

# Inspection of FORWARD2EMPLOYMENT LIMITED

Inspection dates: 20 to 22 March 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this provider

Forward2Employment (F2E) is an independent specialist learning provider based in Chatham, Kent. It provides supported internships for young people aged 16 to 24 years old with special educational needs in Medway and Kent. Supported interns complete most of their training in the workplace. They spend the remaining time at the learning centre in Chatham's historic dockyard studying English and/or mathematics and employability skills. At the time of inspection, there were 30 students, of which 18 students were aged 16 to 18 years old. All supported interns were in receipt of high needs funding. Leaders do not work with any subcontractors. F2E has not previously been inspected.

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

Supported interns greatly value the training and high levels of support they receive from staff at F2E and the employers they work with. They appreciate the carefully chosen work placements where they rightly relish the opportunity to acquire valuable workplace skills and knowledge to enable them to meet their aspirations to gain a permanent role.

Supported interns receive significant support to develop employment skills and practices. Supported interns in warehouses identify damaged packaging and follow set problem-solving processes to ensure action is taken so the customer receives the correct product. Supported interns become increasingly confident to work with members of the community and work colleagues. As a result, they become valued members of the workforce. Many supported interns achieve well in their courses and progress to employment.

Most supported interns are well motivated and enthusiastic about their learning and work. They are often punctual and attend training and work well. Supported interns learn professional behaviours quickly. They become reliable team members who follow employers' instructions well.

Most supported interns benefit from good-quality careers guidance. They attend events such as careers fairs to learn about apprenticeship opportunities and benefit from employer visits and talks. Consequently, most supported interns have a secure understanding of their next steps.

Supported interns become increasingly respectful and considerate to others due to their training. They learn to celebrate the diverse communities they work and study in, such as by studying black history, Down syndrome awareness and hidden disabilities. They become more considerate of those in their communities as a result.

Supported interns feel safe and know who to talk to if they have a concern while at Forward2Employment and at their work placement. Supported interns know how to keep safe in the workplace. They receive appropriate guidance and training in safe working practices, such as wearing personal protective equipment.

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

Leaders and staff have high aspirations for learners with special education needs and/or disabilities and those who face disadvantage. They are passionate about providing opportunities for these young people to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to succeed in life and the world of work.

Leaders work collaboratively with employers to design and provide high-quality work placements. They give employers helpful training to support them to work with supported interns successfully. Leaders provide useful disability awareness training

and autism awareness training, so employers are confident and able to support interns to make good progress in the workplace.

Leaders, teachers and job coaches create programmes and sequence learning carefully. They plan programmes so that supported interns learn new knowledge, skills and behaviours that are relevant to them at each stage in their learning. At the start of the course, staff train supported interns to travel independently and work safely in the workplace before progressing to more challenging tasks. Consequently, supported interns learn the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to succeed at each stage in their placement.

Leaders carefully consider the additional qualifications they provide to supported interns to ensure they are relevant to their work placement. For example, supported interns working alongside school teaching assistants complete qualifications in food hygiene, online safety for teaching staff and supporting mental health for people with autism. As a result, most supported interns develop additional skills to help them in their job role and to move into employment.

Most staff explain concepts clearly and concisely. They break complex concepts down into more easily understood components. For instance, supported interns first learn how to identify the median number with an odd range of numbers before moving on to do this with an even range of numbers. Consequently, supported interns gain a secure understanding of the concepts they are learning.

Staff check supported interns' learning well using a variety of appropriate and helpful techniques. Most staff provide supported interns with feedback that helps them improve. However, in a small number of cases, the feedback that staff provide is too limited and does not enable interns to identify specifically what they need to do to improve their future work or meet their individual targets.

Job coaches and employers understand the needs of supported interns well. They put in place appropriate adaptations and support to help supported interns make good progress. Staff sensibly reduce this help as supported interns become more confident and independent. For example, supported interns are given more challenging tasks that require them to move around the warehouse independently and interact with other colleagues. As a result, supported interns are helped to prepare to work fully independently when they complete their internship.

Leaders provide supported interns with information that develops their understanding and appreciation of important topics such as healthy eating and managing finances. Consequently, supported interns become more confident and independent in these areas. However, leaders rightly recognise that supported interns do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of healthy living. Most supported interns have a limited understanding of the risks from radicalisation and extremism. While leaders have secure plans in place to resolve these issues, it is too early to judge the full impact of these plans.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff participate in sufficient development activities to maintain and further develop their teaching skills and knowledge. Staff benefit from training to help them understand conditions such as autism so that they can better meet the needs of the supported interns they work with. Leaders support staff well-being successfully. They have created a working environment where staff members feel valued and motivated in their job roles.

Well-qualified and experienced directors and trustees use their expertise to challenge and support leaders to develop, improve and grow the provision successfully. For example, they supported a move to new premises to enable the provision to expand and provide improved facilities and resources. As a result, leaders are well supported and interns benefit from improved facilities.

Leaders use the funding they receive to support interns appropriately, for example for travel training and the support from job coaches in the workplace. Consequently, supported interns become more independent and develop resilience and confidence to enable them to become valued members of the teams they work with.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

### **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Make sure that all supported interns have access to activities that provide them with opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding on healthy lifestyles.
- Provide all supported interns with useful feedback that helps them to improve and achieve their targets.
- Ensure that all supported interns further develop their understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147315
<b>Address</b>	The Historic Dockyard Chatham ME4 4TZ
<b>Contact number</b>	01634683990
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.FORWARD2EMPLOYMENT.CO.UK">www.FORWARD2EMPLOYMENT.CO.UK</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Elizabeth Halton/Marie Sweetlove-Smyth
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent Specialist College
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## 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

Jo-Ann Henderson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Roland White	His Majesty's Inspector

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