

# Inspection of The Hive College

Inspection dates:

8 to 10 November 2023

## Overall effectiveness

## Outstanding

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Provision for learners with high needs

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

## Information about this provider

The Hive College was established in 2016 and was formally known as Wilson Stuart University College Birmingham Partnership Trust and is part of the Education Impact Academy Trust. The college provides education and training for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. At the time of inspection, there were 120 learners at the college, all over 18 years old.

The curriculum is based on preparation for adulthood and includes employment, independent living, community inclusion, and health. It consists of three different courses - the live course for learners who aspire to move into paid employment and community participation on completion of their studies; the thrive course for learners who aspire to move into voluntary work; and the strive course for learners following a sensory curriculum, who want to improve their communication skills and aspire to become an active member of their community. Learners can access rebound therapy, speech and language therapy, yoga, music, and sports.

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

Learners' behaviours and attitudes are exemplary. They are kind and respectful to each other and their teaching and support staff. They listen well, ask for clarification, and confidently express their views, wishes and personalities.

Teachers and teaching assistants support learners to participate in a wide range of challenging community activities that contribute to broader society and help them develop their skills in different environments. The activities are often taught in partner settings, enabling learners to take part in tasks alongside a diverse age and ability range. For example, learners attend weekly paired activities hosted in a local dementia care home that allow them to practise their communication skills in a safe space and participate in creative craft and sporting activities.

Learners thrive in an inclusive and harmonious environment. They understand differences, democracy and choice. The highly inclusive environment and supportive staff culture enables learners to express themselves. Learners understand boundaries, behavioural differences, sexual identity and differences in religious beliefs.

Learners are well prepared for adult life. Teachers' planning of lessons, tutorials, and enrichment supports learners to understand their place in the world, develop plans for meaningful adult lives and the skills to protect themselves from harm. They know who to ask for safeguarding support and behave supportively and kindly to their peers, respecting individual differences.

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

Leaders and managers have developed an ambitious curriculum that prepares learners with high needs for adulthood and enables them to exceed their education health and care plan (EHCP) outcomes. Learners participate in real-life and simulated learning activities to develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours. They build on their levels of independence, which enables them to become more active members of their communities.

Leaders collaborate closely with various partners and stakeholders, including national membership organisations, learners and parents, to carefully design and sequence challenging curriculums. Leaders nurture effective relationships with employers to increase their understanding of the value of learners with high needs in the workplace and create opportunities for learners to progress into work. They provide internships with a national construction company and offer free disability awareness training to employers.

Leaders have detailed processes for quality assurance, which they use effectively to identify areas for development and put interventions in place to support improvements. For example, leaders have improved the use of target setting. As a

result, teachers frequently review detailed targets, allowing learners to progress swiftly and enabling them to achieve their best.

Teachers and teaching assistants are supported well to contribute to developing new teaching and support practices. Managers provide regular and meaningful feedback to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching resources, learning materials and the detailed recording of learners progress.

Leaders have established a board of trustees with a well-balanced membership, including educational experts, parents and employers. Trustees receive the information they need to challenge the leadership team and hold them accountable to continue to improve the quality of education. They provide significant challenge to leaders when planning the change to the non-accredited curriculum, and more operational challenges, such as concerns regarding attendance linked to travel.

Learners' ongoing wellness and health are at the forefront of curriculum planning. Teachers use the input from therapists and nurses to enhance teaching, placement preparation and activities. Occupational therapists work closely with work placement coordinators and have developed helpful work placement resources specific to the placement and learner needs. These include reference point information, photographs of new environments and guidance information, which mitigate learners' anxiety and are particularly useful for autistic learners to manage their transition to new environments.

Leaders and managers have developed a detailed and cumulative assessment process for learners. Teachers use a range of activities before learners start college to gather rich and meaningful baseline assessments. These include taster days, college staff attending reviews, and building positive relationships with learners and their parents. Teachers check the accuracy of initial assessment evidence during a 6-week induction. Subsequently, there are opportunities for teachers to adjust learners' pathways to ensure they participate in a challenging learning programme that develops skills significantly beyond their EHCP targets.

Learners participate in a wide range of curriculum and communication activities. They make considerable progress towards their short-, medium-, and long-term targets. Teachers set consistently demanding goals for learners, which contribute to them exceeding their EHCP outcomes. Learners gain valuable knowledge and skills for future learning and employment, such as customer service, enterprise, English and mathematics. Teachers effectively support learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities to engage in their education fully, self-regulate their behaviours, and, as a result, develop significant new skills.

Teachers and teaching assistants expertly use various techniques to check on learners' understanding in lessons. They use verbal questioning and communication cards and ask learners to explain their actions. Teachers and teaching assistants give learners time to respond, encouraging them to develop their vocabulary and voice. As a result, learners make extensive progress in developing their confidence and speaking skills, and they progress from being unable to express themselves

confidently to delivering presentations and making videos, highlighting issues people with disabilities face when shopping.

Feedback is highly detailed and personalised. Teachers use video extensively and help learners reflect on their improvement targets effectively. Learners who find it difficult to pay with coins work with their teachers and families to master using debit cards and mobile applications to monitor their spending.

Learners have aspirational targets to improve interactions based on their baseline assessment and progress throughout the programme. All staff consistently and effectively use learning tools to develop learners' understanding of how their actions and behaviours can influence outcomes. Learners learn to ask for personal care when needed and develop the complex skill of using a tablet to communicate fluently. This means that teachers remove communication barriers, and learners thrive.

The vast majority of learners have positive destinations, including work, apprenticeships, and independent living. The college proactively works with other agencies for those who need more time to achieve their outcomes. Managers have put in place extensive after-college support plans and continue to support learners after they leave college.

Leaders have developed a highly effective careers programme that has been co-created by working with various internal and external stakeholders. Learners are supported to access a variety of activities to prepare them to engage with employer and community placements. Learners are effectively supported to prepare for work placements by a range of visiting speakers to help them improve their confidence and deepen their understanding of the work they will be participating in.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142915
<b>Address</b>	Perry Common Road Birmingham West Midlands B23 7AT
<b>Contact number</b>	0121 306 4800
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.hivecollege.org.uk">https://www.hivecollege.org.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Kim Everton
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent specialist college
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	27 to 29 March 2019
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the executive 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.

### Inspection team

Sharon Dowling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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