

# Inspection of Building Crafts College

Inspection dates: 23 to 26 May 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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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>
Education programmes for young people	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Information about this provider

Building Crafts College is located across two sites close to Stratford station in the London Borough of Newham. The original college, founded by the Carpenters' Livery Company, dates back to 1893.

At the time of the inspection, there were 100 apprentices on standards-based apprenticeships at level 2 and level 3. These include 60 carpentry and joinery apprentices at level 2, 20 stonemasonry apprentices at level 2 and nine advanced carpentry and joinery apprentices at level 3. There were also 30 learners on education programmes for young people. Most were on carpentry and joinery courses at level 2, with a small number studying fine woodwork at level 3.

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

Apprentices and young people enjoy attending college because of the good support and teaching they receive. Highly experienced in their craft, tutors relish teaching their subject. They provide expert technical advice that helps apprentices and learners to develop up-to-date industry knowledge and working practices.

Apprentices and young people benefit from learning in a calm and orderly environment where they are motivated to learn and achieve. In workshops, they concentrate well on their projects. They work safely with care and precision and produce high-quality work.

Apprentices and young people gain a good insight into working practices in their trade because employers are involved effectively in the design and teaching of the curriculum. Employers host site visits for young people and run workshops for apprentices. For example, bricklaying apprentices hone their skills and knowledge during an employer-led session on installing wall-ties on a cavity wall. Apprentice stonemasons gain insight from employers into the correct techniques and technologies used for cleaning marked and aged stones.

Apprentices and learners participate well in activities such as commercial and community projects. For example, stonemasonry apprentices helped to rebuild a war memorial and fix stone paving in a church. Across disciplines, apprentices successfully take part in skills competitions.

Learners and apprentices receive effective support for their physical and mental health. For example, health professionals give useful information sessions on sexual health and healthy relationships. Counsellors and well-being staff ensure that the mental health needs of apprentices and learners are well met.

Apprentices and learners develop a good understanding of health and safety and how to keep themselves safe. Young female learners enjoy learning in a safe environment free from harassment. Apprentices and young people are confident in reporting any concerns to their tutor or the safeguarding team. They feel that staff will take their concerns seriously and act quickly and appropriately.

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

Tutors teach their subjects in a logical way so that apprentices and learners quickly develop their trade skills and knowledge. For example, young bench joiners first learn about general health and safety before moving on to power-tool safety, setting and marking out. Fine woodwork learners first learn technical drawing before producing cutting lists and machining the wood they need to make a cabinet.

Most tutors use a range of effective techniques that ensure learners and apprentices remember and apply what they learn. For example, in workshops, tutors give clear explanations so that learners know how to mark out their work accurately, such as

when making a half-scale staircase. Advanced bench joiners safely set up the tenoner in order to produce accurate mortice and tenon joints for their casement windows.

Tutors give learners and apprentices good support to develop their knowledge of English and mathematics. For example, a specialist tutor teaches mathematics in vocational workshops so that apprentices immediately see the practical application of trigonometry to their work. Apprentices understand how to use trigonometry to problem-solve. They use it successfully when calculating the length of a rafter needed for a gable roof. Apprentices understand the importance of mathematics in their trade.

Most tutors provide helpful feedback to learners to help them improve their written work when, for example, they do not answer questions fully in their workbooks. Most tutors routinely check learners' and apprentices' spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, in a minority of cases, feedback on apprentices' written tasks is too brief and does not help apprentices identify what they need to do to improve their work.

Apprentices and learners benefit from effective careers advice and guidance from their tutors and employers. Many aspire to achieve promotion at work or to take higher level courses. When they complete their studies, most young people and apprentices progress to a higher level of study. A high proportion of learners and apprentices who stay to the end of their course successfully complete their studies. Many apprentices achieve high grades in their final assessments.

Apprentices and most young people regularly attend their workshops and are punctual. Staff take swift action where this is not the case. For example, staff follow up apprentices' absence with their employers on the same day. However, while improving, attendance by young people is not high enough.

Governance arrangements are effective. Governors provide good support and suitable challenge to senior managers regarding the quality of the provision. Senior managers and governors understand well the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They take effective action that leads to improvements. For example, learners and apprentices now develop their knowledge of English and mathematics successfully, which was a weakness at the previous inspection.

Senior managers ensure that tutors maintain up-to-date industry expertise and develop their teaching skills. They give teachers good opportunities to attend external courses and frequent in-house training and coaching. Staff are proud to work for the college and feel that leaders and managers are considerate of their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers ensure that there is an effective safeguarding culture at the college. When safeguarding concerns arise, managers and staff respond well. Tutors are vigilant and refer any concerns to the designated safeguarding leads (DSLs). Where necessary, they liaise effectively with parents and carers and outside agencies to safeguard learners.

Leaders and managers have put in place suitable safeguarding policies that underpin safeguarding practice. For example, they follow safe recruitment processes. This ensures that staff are suitable for their roles.

Staff and the DSLs are suitably experienced and qualified. A pastoral team supports learners and apprentices with, for example, counselling where needed. A governor with responsibility for safeguarding visits the college to seek their own assurances that it is a safe place for young people and apprentices.

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

- Leaders and managers should ensure that tutors consistently provide learners and apprentices with feedback that helps them improve their written work.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that young people's attendance is high.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	50888
<b>Address</b>	Kennard Road Stratford London E15 1AH
<b>Contact number</b>	020 8522 1705
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://thebcc.ac.uk">thebcc.ac.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Joe Mercer
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 to 31 January 2020
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the senior manager, 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

Jon Bowman, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Darren James	Ofsted Inspector
Shahram Safavi	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Lambert	His Majesty's Inspector

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