

Inspection of Derby Skillbuild

Inspection dates:

11 to 13 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Education programmes for young people

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Information about this provider

Derby Skillbuild is an independent learning provider based in Allenton, Derby. It provides education to vulnerable learners who struggle to study in mainstream education. Learners study a variety of vocational courses, in addition to functional skills or GCSE mathematics and English.

At the time of inspection, there were 70 full-time learners. Courses are offered from level 1 to level 3. There were 33 learners on construction courses, 21 on health and social care, 11 on land-based courses and 5 on creative media courses. Leaders also offer part-time courses for 14- to 16-year old learners who are electively home educated.

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

Learners do not benefit from any activities to explore their interests and talents beyond their main vocational qualifications. They do not benefit from a sufficiently ambitious curriculum.

Too many learners do not experience meaningful work placements, work-related projects or workplace preparation studies. As a result, most learners lack the opportunity to develop professional behaviours and positive attitudes that prepare them well for work.

Most learners display poor attitudes towards learning. They do not attend lessons punctually and are often disruptive within lessons. As a result, those learners do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Too many learners do not receive sufficient careers education, information, advice and guidance to help them plan their long-term career goals. A large majority of learners are unaware of the wider opportunities available to them, or how to progress successfully on to their next steps.

Learners develop their understanding of equality and diversity and fundamental British values during induction. However, too few learners can recall this information in sufficient detail.

Learners feel safe when on site. They are introduced to appropriate safeguarding topics such as personal safety, radicalisation, extremism, and sexual consent. Learners know to whom they should report any concerns.

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

Leaders' oversight of courses is not effective enough. They do not act systematically to resolve any weaknesses that they identify. While leaders have access to a range of performance data, such as attendance and achievement, they have not taken sufficient action to tackle a decline in the quality of education. For example, leaders acknowledge that pass rates in construction are too low. However, they have not implemented measures to improve this.

Leaders do not place sufficient focus on curriculum planning. They are yet to put in place a purposeful curriculum that includes the required elements of a study programme. Courses do not include work experience, English, mathematics and other non-qualification activities that prepare learners well for progression or next steps.

Leaders do not ensure that teachers plan and structure the content of courses appropriately. For example, within construction, learners are often required to complete tasks such as wiring a plug or constructing a dovetail joint without a clear

understanding of how to use tools correctly and safely. As a result, learners are often confused and make slow progress.

Leaders do not do enough to tackle poor standards of behaviour within lessons. They do not provide staff with relevant training to address behavioural issues. Too much time in lessons is spent on classroom management instead of teaching.

Teachers do not ensure that curriculum activities support learners' preparedness for future employment. They do not focus enough on employability skills such as safe working practices, communication, teamwork, and professional behaviours. Consequently, the curriculum does not support learners' needs well enough.

Most teachers are suitably qualified and have relevant industry experience. However, they do not plan suitable activities that enable learners to become more knowledgeable and proficient. On construction and land-based courses, tutors do not move through topics at a suitable pace. As a result, learners do not build their knowledge, skills and confidence swiftly.

Too few teachers use assessment effectively to check learners' understanding. They do not sufficiently recap previous learning to ensure that learners retain essential knowledge. Too many learners do not develop work standards to an appropriate level.

Leaders do not have high enough expectations of their learners. They know them well and understand the barriers and challenges they face. However, they do not use this information to set an appropriately aspirational culture. Too often, for example, they accept learners' lack of motivation as a reason to not complete assignments. As a result, too few learners pass their vocational courses.

Leaders do not undertake sufficient activities to evaluate and understand the professional development needs of teachers. Lesson observations are not frequently carried out, professional development opportunities for teachers are limited, and there are too few opportunities for managers to support new teachers. Consequently, teachers are not skilled enough to support learners and manage teaching environments well.

Arrangements for external scrutiny and oversight are ineffective. Leaders and managers have appointed a non-executive director; however, their knowledge and insight of the curriculum, and its quality, are limited. As a result, they do not have detailed knowledge of weaker areas, or of how to support leaders to improve these. They are, however, meticulous in their approach to safeguarding and staff well-being to ensure statutory responsibilities are met.

The quality of resources and the general learning environment are poor. Classrooms are unkempt and uninspiring. In construction, there are insufficient numbers of workbenches for group sizes, and there is uneven flooring, which makes practical work difficult. In a small minority of curriculum areas, learners benefit from high-

quality practical equipment. For example, in land-based courses, learners use a new rotavator, polytunnels and new hand tools.

Leaders have clear oversight of learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work closely with the local authority SEND team to access information about learners' support plans. In level 3 health and social care, teachers use this information well to put into place appropriate strategies. However, this approach is not consistent across all courses. Learners with SEND do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Establish, as a matter of urgency, a purposeful curriculum that includes the required elements of a study programme.
- Ensure swift and appropriate action is taken to improve teaching.
- Create a curriculum that supports learners to develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Ensure all learners receive high-quality, impartial careers education, advice and guidance that supports them to plan for their future.
- Ensure governance arrangements and external oversight are effective.
- Plan appropriate and demanding assessment activities that allow learners to practise what they learn and master new skills and knowledge.
- Develop a personal development curriculum.
- Ensure that quality monitoring processes are used to identify weaknesses accurately and take swift action to make improvements.
- Ensure leaders take appropriate action to address learners' poor behaviour and punctuality to lessons and that teachers are equipped with effective classroom management strategies.
- Ensure that learners' achievement is high.

Provider details

Unique reference number	51525
Address	Moor Lane Allenton Derby DE24 9HY
Contact number	01332 897047
Website	www.derbyskillbuild.org
CEO	Tim Kerry
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	June 2017
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy head, 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

Nikki Brady, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Vicki Locke	His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Houghton	His Majesty's Inspector
Saul Pope	His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023