised a concern.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum which aims to develop learners' employability, personal and independence skills in preparation for adulthood. Leaders recognise that they work in an area with high levels of deprivation, and work closely with parents and carers to ensure that they are supported to be ambitious for their young person.

Leaders continually work to improve the teaching practice of their team. The recently revised observation of teaching and learning process uses formal teaching observations to inform the sharing of best practice and implement targeted professional development for staff. Although early in its implementation, there are

indications that this support and feedback is helping tutors to become more confident in the classroom and improve their teaching.

Leaders have a good overview of how learners are progressing on their courses. Tutors carefully track the progress of learners through weekly intervention meetings which inform discussions with senior leaders. As a result, they quickly support tutors to put in place interventions to help learners who fall behind to get back on track.

Leaders have in place an advisory board to oversee their work of the college. Members of the board are skilled and experienced professionals in the education and business sectors. This enables them to have a clear and in-depth understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and to provide challenge to support improvements to the learner experience.

Tutors plan their teaching to reflect the learning needs of their learners. They develop the curriculum to focus on learners' individual learning targets. Where appropriate, learners receive support to study accredited qualifications. For example, learners on the entry level 3 skills for living and work course will take the module 'building working relationships with colleagues'. This supports learners to be able to take part in volunteering roles or work placements. As a result, learners develop the specific skills they need to achieve their goals and get ready for life after college.

Most tutors use teaching strategies which ensure that learners are able to participate in learning activities. Where they are particularly effective, tutors recap learning well and use a range of practical activities to support learners' skill development. Tutors are aware of the individual needs of their learners. They plan supplementary teaching activities for learners who can become easily distracted, or whose behaviours prevent them from focusing for a fixed period. As a result, most learners are supported to remain on task and to increase their participation during their time at college.

The majority of LSWs provide support which enables their learners to participate fully in sessions. They successfully implement behaviour strategies, providing time out of lessons for learners where needed. This enables learners to return to lessons and continue with their studies.

In a few cases, tutors and LSWs are too quick to complete tasks for learners and do not always allow learners the time to reflect and respond independently. As a result, a few learners do not have an opportunity to secure their understanding of a topic before moving on to the next one.

Most tutors and LSWs use verbal feedback to good effect. For example, in communication sessions, they use instant feedback and recognition. This motivates learners to engage in sessions and supports their skills development and communication.

Tutors plan the curriculum to ensure that learners develop their English and mathematical skills. In English lessons, tutors use assessment well to check what

learners know and remember. They use written assessments, formal presentations and questioning to assess learners' progress. Mathematics is skilfully woven into the curriculum. For example, the drama group produces costings for the costumes for the end of year performance. Consequently, learners remember more and can do more over time, and are often able to complete all or parts of their formal functional skills qualifications.

Tutors and LSWs use the information in learners' education, health and care (EHC) plans to identify milestones for learners to enable them to make good progress. For example, in travel training and personal cooking learning activities, tutors plan and sequence learning based on learners EHC plan outcomes. LSWs help learners reflect on their learning and explain what they have done. As a result, most learners progress well and develop the skills they need to become more independent and, where appropriate, progress to employment.

Where appropriate, most learners participate in meaningful volunteering and work placements. LSWs provide learners with the support they need to transition to volunteer or work placement and to focus on routine tasks. As a result, learners are able to quickly engage in meaningful activity and to develop the skills and confidence they need for the workplace.

Learners receive appropriate careers advice and guidance. The transition link worker supports learners to identify appropriate transition opportunities. They facilitate an annual careers event which involves a range of providers and representatives from the local authority, local voluntary agencies and social action groups. With this support, most learners progress to appropriate positive destinations, including volunteering, part-time work, supported living and, in a few cases, paid work.

Most learners develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours. They are able to speak confidently about what they have learned. For example, they are able to explain how they develop their communication skills, confidence, management of anxieties and development of new skills such as mentoring and teamwork. In rebound therapy sessions, tutors closely observe learners' performance and coach them to progress further, for example to coordinate sitting to standing moves.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put in place suitable policies and procedures for reporting and managing safeguarding concerns. Leaders use learners' EHC plans and other related information to identify learners' vulnerabilities and to train staff to carefully monitor learners and keep them safe.

Leaders have appointed a suitably trained designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The DSL works closely with a range of external bodies, such as the police, social services and child and adolescent mental health services, to ensure that learners have access to the support they need.

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

- Leaders should continue to implement strategies to improve the teaching practice of their tutors, to ensure that all tutors provide a consistently high-quality teaching and learning experience.
- Leaders should improve the support from tutors and LSWs to ensure that learners complete their own work, where possible, so that they have the opportunity to secure their understanding of what they have been taught.
- Leaders should ensure that tutors help all learners to develop their understanding of fundamental British values throughout their programmes, so they can apply this to their daily lives.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131968
<b>Address</b>	77 Shelton New Road Stoke-on-Trent ST4 7AA
<b>Contact number</b>	01782263326
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<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Wendy Williams
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent specialist college
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 February 2014
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of teaching and learning, 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

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