Short inspection of Landmarks

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 November 2024 and 12 February 2025

Outcome

Landmarks continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Landmarks is an independent specialist college for learners aged 16 to 25 with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All learners have an education, health and care plan.

At the time of the inspection, there were 163 learners. They study one of three pathways focusing on life skills, vocational subjects or employability. Supported internships are offered to learners on the employability pathway. Just under half of learners have autism spectrum disorder. The remaining learners have a range of SEND, including social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The provider has five main sites in Sheffield, Rotherham, Derbyshire, Mansfield and Nottingham, including a working farm and an operational public house.

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

Learners follow well-planned courses and benefit from positive relationships with staff. Most develop their technical knowledge and wider skills successfully. They grow in confidence, improve their communication skills and their ability to self-regulate. They enjoy learning in practical settings, such as the public house, where they serve customers in a busy restaurant or care for animals at the farm.

Learners receive good guidance to prepare them for their next steps. The 'WayFinder' team helps most learners to secure employment or voluntary work effectively when this is their aspiration. Leaders offer a highly valuable 'After College After Care' service. This provides learners with assistance to find new employment or volunteering opportunities after their time at Landmarks.

Learners feel safe and have access to a range of resources to help them ask staff for support. Leaders have recently developed a comprehensive 'life in modern Britain strategy' for each campus. This ensures learners are taught about themes that relate to their communities and relevant local risks.

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

Leaders develop strong employer partnerships that provide learners with beneficial learning opportunities. Leaders and governors focus closely on improving the facilities and resources for learners. Since the previous inspection, new campuses have opened in locations that best meet the needs of learners. The working farm and public house provide valuable opportunities for learners to develop their skills for employment and their daily lives.

Tutors are experienced and well qualified. In lessons, they explain clearly to learners what they will do 'now and next'. This reduces learners' anxiety and supports the transition between activities. In the main, tutors skilfully use open questions and technology-based quizzes to check what learners know.

In most cases, tutors and learning support assistants (LSAs) work effectively together to help learners to participate and concentrate in lessons. Where learners learn more independently, LSAs observe them and give only minor verbal prompts when necessary. However, on a few occasions, LSAs do not identify learners who need help quickly enough. On other occasions, LSAs do not challenge low-level disruption swiftly. This leads to other learners becoming distracted. Tutors have to direct them to support specific learners. Leaders rightly identify this as an area of focus in their improvement plan.

Tutors produce high-quality resources that are tailored to meet learners' individual needs. For example, in catering classes, learners can select to use different task sheets, recipe guidance and methods to time their dish preparation. This allows them to make choices and work independently.

Most learners understand their targets and know what they need to do to achieve them. For example, they can explain that they need to improve their communication skills to help them to gain the job they want to do. However, in a small minority of cases, learners' written targets are not specific enough. These learners do not know why they have to complete certain tasks, such as speaking to their peers about their work. They do not recognise what the targets mean for them and why they need to work towards them.

Leaders carefully monitor learners' progress in their fortnightly curriculum meetings. Where they identify any concerns, they put support in place quickly. This includes changes to timetables or home visits to understand any barriers to learning. Leaders' actions often enable learners to continue with their studies. At the end of their courses, most learners achieve their individual targets, and functional English and mathematics qualifications if they study them.

Leaders follow a useful calendar of activities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. When they identify areas for development, their actions mostly result in swift improvement. Leaders offer a range of appropriate professional development.

Tutors, therapists and support teams value the training they access. In the main, it has a positive impact on staff skills.

Governors have the relevant experience they need to undertake their roles. Through a committee and board structure, they oversee the quality of education effectively. Governors frequently meet with learners and staff and know the college well. This enables them to check and test what leaders tell them and assists improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Continue to develop the skills of LSAs so that all learners receive the level of support they need.
- Ensure that learners' written targets are of an equally high standard so that all learners understand their targets and why they need to work towards them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	131900
Address	Littlemoor House Littlemoor Eckington Sheffield South Yorkshire S21 4EF
Contact number	01246 433788
Website	www.landmarks.ac.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Larry Brocklesby
Provider type	Independent specialist college
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2018
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The original inspection was the second short inspection carried out since Landmarks was judged to be good in May 2014. It took place 19 to 20 November 2024. An additional visit was conducted in line with the gathering additional evidence procedures on 12 February 2025.

The inspection team was assisted on both visits by the director of quality and curriculum, 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

Emma Woods, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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