

# Area 51 Education Limited

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

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| <b>Unique reference number:</b> | 139243  |
| <b>Name of lead inspector:</b>  | Joanna Walters, His Majesty's Inspector             |
| <b>Inspection dates:</b>        | 22 and 23 November 2023                             |
| <b>Type of provider:</b>        | Independent specialist college                      |
| <b>Address:</b>                 | 1 Mallard Place<br>Coburg Road<br>London<br>N22 6TS |

# Monitoring visit: main findings

## Context and focus of visit

Area 51 Education Limited was inspected in September 2022. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in resolving the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

## Themes

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| <p><b>How much progress have leaders made to create and teach a curriculum that is ambitious for learners, and meets individual learners' needs so that they can achieve their learning goals?</b></p> | <p><b>Insufficient progress</b></p> |
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Since the previous inspection, leaders have introduced a new curriculum that includes subjects aimed to equip learners with the skills they need for their next steps as young adults. Learners study a range of life skills subjects, English, mathematics, digital skills and employability skills. However, leaders have not fully considered the specific knowledge, skills and behaviours learners have at the start and what they need to develop over the full length of their programme. As a result, learners do not study an ambitious curriculum that is well planned and sequenced.

Leaders do not make sure that the quality of teaching and learning is of a consistently good standard. Tutors use visual aids well to support learners to understand new content. They use clear instructional words and phrases such as 'choose', 'tell me', 'show me'. This helps learners understand what is expected of them when, for example, they are asked to identify the correct coins to use in the café. However, leaders do not always make sure that there are sufficient or appropriate resources for tutors to teach the curriculum.

Tutors set targets for learners that are often too broad and not specific enough. Tutors do not sufficiently identify the precise knowledge, skills and behaviours learners need to develop and how they will achieve these targets. As a result, learners make slow progress towards achieving their learning goals.

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| <p><b>How much progress have leaders made to make sure that learners receive the therapeutic input they need to support their progress?</b></p> | <p><b>Reasonable progress</b></p> |
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Leaders have taken positive action to implement therapy provision. From September 2023, speech and language, and occupational therapists provide therapeutic sessions

to learners who need it. Therapists meet frequently to plan and review the therapeutic input learners need and the progress they make. They make sure that learners receive therapies that suit their individual needs. However, the therapy provision is in the early stages of implementation and leaders have not fully integrated the work of therapists and curriculum staff. This restricts the amount of progress learners make overall.

Leaders supported staff to attend specialist therapy training during the summer of 2023. Staff now provide Rebound Therapy for learners through the use of a trampoline. This therapy is particularly effective for learners who have high levels of anxiety or who need to increase muscle strength. Staff also provide yoga, mindfulness and fitness sessions for learners.

Therapists provide helpful training, support and guidance to staff. Training includes feeding and seating guidance, how to provide physical support to learners, and different communication techniques including sign language. Because of the feeding training they have had, staff are effective in ensuring that learners eat safely. At the time of the visit, leaders have not made sure that all staff receive communication techniques training. This means there is variation in how effectively staff use different communication strategies with learners such as sign language.

**How much progress have leaders made to provide learners with opportunities to widen their talents and interests outside of the main curriculum?**

**Reasonable progress**

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have taken reasonable action to increase the opportunities for learners to explore their talents and interests. They have been particularly successful in developing links with external stakeholders to run workshops and activities in vocational areas, such as horticulture and creative arts. This means learners have opportunities to grow vegetables, create murals and participate in film and photography projects. Most learners have taken part in at least one external extra-curricular activity.

Leaders provide lunchtime activities for learners to participate in. Activities include a walk, disco, use of a quiet room and a games room. However, these activities are limited in scope. Leaders are in the process of developing further lunchtime activities for learners that match their interests.

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