

Inspection of BOSCO Centre

Inspection dates:

12 to 14 December 2023

Overall effectiveness**Good**

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Education programmes for young people

Good

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Information about this provider

BOSCO Centre (Bosco) is a registered charity based in the London Borough of Southwark. It comprises an education and community centre, a vocational college, a football academy, a nursery and a community café called Boscoffee. This inspection was of the vocational college. At the time of the inspection, 88 students were studying courses from entry level to level 3.

Bosco offers young people aged 16 to 24 vocational courses in childcare, digital media, sports, business, information technology and health and social care. Approximately two thirds of students take English and/or mathematics GCSE or functional skills alongside their vocational programme. Fewer than five students were taking courses in English for speakers of other languages.

Around a third of learners have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or receive high needs funding and have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

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

Students and staff work harmoniously to create a purposeful community of learning, where, together, they model calm and respectful behaviour. Staff celebrate students' achievements with praise, celebration events and postcards home. As a result, students feel a strong sense of belonging.

Students enthusiastically take part in social action projects in the local community. For example, they hugely enjoy hosting local senior citizens at the centre's annual Christmas lunch. Through these community activities, young people gain confidence, self-worth and a sense of social responsibility.

Students experience the world of work through a wealth of opportunities. Leaders and managers work closely with employers and community groups to arrange work experience for all students. For example, students with high needs who aspire to careers in hospitality work on the Boscoffee mobile wagon at a large local festival. They gain important customer service skills from working in a busy, unfamiliar environment.

Students enjoy their lessons and are happy with the education and pastoral care they receive. Caring, well-qualified staff encourage students to overcome difficulties, and students respond well by working hard towards their goals. A large majority of students pass their vocational and mathematics and/or English qualifications. Staff provide students with good careers advice and guidance. As a result, students have a good range of choices about their next steps, and the vast majority move on to work or further study.

Students feel safe in all areas of the centre. They do not hear discriminatory or other language that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable. They feel confident that staff and their peers will support them if they have any concerns.

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

Leaders and managers have developed curriculums that meet the needs of young people who experience significant disadvantages and barriers to success. They have developed a good range of vocational and personal development training to prepare their students for the world of work or further study.

Leaders carefully consider the local labour market when planning their curriculums. For example, they have introduced health and social care courses and expanded their childcare training offer while enlarging the on-site nursery. As a result, they are helping to address local shortages in childcare and social care workers.

Managers and teachers design the curriculum appropriately. For example, level 2 childcare managers make sure that teachers cover units on early years education for children with additional needs early in the course. In the nurseries, students apply and reinforce this classroom learning when working with children with SEND. Over

time, students gain the knowledge and skills they need to become competent early years practitioners.

Teachers skilfully help students to remember new knowledge and how to apply it. For example, in mathematics, students conduct surveys and practise working out percentages before they learn how to construct pie charts and finally tackle exam questions on handling information and data. This means that they build their skills, knowledge and confidence in manageable steps. Students make good progress and are well prepared for their final exams.

Teachers use assessment effectively to check that students understand what they have been taught. For example, childcare teachers frequently test students' understanding using short tests. They give students useful feedback on their work. However, in a few instances, teachers do not give feedback that helps students understand how to overcome misconceptions in their written or practical work. As a result, students do not always know how they can improve their work.

Leaders, managers and teachers closely monitor students' progress. Teachers meet with students frequently to review their progress and to set targets for attendance and personal development. However, they do not set targets that focus well enough on students' academic progress. In the small number of subjects where students can achieve high grades such as merit and distinction, teachers do not consistently encourage students to aim for these. Although students achieve their qualifications well, too few achieve high grades.

Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and assessment well. They visit lessons and accurately identify teacher training needs. For example, they noted that teachers could support students with autism more effectively. Leaders arranged for specialist training to give teachers techniques to help learners on the autistic spectrum. Consequently, teachers have the skills to make sure that all students benefit from high-quality teaching.

Leaders and managers have high expectations for attendance and punctuality. They foster a culture that helps students take responsibility for their attendance and develop resilience to overcome any barriers that may cause them to miss lessons. Staff follow up on absences swiftly and with rigour. Staff work closely with the families of absent students to help them return to the classroom. For example, teachers help students with long-term health issues by creating adjusted timetables and online learning resources. This supports a phased return to learning. As a result, students who miss lessons do not fall behind. The vast majority of these students complete their studies.

Leaders and managers make sure that students with SEND have the same high-quality teaching as their peers. They consider a good range of information on what students know and can do before they start their course. They use information from EHC plans, as well as English and mathematics and speech and language assessments, to plan an individualised curriculum that supports their progress well.

Students with SEND achieve their qualifications as well as, or better than, their peers.

Governance arrangements are effective. An experienced board of trustees with relevant experience supports the leadership team well. Trustees, leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development at Bosco. They take effective action to improve the provision. For example, trustees and leaders noted the need to improve student retention and have taken appropriate steps to keep students in learning. These include better initial assessment and a six-week settling-in period that helps students manage their move to the centre more smoothly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Make sure that teachers provide feedback on written and practical work that helps students overcome misconceptions and improve their work.
- Make sure that teachers set students clear academic targets that help them to improve their work over time, including, where relevant, targets that help more students achieve their qualifications with high grades.

Provider details

Unique reference number	50782
Address	281 Jamaica Road Rotherhithe SE16 4RS
Contact number	020 7232 0440
Website	www.bosco.ac.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Darren Coghlan
Provider type	Independent Learning Provider
Date of previous inspection	19 to 22 October 2015

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the 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

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His Majesty's Inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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