

Inspection of Hoople Ltd

Inspection dates: 11 to 13 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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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

Hoople Limited (Hoople) is a public-sector-owned company, based in Hereford. It is jointly owned by Herefordshire Council, Wye Valley NHS Trust and Lincolnshire Council. Hoople is contracted by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to provide study programmes, with a focus on supporting post-16 learners who have social, emotional and mental health needs as well as special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The aim of the curriculum is to develop learners' personal, social, English and mathematics, and employability skills to prepare them for their next steps in training, education or employment. There are currently 35 learners in learning, of which 25 are aged 16 to 18 years old.

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

Learners enjoy their time at Hoople. Staff have created a highly inclusive environment in which learners, who have previously faced challenges in mainstream education, are able to thrive.

Teachers help learners increase their confidence and self-esteem through a well-considered personal development curriculum. For example, learners become involved in community projects, such as organising food and clothes donations for Ukraine. Learners also develop their understanding of protecting the environment by visiting a local recycling centre.

Learners develop an awareness of how a healthy lifestyle, such as a balanced diet, regular exercise and a sensible sleeping routine, will help them in becoming better learners and more valued employees.

Learners have a positive attitude to their learning; they focus and behave well in lessons. They are considerate of each other and respectful towards their teachers. In the infrequent instances where learners became distracted, teachers use effective strategies to manage and support learners to re-engage in their learning.

Learners benefit from broadening their understanding of rights and responsibilities in the workplace. They develop employability skills, such as cooperation and professional conduct. As a result, most learners are able to engage in meaningful work placements in local settings, such as in building and maintenance, high street retail, schools, accountancy firms and in the hospitality sector.

Learners feel safe at the provider. Teachers help learners to understand safeguarding risks and peer-on-peer abuse. Learners know and trust staff, and know who to contact if any issues occur.

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

Leaders have a clear intent for the curriculum that they offer. They work well with the local authority to respond to the need for local provision for post-16 learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders and teachers have designed a curriculum that meets learners' significant emotional and personal development needs.

Leaders and teachers adapt the curriculum based on learners' individual interests. For example, learners who are interested in sport undertake an award in sport alongside a work placement in a leisure centre, while other learners prepare to support teaching in a school setting.

Leaders and teachers do not monitor how well learners progress in developing their English and mathematics skills, alongside their emotional and personal development

skills. As a result, too many learners make slow progress towards developing their English and mathematic skills and passing their functional skills examinations.

Despite leaders taking steps to improve the tracking of learners' progress in their studies, they still do not have access to a comprehensive suite of information to monitor learners' progress across all elements of the curriculum. This means that they are not able to swiftly intervene when learners fall behind to help them to catch up.

Leaders recognise the need to develop their quality assurance processes further to be able to report accurately on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and the impact this is having on learners. For example, leaders do not yet use information about observations and learning walk findings, and the quality of learner reviews, to improve the quality of education that learners receive.

Teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled in working with learners with physical and emotional disabilities. They work effectively with learners, putting them at ease and nurturing teacher–learner relationships that promote progression. As a result, learners become more resilient and confident in the classroom.

Teachers work closely with parents, carers and support services to ensure that learners have a safe home environment as a platform for effective learning. Teachers support learners who have high levels of anxiety by providing an individualised timetable which combines online and face-to-face learning. This enables learners to gradually build in confidence and resilience until they are ready to join group sessions, and take up a work placement.

Teachers prepare tasks which challenge learners; for example, learners compare the American economic depression to the current cost of living crisis. Learners enjoy the variation in the way they learn, such as visiting the town centre to take photos of the environment before completing a writing task about it. Teachers make links to previous learning, which helps learners to know more and remember more.

Teachers do not always use feedback effectively enough to support learners to understand what they need to improve. Often, this is too focused on praise and as a result a small proportion of learners do not progress as quickly as they could.

Teachers have regular reviews with learners to discuss a range of progression opportunities. As a result, learners are aware of possible next steps, such as job opportunities, apprenticeships or continuing education at the local college.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have in place appropriate policies, including those for safeguarding, safer recruitment and the 'Prevent' duty, which are reviewed and updated regularly.

Leaders ensure that all members of staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding. The designated safeguarding lead, teaching staff and assistants receive regular training which includes the annual required updates and additional training, such as mental health and autism spectrum disorder.

Where safeguarding disclosures or incidents are reported, the designated safeguarding lead responds swiftly and makes appropriate referrals to external agencies.

Leaders work well with a network of organisations to support safeguarding in the centre.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that teachers set, and monitor progress against, short-term targets in English and mathematics so that learners make the progress of which they are capable in these subjects.
- Leaders should use their quality assurance processes effectively to identify how they can improve the quality of education that learners experience on their courses.
- Leaders should ensure that they can readily identify how well learners progress across all aspects of the study programme so that they can swiftly action intervention and improvement to support learners to achieve.

Provider details

Unique reference number	56201
Address	Nelson Building Whitecross Road Hereford HR4 0DG
Contact number	01432 383678
Website	www.hoopleltd.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Stephen Weller
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 January 2020
Main subcontractors	Not applicable

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the senior manager for quality and compliance, 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

Beth Selwood, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sharon Dowling	His Majesty's Inspector
Rob Mottram	Ofsted Inspector
Jaswant Mann	Ofsted Inspector

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