

Short inspection of Trinity Specialist College

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2024

Outcome

Trinity Specialist College continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Trinity Specialist College (TSC) is an independent specialist college based in Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands which provides specialist education and training for young people with special education needs and/or disabilities and complex needs.

At the time of the inspection, there were 32 learners studying at the college. All learners were aged over 19 and had an education, health and care (EHC) plan and were in receipt of high needs funding. Learners study curriculums that enable them to prepare for adulthood via different pathways. These include pathways to independent living skills, community, good health and work skills. Learners also have the opportunity to gain vocational, English and mathematics qualifications. The college also offers a life skills day service for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but this was not in scope for the inspection.

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

Learners enjoy their time at TSC. They work with staff who celebrate their achievements and provide well-structured activities in which they can develop their skills, knowledge and behaviours. Learners benefit from professional and supportive learning environments and take part in work experience. Staff teach learners the skills which will help them to move on into independent living, day care or work when they complete their studies.

Learners feel safe at TSC. They know they can speak to staff members if they feel worried or need support. The college employs counsellors to work with learners who need support for anxiety and mental health. Learners are positive, proud of their work and enjoy the opportunity to take part in activities, including being part of the learner voice group.

Learners participate in a range of enrichment activities that enable them to socialise, take part in leisure activities and develop friendships. Learners enjoy music sessions

as well as visiting local community centres and sports facilities. Learners, over time, improve their confidence and try new experiences.

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

Staff design individualised programmes for learners to specifically enable them to achieve their EHC plan outcomes and prepare for adulthood. Teachers work closely with teams, including therapists, job coaches and learning support assistants (LSAs). Staff translate learners' outcomes into ambitious and realistic targets. This supports learners to progress and builds on their prior skills and knowledge, as well as developing positive behaviours to prepare them for their next steps.

Staff know their learners well. They take time to understand learners' needs and work closely with families and external agencies. Staff work hard to develop a caring and nurturing approach to their teaching and support, which enables learners to thrive.

Teachers diligently plan lessons to meet learners' individual needs. They skilfully work with learners in small groups to encourage learners to take part and take turns. Teachers expertly use sign language and encourage learners with complex needs to focus on the activities in the class. Most learners make the progress of which they are capable. However, in a few cases LSAs are too quick to intervene, preventing learners from developing their own independence and communication skills.

Teachers use symbols to support learners to develop their understanding of important words and phrases to improve their communication skills effectively. However, on a few occasions teachers do not take into consideration learners' starting points. Where learners are able to read more complex words and sentences, they do not sufficiently modify their approaches. A few learners do not improve their English skills as quickly as they are able.

Teachers work closely with independent advisers to ensure that learners develop career plans so that they prepare for their next steps, including voluntary and paid work. Staff teach learners skills for employment and how to live independently, for example opening a bank account, understanding employment contracts and getting ready for interviews. Staff encourage learners to identify what they do well and what skills they need to improve. Learners gain self-confidence, apply for job roles and gain work in a number of different sectors, including warehousing, retail, sports coaching and catering.

Leaders and teachers are proactive in developing approaches that improve the quality of teaching and the support that learners receive. Working closely with external agencies they have developed diverse strategies to ensure that there is a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching learners. This has included collaborating with speech and language specialists to improve learners' communication skills and developing strategies so they can manage their own behaviours and emotions.

Advisory board members work closely with leaders to ensure that the curriculums taught are relevant and sustainable. Advisory board members have extensive experience of the education sector and use their knowledge and experience to challenge leaders effectively. They frequently take part in lesson visits and have a good understanding of the quality of the teaching and support that learners receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that learners' starting points are considered to enable learners to improve their written English.
- Ensure that staff do not over support learners.

Provider details

Unique reference number	141703
Address	The Lindridge, Lindridge Road Sutton Coldfield West Midlands B75 7JB
Contact number	0121 378 3242
Website	www.trinityspecialistcollege.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Lindsay Harris
Provider type	Independent specialist college
Dates of previous inspection	30 January to 1 February 2019

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since Trinity Specialist College was judged to be good in January 2019.

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

Steve Kelly, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrea Dill-Russell

His Majesty's Inspector

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