

Slough Pitstop Project Limited

Community learning and skills

Inspection dates

21–23 February 2018

Overall effectiveness			Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good		
Outcomes for learners	Good		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders, managers and trustees set a clear direction for the charity. They welcome all learners to their courses, which benefits the local community.
- Leaders, managers and trustees have successfully improved the quality of the provision. Teaching, learning and assessment are now good.
- As a consequence of attending The Gateway, learners improve their confidence and behaviour. They learn to value education and become more self-assured.
- Learners and staff treat each other with respect. This improves learners' confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff know their learners very well and are responsive to their needs. As a result, most learners stay at The Gateway and complete their courses.
- Leaders and managers use productive partnerships with local external agencies very effectively to engage and support learners.
- Staff prepare learners successfully for their next steps. Almost all learners progress to employment, further education or training after leaving their courses.
- Only a small minority of learners gain mathematics qualifications as a result of their studies.
- A small minority of teachers do not challenge learners to make fast enough progress towards their qualifications.

Full report

Information about the provider

- The Slough Pitstop Project, known as 'The Gateway', is based in Slough, Berkshire. The Gateway has engaged Haybrook College Trust as subcontractor to deliver 16 to 19 study programmes funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). All managers and staff involved are employed by Haybrook College. The Gateway delivers programmes with the aim of engaging and motivating disadvantaged young people. They work with those not in education, employment or training (NEET) to equip them with the confidence and skills to succeed in life. There are currently 26 learners on 16 to 19 study programmes.
- Slough has a population of approximately 130,000. About one third of the population is from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including in English and mathematics, is substantially higher in Slough than England as a whole.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers should:
 - develop a clear and carefully monitored mathematics strategy that will improve learning and outcomes in this subject
 - improve all learners' mathematical skills earlier in their programmes, and make sure that all learners who are ready to take their functional skills tests do so at the earliest possible opportunity
 - support teachers to improve their practice so that lessons provide greater levels of challenge for all learners
 - engage with other providers of study programmes with similar learners in order to identify and share good practice.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, managers, teachers and trustees all have a clear and shared vision to reduce the number of young people locally not in education, employment or training. They make sure that almost all learners leave The Gateway better equipped to succeed, and able to re-engage with education. By doing this, leaders make a positive contribution to their community.
- Leaders and managers welcome and support all learners very effectively. Most learners who come to The Gateway are from disadvantaged backgrounds. They have either been excluded from school or have achieved little in their previous education. Staff care for these learners very well. They improve their lives and prospects for employment.
- Leaders and managers acted quickly to improve weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Teaching, learning and assessment are now good. Almost all current learners are making good progress. A review of governance has resulted in the formation of a board of trustees who focus solely on The Gateway. New staff appointments have improved leaders' knowledge of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and have strengthened the tracking of learners' next steps.
- Strong partnerships with local organisations support staff and learners well. Close links with the local youth offending team help learners to engage more productively with education. Staff use the close relationship with Haybrook College to make sure that courses are flexible enough to cater for learners' needs. Local employers, who sit on the board of trustees, provide work-experience placements for more challenging learners. Staff make good use of connections with the local police service to help learners remove themselves from gang culture and lawbreaking.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have simplified the range of courses on offer. This helps learners to focus more on the main subjects that they will need to make them more employable and that will help them with their next steps. Leaders make sure that they design the curriculum around the needs of learners.
- Leaders hold informative daily briefing sessions with staff that provide an opportunity to share effective teaching strategies for difficult learners. They help staff identify the progress that learners are making in developing their social skills. Staff share information effectively about how to support learners' individual needs. All staff know their learners very well.
- Leaders, managers and staff celebrate equality well. Learners attend workshops during induction that challenge effectively their views on homophobia. One-to-one sessions with staff help to break down prejudicial views. Learners attend lessons on preventing domestic violence, which improve their knowledge about how to keep themselves safe. Staff highlight topics during Black History Month that help learners to understand more about the diverse society in which they live. Leaders are highly reactive to learners' needs. They quickly arrange visitors to speak to them to challenge their views.
- Leaders and managers arrange trips and visits for all learners to help them to improve their social skills and develop resilience. Learners take part in competitive sports to help them learn about losing gracefully. Theatre visits and trips to see female football teams

broaden their horizons. Visits from healthcare professionals improve their health and well-being.

- Performance management processes focus effectively on improving classroom practice. Managers assess all staff rigorously against the teachers' standards. All teachers know how to improve teaching, learning and assessment. However, targets to improve qualification outcomes for learners are not sufficiently challenging or detailed, and a small minority of staff do not have any targets aligned to their post-16 work. As a result, managers do not always hold teachers fully to account for their learners' qualification outcomes.
- Leaders and managers evaluate the quality of their provision well. They identify correctly most of the strengths and plan carefully to improve weaknesses. They check the progress of improvement actions frequently. However, they do not always measure fully the impact of all the actions that they take to improve weaknesses. As a result, they are not always able to gauge fully the success of their actions.

The governance of the provider

- Well-qualified, committed and passionate board members support leaders and managers successfully. They work closely with leaders to make sure that courses meet local priorities well. Their strong business links help provide high-quality resources to support teaching and learning. Board members track financial performance effectively.
- Trustees join learning walks to help inform them of the quality of teaching and learning, and to meet learners. Recent new appointments have made sure that more board members have the educational expertise to question leaders about the quality of teaching and learning.
- Board members receive detailed reports on learners' progress, and updates on the college development plan, which they scrutinise in detail. They discuss learners' attendance, retention, progress and destinations productively at each meeting. They effectively hold managers to account for the progress of learners. However, board members do not receive clear, detailed and contextualised information on all qualification achievement outcomes. As a result, they do not know enough about the achievements of learners and cannot question leaders effectively on how to improve pass rates.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Learners, many of whom are vulnerable and come from chaotic backgrounds, welcome the safety of their classroom environment. Learners, parents, carers and guardians receive frequent safeguarding newsletters that alert them to threats in the local area. Managers and teachers provide a good range of classes that allow learners to understand how to keep themselves safe. Learners benefit from units on health and safety as part of their work-related learning. They understand well how to protect themselves from dangers online, and from substance abuse, smoking and other related matters.
- Designated safeguarding leads have higher level and more frequent training. They meet frequently to discuss cases and carry out a risk assessment for all learners. Strong links with relevant external agencies, including the local borough council and the local safeguarding

board, help them to refer learners for more specialist action. Staff use their close connections with the local youth offending team to support learners not to reoffend. They use their good relationships with mental health services to help young people gain early support for mental health concerns.

- All staff have frequent safeguarding training. They also complete extra training that improves their awareness of de-escalation techniques. Managers' comprehensive 'Prevent' duty action plan focuses clearly on helping staff develop the skills and knowledge to show learners how to keep themselves safe. All staff have received training in the 'Prevent' duty. Almost all learners understand well how to protect themselves from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Enthusiastic teachers and support staff use their skills and knowledge to support learners very effectively. They understand their learners' personal challenges. They successfully help learners overcome barriers to learning. Consequently, learners become more confident. They make good progress in class and are well prepared for their next steps.
- Learners work well in lessons. They make good progress in developing their skills and understanding. For example, learners in art develop good skills in drawing. They produce elaborate pictures in challenging styles such as cubism. In health and social care, learners work very productively, researching the effects of drug taking. Learners on motor vehicle courses learn to identify and record faults in cars. This develops their subject knowledge and builds their confidence.
- Teachers and support staff manage learners' behaviour skilfully. Most learners start their courses having struggled to connect with education. Teachers provide good one-to-one coaching support in lessons, which re-engages learners successfully in education. Teachers use referrals to specialist agencies successfully when needed. Accordingly, learners' conduct and attitude to learning improve considerably during their time at The Gateway.
- Teachers assess learners' starting points in detail and identify their aspirations, long-term goals and interests. Teachers use this information successfully to plan the best courses for learners to realise these objectives.
- Staff track and check learners' progress very effectively. On nearly all occasions, teachers test learning well in lessons through good questioning techniques. They use activities that successfully improve, probe and assess learners' understanding. They record learners' progress through different parts of the qualification in detail.
- Clear and detailed written feedback shows learners how to improve their work. Teachers use praise and encouragement admirably to give learners confidence. As a result, learners produce written work of a good standard. They are proud of their well-organised and high-quality portfolios of work.
- Teachers develop learners' knowledge well in lessons. They explain topics clearly and reinforce learning through the use of carefully chosen and interesting visual aids. For example, in a preparation for life and work lesson, learners watch powerful video clips on the impact of smoking and alcohol misuse. They then take part in a useful discussion led effectively by the teacher. This helps them to reflect clearly on the dangers of poor

lifestyle choices.

- Teachers prepare learners successfully for their next steps. They use discussions, practical activities and group work positively to discuss the skills that learners will need for work and further learning. They plan effective work-experience placements and visits to employment fairs. These prepare learners well for employment and further education.
- Teachers challenge stereotypical views very effectively. They work hard to develop successfully learners' listening and reasoning skills. They teach learners to consider and understand the points of view of others admirably. Consequently, learners and teachers respect each other.
- Learners develop their English skills well. They develop their comprehension skills successfully. Teachers check and extend learners' vocabulary effectively. They help them to improve their understanding of subject-specific language. For example, learners develop their internet-research skills well to find out the meaning of 'dependence' in relation to the use of drugs. In physical education, learners use well-constructed sentences that show they understand topics such as physical fitness.
- Not all teachers challenge learners enough to make swift progress in passing their qualifications. Teachers do not routinely set work for learners to complete outside the classroom to develop independent learning skills. In a small minority of lessons, tasks are not demanding enough for learners. In a small number of cases, teachers do not give learners sufficient time to answer questions before providing answers themselves. As a result, a few learners make slow progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- During their time at The Gateway, learners increase their confidence and self-esteem. Almost all learners improve their behaviour and attitudes to learning. They gain the knowledge and strategies to help them to overcome their anxieties, improve their personal skills and become more self-assured.
- Learners thrive within an environment of mutual respect. They understand what teachers expect of them and keep sensibly to these requirements. Staff support learners with low previous achievements very effectively and help them to value the benefits of education. Learners feel secure and safe, and staff work with them well to help them to remain focused and on task. Learners value the help and encouragement that staff provide.
- Learners work well together. In most lessons, they work in a productive and respectful manner. For example, learners in motor vehicle workshops work successfully in teams. They develop skills in fault-finding in a mature and professional manner.
- Teachers help learners to develop a good understanding of how to stay healthy. Learners gain a good awareness of the problems that can arise from smoking and from alcohol misuse. They know the benefits of fitness and the consequences of their lifestyle choices. For example, learners studying health and social care show a good grasp of body image. They learn in detail about the pressures people can come under to conform to stereotypes of body shapes. They create well-produced games to help users reflect on body shape and self-image.
- Learners feel safe and are safe. They develop a good understanding of the risks and hazards of the workplace and learn how to minimise risks. For example, they wear

suitable personal protective equipment in motor vehicle workshops.

- Well-qualified careers staff provide learners with thorough and impartial careers guidance. This allows them to make informed choices about their next steps. Staff and learners develop effective personalised action plans to map learners' next steps. This helps the large majority of learners to progress into employment, further education or training.
- An effective programme of internal and external work-experience placements helps learners to develop the skills that they will need for employment. Managers work with an external organisation to establish successful, safe and bespoke work placements for learners, who often have little or no experience of the demands of work. Most learners enjoy their external placements and they attend well. They evaluate the skills that they learn from their placement effectively.
- Effective attendance tracking and recording systems help staff to check learners' attendance accurately. Learners have challenging targets based on improving their prior attendance. As a result, the large majority improve their attendance while at The Gateway. When learners miss lessons, staff contact them quickly. They inform parents, carers and guardians when needed. Managers are quick to contact external agencies to support learners further. However, although attendance has improved substantially from 2015/16, it is still too low.
- Although teachers and most learners have had training on the meaning and promotion of British values, a small minority of learners still lack understanding in these matters.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Learners enjoy their courses. Almost all current learners are making good progress relative to their previous achievements. During their time at The Gateway, they improve their confidence and social skills. Most develop a more positive attitude toward learning and education.
- The large majority of learners produce work of a high standard, which is detailed, well written and thoroughly researched. Learners' portfolios are of high quality and are well organised. The quality of learners' work meets, and often exceeds, the requirements of their qualifications.
- Leaders and managers track the destinations of learners in detail. Almost all learners progress to employment, further education or training, even when they leave The Gateway early. Most go on to further education courses, with a small minority proceeding to apprenticeships or employment.
- Many more learners stay at The Gateway to complete their study programmes than at the time of the previous inspection. The large majority of learners completed their courses in 2016/17. Almost all learners who started this year are still on their courses.
- Leaders and managers analyse gaps in achievement well. In 2016/17, they identified that female learners were outperforming male learners. Further detailed analysis showed little difference between learners' achievement and progress when considering just September starters. As a result, current male learners who start later on in the year receive more support than in previous years, to help them make faster progress.
- Although examination pass rates for learners in 2016/17 were higher than in 2015/16,

they are still too low. Learners taking work-related qualifications achieve well, as do learners taking entry and level 1 English qualifications. However, the large majority of learners do not achieve their functional skills or GCSE mathematics qualifications. Although current learners are making good progress from their often very low starting points, it is too early to judge whether this will result in improved pass rates for 2018.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58054
Type of provider	Not-for-profit organisation
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	31
Principal/CEO	Jim McLaughlin
Telephone number	01753 535878
Website	http://haybrookcollege.co.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	25	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	0							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Haybrook College							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of studies, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. 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

Andy Fitt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Roger Pilgrim

Ofsted Inspector

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