

Inspection of TCHC Group Ltd

Inspection dates: 28 June to 1 July 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Education programmes for young people	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

TCHC Group Ltd (TCHC) is an independent learning provider established in 2004. TCHC is based in Watford with an administration office in Stansted. TCHC have four training centres based in Thurrock, Ipswich, Peterborough and Dunstable. They work with 10 subcontractors across London and the East of England to teach adult education programmes. In 2013, TCHC started teaching study programmes and expanded into teaching apprenticeships in 2018 and traineeships in 2021. They have recently introduced programmes for learners with high needs. Currently, there are 13 learners with high needs, most attend the site in Dunstable.

At the time of the inspection, there were 790 learners. Of these, 170 learners were aged 16 to 18, 584 learners were on adult learning programmes and 36 were apprentices. Most apprentices are on standards-based qualifications in information technology, business administration, management and care. TCHC teach mainly employability programmes to help adult learners and young people progress into employment or improve their promotion prospects. Learners study vocational areas, including horticulture and construction. Most learners study functional skills in English and mathematics as a part of their programmes.

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

Most learners at TCHC enjoy and value the education that they receive. They appreciate being taught in small groups and learning at a pace that helps them to succeed. Learners comment positively about the flexible approach to learning and how tutors teach subjects in bitesize topics so that learners can understand them thoroughly before moving on to the next topic.

Learners like the friendly and helpful approach of tutors at TCHC. They feel welcome and well supported. Adult learners who state that they were nervous before starting the course report that the supportive environment has helped them to settle into learning and feel more optimistic about their studies. They enjoy the challenge and pace.

Most adult learners gain new skills that enable them to progress in their careers, for example into higher nursing apprenticeships. Many young learners who have had disrupted educational backgrounds value achieving qualifications that will help them to gain employment. They understand the rules that help them to study better, such as not being allowed phones in lessons. As a result, they learn the professional behaviours that are required in the workplace and how to apply for jobs.

Learners enjoy the calm and purposeful environment that tutors create for them to learn. Many learners who have not remained in education previously stay in learning and gain self-confidence and become more resilient. They report that they feel that they have a better understanding of the world of work.

A few learners have found changes in tutors difficult to manage. They prefer to have more consistency with the tutors they work with and better communication about any changes to their studies.

Learners and apprentices feel safe at work and in their studies. In horticulture, learners with high needs learn to work safely, for example when working with soil and other chemicals. Learners know who to report any concerns to and are confident that they will be dealt with swiftly.

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

Senior leaders have set out a clear ambition to support young people and adults to gain employment and secure progression into meaningful and sustainable careers. Leaders, managers and staff have high expectations of learners. They have put in place a curriculum that meets the needs of learners who have had a disrupted education and who find it difficult to gain employment. Adult learners, including trainees, benefit from programmes that enable them to gain skills and qualifications so that they can advance their careers.

Leaders and managers have established highly effective links with local employers and other external agencies so that they understand the skills needs in the areas

where they work. They use these links skilfully to help learners progress into sustainable employment. For example, adult learners working in a healthcare provider gain relevant skills so that they can progress onto higher nursing apprenticeships to meet the employers' needs.

Senior leaders have focused strongly on improving quality while diversifying the provision. They have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the organisation, including the quality of teaching. They have plans in place to secure further improvements. Leaders monitor the performance of subcontractors closely and put appropriate interventions in place where appropriate.

Most tutors are well qualified and experienced. They use their skills and knowledge to plan lessons thoroughly. They ensure that they build learners' skills progressively over time so that learners can consolidate basic skills before they move on to more complex activities. Adult learners on care programmes learn about the types of dementia they see in care settings and then study the causes and factors affecting patients.

Managers and tutors provide high levels of support for learners with complex social and emotional needs so that they make good progress towards their personal and employment goals. For example, they plan programmes so that learners can overcome challenges, such as anxiety, that have previously prevented them from remaining in education. Learners make small steps in gaining confidence and tutors support them. For example, they accompany learners to potential workplaces so that learners understand the environment they plan to work in.

Most tutors skilfully link their teaching to the workplace. Tutors on traineeships and adult learning ensure that the work they do is relevant to adults' work settings. As a result, adults can apply theory to practice and reflect on their workplace roles. However, in apprenticeships, tutors and assessors do not routinely ensure that the topics apprentices study complement what they are doing at work. As a result, too few apprentices practise what they learn in their workplace and do not consolidate their new skills and knowledge.

Learners and apprentices gain new knowledge and skills while on their courses. Learners with high needs in Dunstable learn fundamental skills in construction trades so that they can progress into work in plastering, tiling, painting and decorating. Tutors make strong links to future employment in their lessons and as a result, learners are highly motivated to succeed in their programmes. Apprentices on management apprenticeships gain work-related skills, such as dealing with customer complaints. They become more resilient as they accept constructive feedback from their mentors. Apprentices in global companies learn how to communicate confidently with colleagues who speak English as a second language. Learners improve their English and mathematics skills during their programmes. Adult learners learn to spell and punctuate work accurately so that they can study at higher levels. Most learners on study programmes improve their mathematics skills.

Tutors do not use questioning strategies effectively enough to check learners'

understanding. They do not allow learners time to reflect on questions and too often, answer the questions for the learner. A few tutors do not ask probing questions to check if learners have an in-depth understanding of topics. Apprentices frequently do not recall what they have learned in taught sessions. Tutors help learners to retain new knowledge by recapping and practising skills.

Tutors provide learners with positive feedback on their written work. However, too often, tutors do not tell learners what they have done well, what they need to improve or how to improve. Tutors of learners with high needs use praise effectively to motivate them and celebrate success. Assessors provide apprentices with valuable feedback on their written work so that they learn how to write to professional standards.

Tutors provide learners on study programmes with valuable advice on future careers. They benefit from visits from employers who discuss future options, including apprenticeship programmes. As a result, learners gain a good understanding of work and can consider their future job roles. Apprentices studying the infrastructure technician apprenticeship have helpful discussions about their future careers. However, those apprentices studying management do not have a good understanding of the options available to them when they complete their apprenticeship.

Learners and apprentices are polite and respectful to their peers and staff. Tutors have high expectations of learners to behave well and focus on their learning. As a result, learners become valuable members of the group. They gain confidence in expressing their own opinions and presenting and debating ideas. Learners understand the need to respect others' views in discussing sensitive issues such as capital punishment.

Attendance in lessons is not high. Tutors place a strong emphasis on frequent attendance. They discuss these in reviews and follow up frequently with learners if they do not attend. As a result, attendance on study programmes is improving. Tutors on adult learning programmes and apprenticeship programmes do not promote attendance sufficiently well. Too few apprentices routinely attend their lessons, often due to work commitments.

Learners have a secure understanding of life in modern Britain. Learners with high needs understand Remembrance Day through planting poppy seeds and discussing their relevance, and they plan and budget to sell plants to raise funds for a charity. They take on different roles to improve their skills in greeting customers and managing money. Adult learners take part in charity events and learn about employment legislation related to age and disability discrimination.

Most learners make good progress and gain their qualifications. A large proportion progress onto further study or into employment or training. Too many apprentices are not prepared well for their final assessments. Apprentices on management and accountancy apprenticeships do not understand how they will be assessed or what they need to do to gain high grades. Achievement rates for apprentices are too low.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They have put in place relevant policies and procedures that they apply appropriately to keep learners safe. They are mindful of the vulnerability of many of their learners and pay particular attention to helping these learners to keep themselves safe in their everyday lives.

Staff responsible for safeguarding have established helpful relationships with external agencies so that staff are aware of safeguarding risks in the local area. Tutors help learners to understand these risks and how to manage them.

Leaders ensure that staff are trained effectively so that they can support learners and raise any safeguarding issues swiftly. Staff have put appropriate strategies in place to support learners with emotional and mental health issues. Staff benefit from regular safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty update training.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Managers and tutors should ensure that tutors use questioning strategies effectively to check learners' deeper understanding of concepts and knowledge, providing them with time to reflect and consider their responses.
- Leaders should ensure that tutors provide helpful feedback to learners so that they know what they have done well, what they need to improve and how to improve.
- Leaders must ensure that learners on all programmes attend their lessons frequently so that they benefit from their taught sessions and make good progress.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that tutors plan apprenticeship programmes so that apprentices can practise and reinforce what they learn in their off-the-job training while they are at work.

Provider details

Unique reference number	59189
Address	2nd Floor 21 Station Road Watford WD17 1AP
Contact number	01923 698430
Website	www.tchc.net
Principal/CEO	Dale Morgan
Provider type	Independent Learning Provider
Date of previous inspection	25 to 27 April 2017
Main subcontractors	Care Training (Universal Vibes) Constructive Future Training InTech Centre Limited KBM Training and Recruitment Knights Training Academy Learners Progress College Links2work Oasis Care and Training Agency (OCTA) Seymour Davies Ltd (Opps Development) SABA UK

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality director, 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

Lynda Brown, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alan Winchcombe	Ofsted Inspector
Colin Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Jaswant Mann	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Helkenberg	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Breheny	Ofsted Inspector
Winsome Aldred	Ofsted Inspector
Sambit Sen	Her Majesty's Inspector

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022