

Inspection of Woodbridge College

Inspection dates:

29 January to 5 February 2025

Overall effectiveness**Good**

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Information about this provider

Woodbridge College is part of Woodbridge Trust. The trust provides education to children and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who are aged from four to 25 years. Students at Woodbridge College are aged between 19 and 25 years and have a range of SEND, including severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). All students have education, health and care (EHC) plans.

At the time of the inspection, 29 students were enrolled on pre-entry to entry level programmes. Students are enrolled on one of three pathways, with 10 on skills for life, 10 on skills for independence and nine on skills for work and living. Students on the skills for life pathway focus on communication and developing their independence, and students on the skills for independence and skills for work and living pathways carry out work placements.

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

Students thoroughly enjoy coming to college and value the wide range of activities that they experience when working in the community and with employers. They participate in volunteering projects, visit shops and cafés, and travel to Manchester to visit art exhibitions. Students on the skills for independence and skills for work and living pathways attend high-quality work placements. Students thrive through their interaction with members of the public, improve their communication skills, grow in confidence and develop their independence.

Students feel valued as individuals at college and appreciate the welcoming and inclusive environment created by staff. Staff place helpful objects of reference on doors to enable learners to identify their classrooms. The kitchen area has low preparation tables to allow those in wheelchairs to take part. Students who are enrolled on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme complete expeditions where they take part in mud walks. Students who use wheelchairs are given all terrain buggies to enable them to participate.

Students feel safe at college and when out in the community. Tutors teach them about potential dangers such as talking to strangers, how to keep themselves safe when online and, most importantly, support them to communicate any concerns.

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

Leaders have a clear purpose for the provision they offer and work closely with the local authority to respond to local need and the increasing demand for provision for students with PMLD. They provide three pathways to support students with a range of SEND to work towards the outcomes identified in their EHC plans. Students have a personalised programme of study focused on preparing them for the next stage in their lives.

Most tutors set appropriate targets for students based on what they already know and can do when they arrive at the college. They ensure that learning activities are planned to help students meet their targets and develop the skills they need for the future. However, in a few instances tutors set targets that are too broad, which makes it difficult for staff to translate the targets into learning activities.

Tutors use a range of skilful teaching and support methods such as modelling, visual cues, and physical, sensory and verbal support. Staff help students to embed their new knowledge and skills by repeating and reinforcing learning through a variety of well-designed activities. This helps students to remember what they learn and to apply it in different situations, such as when preparing food and following simple recipes.

Tutors weave the development of students' English and mathematical skills seamlessly into lessons. For example, they help students to develop their

mathematical skills by identifying small, big, wide and narrow and help them to understand time in the context of being 'on time' for lessons.

Tutors use resources effectively to enable students to follow instructions and express their feelings, including their likes and dislikes. On the skills for life pathway, staff use eye-driven communication aids for non-verbal students to express their preferences.

Speech and language therapists work collaboratively with tutors and teaching assistants to help students with their communication needs. Tutors embed communication strategies effectively into the curriculum to help students to develop their vocabulary, make choices and advocate for themselves.

Most tutors use a range of assessment methods well. They use questioning effectively to check students' understanding and to extend their learning. However, in a few instances tutors use open questions but do not allow sufficient processing time for all students to answer. A few students shout out the answers and tutors move on without knowing if all students have understood.

Tutors and teaching assistants work effectively together. Staff understand the needs of students and are able to pre-empt and manage negative behaviours before they occur. However, in a few instances, staffing ratios do not enable all students to be supported fully in lessons.

Tutors provide a comprehensive personal development curriculum to students. They teach them about relationships, the meaning of consent, fundamental British values and the importance of being respectful and considerate of others. Students are encouraged to consider how they can be considerate of everyone when planning events.

Tutors work closely with an external careers provider to help students develop their understanding of job roles and career opportunities. This enables students to make informed choices in relation to their future aspirations. Where appropriate, students attend work placements related to their long-term goals, such as becoming a barista.

Leaders have an accurate oversight of the quality of education and the progress that students make. They work closely with members of the trust and external specialists to identify strengths and areas for development through completing activities such as observations of teaching.

Governance arrangements are effective. The board of governors is comprised of members who have appropriate experience and specialist knowledge to be effective in their roles and to provide valuable scrutiny and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that all tutors use questioning effectively and allow sufficient processing time for students to provide answers.
- Provide the level of support that all students need to learn effectively.
- Set targets for all students that are clear and specific to enable tutors to translate them into useful learning activities.

Provider details

Unique reference number	146554
Address	Springfield Road Kearsley Bolton Greater Manchester BL4 8LB
Contact number	01204 332382
Website	www.woodbridgecollege.bolton.sch.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Ruth MacLeod
Provider type	Independent specialist college
Date of previous inspection	4 to 6 October 2022
Main subcontractors	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

Jacquie Brown, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Joanne Keatley	Ofsted Inspector
Angie Fisher	Ofsted Inspector
Suzanne Wainwright	His Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Duncalf	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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