

Short inspection of Milton Keynes Christian Foundation Limited

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 September 2023

Outcome

Milton Keynes Christian Foundation Limited continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

The Milton Keynes Christian Foundation (MKCF) is a charity working with young people who have not flourished in traditional educational settings. Leaders at MKCF have created five social enterprises that provide work experience pathways for young people to gain employability and vocational skills alongside qualifications from entry level to level 2. At the time of the inspection, there were 42 learners on roll. All learners were aged 16 to 24. Twelve were following a childcare pathway, 11 were following a catering and customer services pathway and 8 were following a horticulture pathway. The remaining learners followed pathways in textiles, cycle maintenance or functional skills.

The provider has three sites, all in Milton Keynes. The provider does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Learners, many of whom have previously had negative or unsuccessful experiences of education, feel very positive about their time at MKCF. They speak highly of the positive and inclusive community at the provider. They value the staff, who make them feel safe and part of a community that they feel does not judge or stereotype people.

Learners benefit from a carefully planned curriculum that motivates them and swiftly re-engages them in learning. They study vocational pathways that provide substantial experience in real-life commercial settings such as farms, nurseries or kitchens. Learners quickly develop the life skills and sector-based knowledge that employers value. Learners following the childcare pathway confidently run activities with children after only a few weeks in the nursery. Learners on the horticulture pathway harvest crops carefully. Learners in the kitchen produce high-quality food orders that reflect customers' wishes. As a result, they quickly grow in confidence and demonstrate their learning well.

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

Leaders, managers and trustees have a clear, shared understanding of the mission and vision of the provider. They carefully recruit learners who have not thrived in mainstream education, many of whom have complex challenges and additional needs. They provide excellent support for the welfare and well-being of these learners. As a result, almost all learners remain in learning and achieve their qualifications. Most move on to positive destinations, including apprenticeships, employment and further education.

Leaders have designed a logical curriculum that prepares learners for the workplace well. Learners join one of five specialist pathways, where they benefit from high-quality work experience and vocational training. All learners work towards relevant vocational qualifications, such as childcare certificates for those on the childcare pathway and enterprise certificates for those studying cycle maintenance. Many learners gain additional qualifications, such as food hygiene and manual handling certificates, which increases their employability options when they leave.

Tutors use an effective range of techniques to teach key concepts and check learners' understanding. Learners work towards daily targets under the supervision of experienced professionals who demonstrate industry expectations. As a result, they quickly develop new skills and become confident and proficient in their duties, such as serving customers, sowing seeds or baking bread.

Through observations and small groups, staff assess learners' practical skills and knowledge creatively. However, most learners produce very little written work. The very small number of level 2 learners looking to move on to level 3 study do not benefit from the opportunity to practise extended writing, which they will need at that level. As a result, a very small numbers of learners do not have the full range of skills they need for transition to further education.

Learners benefit from helpful careers advice and guidance, which is carefully embedded throughout their programme. Staff provide CV writing workshops, job search sessions and mock interviews run by a prestigious external employer. As a result, most learners are well prepared for their next steps.

Leaders and trustees understand the strengths and weaknesses of their provision well. Where they recognise weaknesses, they respond positively. For example, when they identified concerns about low attendance and poor punctuality, they put in place new tracking, monitoring and rapid follow-up procedures, which led to improvements. In response to low achievement in functional skills mathematics, leaders introduced additional teaching sessions and closer monitoring so they could identify those at risk of falling behind quickly and build in extra support successfully.

Leaders and managers rightly recognise they have not undertaken teaching observations in line with their policy. Consequently, they do not identify staff development needs around teaching and learning quickly enough. As a result,

development plans for teaching staff do not focus sufficiently on activities that will have the biggest impact on the quality of education.

Leaders have not provided learners with the opportunity to evidence the wide range of transferrable skills they develop in the social enterprises. As a result, learners are missing out on the opportunity to reflect fully on what they have learned or demonstrate this learning to others when they leave.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that staff provide sufficient opportunity for level 2 learners to develop their writing skills to support transition to further education.
- Ensure that leaders help staff to develop their teaching skills and practice to further develop the quality of education.
- Enable learners to reflect on and evidence the wide range of transferrable skills they are developing while working in the social enterprises.

Provider details

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| Unique reference number | 53392 |
| Address | Foundation House, The Square, Aylesbury Street Wolverton MK12 5HX |
| Contact number | 01908311112 |
| Website | www.mkchristianfoundation.co.uk |
| Principal, CEO or equivalent | Simon Rudiger |
| Provider type | Independent learning provider |
| Date of previous inspection | 31 January 2018 |
| Main subcontractors | N/A |

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the second short inspection carried out since Milton Keynes Christian Foundation Limited was judged to be good in June 2014.

The inspection team was assisted by the head of 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

Viki Faulkner, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Richard Kirkham

His Majesty's Inspector

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