

Wilson Stuart University College Birmingham Partnership Trust

Independent specialist college

Inspection dates

27–29 March 2019

Overall effectiveness			Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good		
Outcomes for learners	Good		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Trustees have established a very clear strategy and purpose for the college. They are committed to the welfare and progress of the students.
- Trustees ensure that managers provide challenging opportunities for students. Students rise to the challenge.
- Senior leaders and managers create a welcoming and inclusive culture. They work well with parents, carers, the local authority, and health and educational professionals to make sure that students make a good start at college.
- Students benefit from good therapeutic services and support for their medical and care needs. Most students' attendance is high, and they remain on their courses.
- Students who are preparing for employment and voluntary work in the community develop good practical, personal, English and mathematical skills.
- Managers develop positive relationships with parents. Parents value the advice and guidance they receive. In partnership, managers and parents support students to make good progress at home and at college.
- Managers have developed excellent links with employers. Employers and coaches support students well in the workplace.
- Students develop excellent vocational skills and make good progress from work placements to employment.
- Students and families do not have sufficient access to impartial careers advice and guidance to support them to make choices about their next steps.
- Teachers of students who have complex needs do not set detailed short-term targets. They do not monitor and record the small improvements that students make.
- Managers do not have sufficient oversight of the development of skills for students who have complex needs. They cannot easily identify those students who make slow progress.

Full report

Information about the provider

- In September 2016, Wilson Stuart University College Birmingham Partnership Trust (known as the Hive College) was established, following three years of close partnership working between Wilson Stuart School and the University College Birmingham. The college provides education and training for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Most students are residents within the Birmingham local authority. Currently, 67 students are on programme. The numbers of students have grown from 37 students in September 2016. All the current students are aged over 19. Students study programmes from pre-entry level to level 2. Most students aspire to move into employment or to contribute to their communities through voluntary work. A minority of students have complex learning needs and aim to improve their personal skills and independence.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for students with complex learning needs by:
 - recognising and recording the small improvements that students make
 - using learning resources which are appropriate for young adults.
- Improve the monitoring of progress of students with complex needs by:
 - having an accurate overview of the progress students make against their individual targets
 - identifying those students who do not make good progress
 - taking appropriate action to support teachers so that students can catch up and make the progress of which they are capable.
- Ensure that all students receive impartial careers education, advice and guidance to enable them to make informed choices about their next steps, in good time to support their transition to adulthood.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers use the funding for high needs students sensibly. Senior leaders have made significant investment in resources. They have recruited staff for key roles in teaching, learning and assessment and parent liaison. These appointments have led to improvements in the student experience. Most students make good progress from their starting points and enjoy their learning.
- Trustees and senior leaders have developed a clear strategy, which they implement effectively. Trustees and senior leaders are ambitious for their students, their welfare and progress. They challenge parents, guardians, staff and students to match their ambition.
- Managers have developed courses which prepare students for moving into employment and voluntary work, contributing to the local community. Students develop their personal and vocational skills rapidly. Managers ensure that, through good teaching, students develop their English and mathematical skills quickly. Managers plan a detailed but flexible tutorial programme which develops students' understanding of equality, diversity and sexual health. Students can explain what they have learned, and how it helps them at work and at home.
- Managers have close and productive working relationships with the local authority and local schools. Managers use the education health and care plans well to decide on the appropriate curriculum and levels of support for each individual student. Most students make a good start at the college and remain there for the planned period.
- Senior leaders and managers work closely with employers. Employers are clear about what the college expects of them. Employers adapt the role at the start of the placement to reflect the students' abilities. Teachers develop and reinforce the skills that the students need at work. The job coaches support students effectively in the workplace. Students on work placement, and on supported internship make very good progress.
- Senior leaders and managers create a welcoming and inclusive culture. Leaders and managers passionately promote the importance of equality and valuing differences between people. Students improve their self-esteem and confidence. Many students talk fluently about respecting people who have different religious faiths and who are from different ethnic backgrounds.
- Teachers, teaching assistants, nurses, language specialists, physiotherapists, and therapists are well qualified. They provide good support to meet the needs of individual students. Staff possess the skills to keep students safe and secure and to enable them to make progress.
- Senior managers and leaders know their students' strengths and weaknesses. Managers have frequent meetings to discuss students' progress. They monitor the progress that students make towards the achievement of their qualifications. Managers ensure that most students achieve their qualifications on, or before, the planned end date.
- The principal conducts frequent learning walks and samples students' work to assess the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment. Senior leaders manage the performance of staff closely. The principal is correctly aware of the small number of

areas where improvement is necessary. In most areas of the curriculum, assessment is accurate and positive. However, leaders' assessment of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for learners who have complex needs is too generous.

- Managers do not have a sufficiently comprehensive overview of the development of skills and behaviours for students who have complex needs. They do not know enough about which of these students need further support to make the progress of which they are capable.

The governance of the provider

- Trustees are well qualified and possess an appropriate range of skills. They have a good understanding of education and training. They use their expertise well to support improvements at the college.
- Trustees receive detailed reports from leaders and they conduct frequent learning walks with managers. As a result, they are well informed and understand most of the key strengths and areas for further improvement. They use the information they receive to challenge leaders and managers and to hold them to account.
- Trustees receive an annual safeguarding report, and managers produce frequent reports on vulnerable students. Trustees provide appropriate support and challenge. They ensure that managers respond in accordance with the safeguarding policy and the needs of students.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, managers and trustees participate in regular safeguarding training. Staff have recently received training in the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty strategies when working with vulnerable adults. As a result, staff use safe working practices.
- The principal and nurse meet frequently to review the progress of students whom teachers and managers identify as vulnerable. Managers act swiftly when they need to raise concerns with external partners.
- Students develop their understanding of how to stay safe in the community. Students, at and above entry level, develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and how to develop appropriate personal relationships. Most students recognise the different types of abuse and the risks they might encounter.
- Teachers prepare detailed risk assessments prior to external visits and practical work settings. They ensure that students are aware of health and safety risks. Students in practical sessions work safely when using tools and equipment. Managers monitor students' health needs carefully and keep medicines safe. As a result, students feel safe at work and at college.
- Managers use safe recruitment practices. They make appropriate checks on permanent and agency staff, and those who work on site from the National Health Service.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**Good**

- Most students enrol on courses which prepare them for employment or volunteering activities in the community.
- Staff and employers plan and set targets precisely for students in supported internships and work placements. These students develop good practical skills for work. For example, students in hospitality and catering settings build their basic practical kitchen skills. Students quickly move on to preparing drinks, serving food, clearing tables, and interacting more confidently with customers.
- Teachers and work-placement staff track and monitor the progress of students in the workplace closely and accurately. Most of these students demonstrate expected or better standards of work.
- Most teachers develop learning activities that reflect students' starting points. For example, students in mathematics sessions work from entry level to GCSE standard. Teachers ensure that students work at different levels on the same topic. All students make good progress in mathematics.
- Teachers on most English and mathematics courses use questioning and feedback well to develop students' understanding, during learning sessions and over time.
- Teachers in most sessions communicate well with learning support assistants (LSAs) to ensure that they are clear about their role in lessons. LSAs know students' targets and use them to provide the right level of support to enable students to complete tasks successfully.
- Teachers, staff and students use assistive technology and other resources well to meet students' individual education, health and support needs. Most students have access to laptops to support their learning.
- Managers and teachers have highly effective communication strategies in place with parents, families and carers. Parents are well-informed about the courses for young people and the progress that students make. Parents value the support and advice they receive. This allows them to provide good levels of physical, health and well-being support for students. Students with life-limiting illnesses benefit from respectful and caring treatment.
- A minority of students with complex learning needs experience a sensory curriculum. Managers have designed this curriculum to enable students to take part in the wider community and make steps towards greater independence.
- Teachers plan resources and activities that improve students' communication skills. Students who have more complex needs improve their non-verbal communication to enable them to make choices. Teachers work closely with the local repertory theatre to develop non-verbal drama. For example, students improve their use of eye movements to indicate preferences and make choices.
- Staff work closely with parents and students to develop communication books which reflect the needs and interests of each student. Staff support students to use their communication books to express feelings and make decisions.
- Teachers of the minority of students who have complex learning and health needs do not

use sufficiently their assessment of students' starting points to plan learning activities. Teachers and staff do not identify the small steps of progress students make on these programmes. In a small number of sessions, teachers plan learning activities that are inappropriate for young adults. For example, they use nursery rhymes and plastic toys for juveniles.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare**Good**

- Students are rightly proud of the skills they learn in their work placements. They explain how the skills they have learned in sessions support them to work well in their placements. Employers value students' contributions at work. Most students who complete their supported internships gain paid employment.
- Students enjoy their learning and improve their confidence. Most students on employment-based courses demonstrate speaking and listening skills to a high standard. Students who can communicate through writing demonstrate appropriate standards of written work for the level of their course.
- Managers and employers work together to ensure that students are well matched to their placements. Employers make reasonable adjustments to the work to ensure that students improve their skills. For example, students placed in a civil engineering company demonstrate high-level digital design skills. Their employer ensures appropriate access arrangements to the workplace and the workstation.
- Managers provide extensive volunteering and community opportunities. Students improve their timekeeping, personal hygiene, social skills and interpersonal skills with customers and colleagues. Staff organise visits to community venues which prepare students who cannot communicate verbally to be part of a wider community. They support students to aspire to a wide range of opportunities for the future.
- Teachers and staff ensure that students develop a good understanding of health and safety within work experience settings. Students working in facilities management roles wear the appropriate personal protection equipment.
- Students have a good understanding of how to stay healthy in their everyday lives. Staff support students at entry level and above to improve their understanding of sexual health and relationships. Students develop a good understanding of the nature of good friendships.
- Staff support students with complex learning and medical needs to remain healthy and well during their time at college. For example, students accessing community learning venues take part in shared activities using a range of adapted cycles.
- Students, for whom it is appropriate, receive highly effective travel training to enable them to travel independently to their work placements.
- Staff provide good access to a broad range of enrichment activities. They support students to visit local art galleries, libraries, shops, the local gym, and the swimming baths at the Wilson Stuart Special School. Students develop new skills and learn how to participate in community activities.
- Parent and community staff meet with students and their families to review the support they need from external partners. For example, they help parents to apply for support

from social workers.

- Students feel safe. Most students know to whom they should report concerns at college and in the workplace. Students improve their understanding of being safe when developing personal relationships. They have a good understanding of sexual health and well-being.
- A small minority of teachers do not routinely support students to review their own learning in sessions. Too often, teaching assistants provide feedback to students on what they think students have achieved.
- Managers and staff do not ensure that young people and families have sufficient access to impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance during their course. Managers provide information to students and families through information sessions and events. However, too often, the information is restricted to options within the college or to specialist colleges within the local networks.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Most students make good or better progress on their programmes. Students on programmes which prepare them for work and voluntary activities make excellent progress.
- Most students improve their English, mathematical and vocational skills through work-placement and classroom activities. These students make their expected or better progress against their individual targets, and from their starting points.
- Students are proud of their work. Most of the work is of a high standard. Students improve their behaviour. Most students participate well in activities and increase the time they spend in their communities.
- Most students gain their main qualifications. Students on English and mathematics qualifications achieve particularly well. A small minority of students on information technology courses do not achieve the qualification within the planned period.
- Most students remain at college for the planned length of time, and a high proportion of students attend their lessons and work placements. Students with complex learning needs have higher levels of authorised absences, often due to medical appointments. Managers monitor these absences with appropriate understanding, and in partnership with parents.
- Teachers ensure that students improve the skills they will need for the future. An increasing proportion of students move on to supported internships, and paid and unpaid employment. Managers monitor how well students remain in employment after they have left the college. In a small number of cases, when students have found difficulties in employment, managers continue to work with employers. Managers and staff are successful in keeping students in jobs.
- Managers and teachers do not structure the learning for the minority of students with complex needs well enough to promote and record small improvements in knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Provider details

Unique reference number	142915
Type of provider	Independent specialist college
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	67
Principal/CEO	Mrs Kim Everton
Telephone number	0121 306 4809
Website	www.wsucbpt.co.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Entry 1–2 or below		Entry 2–3		Level 1		Level 2 or above							
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+						
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	-	29	-	19	-	10	-	9						
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher									
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+						
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-						
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total									
	-		-		-									
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-													
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	67													
Funding received from:	Education and Skills Funding Agency													
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-													

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. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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