

# Brian Jackson College of Open Learning

Independent school progress report

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DCSF registration number	382/6026
Unique Reference Number (URN)	132732
Inspection number	346544
Inspection dates	1 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Sheila Boyle

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

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## Purpose and scope of the visit

This inspection visit was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002<sup>1</sup>, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005<sup>2</sup>.

The visit was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

## Information about the school

Brian Jackson College is an independent special school now operating solely from Vision House, a modern facility in the town of Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire. It was originally registered for 64 students occupying two sites in the district of Kirklees. At the time of last inspection in June 2009 both sites were in operation. Following the inspection the site in Huddersfield was closed down. The present site is registered for up to 48 boys and girls aged 14 to 16; currently there are 32 students on roll, one attending part time because of a medical condition. One student has a statement of special educational needs relating to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The college is owned by The National Children's Centre charity. It works closely with the local authority to provide medium- and long-term placements for students who have been excluded or are at risk of being excluded from their mainstream schools. Additionally the school makes temporary provision for up to five students who are solely registered in local authority schools from which they have been temporarily excluded. The school aims to provide an alternative education for students to help them to obtain basic qualifications and acquire educational skills to better fit them for life.

## Context of the visit

The college had its last inspection in June 2009 when it failed to meet a number of regulations relating to the curriculum, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, welfare, health and safety and premises and accommodation. Some of the failures occurred on the site which is now closed. An action plan submitted by the school was evaluated in October 2009; an amended action plan was submitted in January 2010. This later plan reflected unforeseen developments at the school including an unsuccessful attempt in the summer term 2009 to amalgamate the college with part of a local special school. This present inspection visit was undertaken to monitor the progress that the school has made against the action plans.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan.

At the last inspection a number of regulations were not met. The college did not provide full-time supervised education for all students of compulsory school age and it did not provide suitable lessons in scientific and technological education. The curriculum was found to be unbalanced with too much time allocated for literacy, numeracy and physical education. The provision failed to provide opportunities for some students to develop self-confidence and self-esteem, to show initiative, take responsibility for their behaviour and contribute to community life. There were too few opportunities for students to acquire an appreciation of their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different faiths and cultures. In addition, the last inspection found that certain procedures relating to safeguarding students and ensuring their welfare, health and safety had not been implemented. In particular, the admission and attendance registers were not maintained properly, the behaviour policy was not implemented effectively and important health and safety issues were identified by the inspectors. The college also failed to fulfil its duty in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act (2002). The report notes several weaknesses in the premises and accommodation. The majority of these related to the site which is now closed. On the existing site there were no suitable facilities for teaching science or technology.

In order to address the issues relating to the curriculum and the provision of full-time education for all students, the college negotiated a merger with a local special school so as to share resources and maximise the expertise within each establishment. With the additional resources and specialist teachers on site, the college was able to offer full-time places to all students and a broader curriculum including specialist teaching in science and technology. However, early in the autumn term 2009, this initiative broke down and both establishments reverted to previous arrangements. This delayed the implementation of the action plan. The college has recently introduced a series of initiatives to improve the curriculum, including lessons using the 'Basic Skills Builder' scheme and accredited courses in all subjects through the Oxford and Cambridge Registration scheme and Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) units of work. It also made arrangements for Year 11 students to have lessons in food technology at an off-site location. More recently an optional six-week course in motor vehicle maintenance was introduced for all students. Several students declined to take part in this course, but were not offered alternative lessons in technology. The college does not yet have the facilities and resources to deliver practical aspects of science and technology on site. The curriculum remains narrow with a disproportionate amount of time given to literacy and numeracy lessons each day. As a result, the students do not have access to their full curricular entitlement. Insufficient progress has been made on this aspect of the action plan.

Through the programme of personal, social and health education the college has provided more opportunities for students to learn about their own and other cultures and there is a planned programme of visits to help students understand how people from different faiths worship. A number of major festivals are celebrated by the

college including Ede, Ramadan, Christmas and Easter. The students' behaviour is generally good and they demonstrate a good degree of respect and tolerance for staff and each other. Satisfactory progress has been made on this aspect of the action plan.

The attendance of students is poor. The limitations of the curriculum impact negatively on attendance and restrict opportunities for students to develop self-confidence and self-esteem and to show initiative. The college has made insufficient progress on this aspect of the action plan.

All matters relating to safeguarding including the single central register of staff checks, the maintenance of registers and policies concerning welfare, health and safety are now in order. Specific health and safety issues brought to the attention of the college at the earlier inspection have been rectified. The college now has a three-year plan to improve access to the premises, so that it meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (2002). Satisfactory progress has been made on this aspect of the action plan.

The maintenance and decorative state of the premises have been improved since the last inspection. Although health and safety matters relating to the premises and accommodation have been rectified, not all of the regulations are met. Temporary arrangements are in place for practical aspects of science and technology to be taught to some students off-site. However, facilities for scientific and technological education on the site remain inadequate. There are plans to convert a nearby building into units for design and technology and vehicle repair workshops but there are no timescales for this work to be completed. Insufficient progress has been made on this aspect of the action plan.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection visit, the college must take action to meet the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003<sup>3</sup> as amended ('the Regulations'), as follows:

- provide appropriate full-time supervised education for all students of compulsory school age (paragraph 1(2)(a)(i))
- establish a curriculum that provides a scientific and technological education for all students (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii))
- enable all students to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence (paragraph 2(a)).

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<sup>3</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm)

- install furniture and fittings at the site to provide facilities for scientific and technological education (paragraph 5(r)).

## School details

Name of school	Brian Jackson College of Open Learning		
DCSF number	382/6026		
Unique reference number (URN)	132732		
Type of school	Special day school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	October 2005		
Age range of pupils	14-16 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 25	Girls: 6	Total: 31
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,328		
Address of school	Vision House Units 1-6 Grove Mills High Street Heckmondwike WF16 0AD		
Telephone number	01924 408306		
Fax number	01484 435150		
Email address	peter.joseph@nccuk.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Peter Joseph		
Proprietor	National Children's Centre		
Reporting inspector	Sheila Boyle		
Dates of inspection	01 March 2010		