

Team Domenica

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	149471
Name of lead inspector:	Viki Faulkner, His Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	9 and 10 July 2024
Type of provider:	Independent specialist college
Address:	5-7 Preston Road, Brighton BN1 4QE

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Ofsted undertakes to carry out monitoring visits to independent specialist colleges newly funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Team Domenica is an independent specialist college located in the city of Brighton. The college supports young people with additional needs and learning disabilities to enter paid work. All learners are aged 19 to 24 years old. Learners have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including Down's syndrome, autism and social and communication needs. They study qualifications in employability, mathematics and English at entry level to level 2. Learners all undertake work experience in the college's own training cafes and in a wide range of workplaces in the locality.

Team Domenica was established as a charity in 2016. They started training learners under subcontracting arrangements at that time. They gained independent specialist college status in 2023. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 29 learners in training. There were 19 learners studying on a supported employability programme and 10 learners on supported internships. All learners have education, health and care plans (EHC plans) in place.

Team Domenica does not work with any subcontractors.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant learning programmes that are clearly defined and tailored to suit the individual needs of learners? Reasonable progress

Leaders have developed a carefully planned curriculum, which focuses effectively on helping learners with SEND move into employment. Courses include work experience, community engagement and a wider personal development curriculum. As a result, learners build the skills they need to gain and stay in employment. They also become increasingly independent. The significant majority achieve paid work by the end of two years. Almost all remain in sustained employment.

Staff check what learners know and can do at the beginning of their programme. They use this information, along with EHC plan targets, appropriately to tailor

effective learning plans that meet learners' needs. For example, learners who do not want to work in hospitality can do work experience at settings, such as care homes, primary schools or hotels, alongside the time they spend in the training café. Learners take English and mathematics qualifications one level above that which they arrive with. Almost all achieve these qualifications.

Leaders carefully consider how to further develop learners' social skills and emotional resilience. They have devised a comprehensive programme of activities that increase learners' interaction and engagement with the local community. Learners join sessions including cricket, dance and art, which are taught at local community centres. Learners grow in confidence during their time at college because of these experiences.

Teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced. For example, staff teaching movement and performance have been to drama school. The cafe training lead has extensive hospitality experience. Where staff need new skills, leaders support them effectively through professional development. For example, leaders identified that training mentors do not always have the right skills sets for all settings. As a result, they introduced additional training to make sure teachers and training mentors now work together well.

How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality learning programmes that develop independence, communication and skills and help them to achieve their personal and/or work-related goals? Reasonable progress

Learners enjoy attending Team Domenica. They justly value the aspirational, inclusive environment that staff create, where no one feels judged, and learners are supported to achieve their potential. Consequently, learners' attendance is high. They grow in confidence as they acquire new skills in the café, such as preparing and serving food or cashing up at the end of the day. As a result of their training, they can complete tasks in the workplace that they could not have done previously.

Teachers create calm and purposeful places to learn. They explain what learners need to do clearly, breaking tasks down into easily understood parts. For example, they teach learners to count as they hold milk under the steam to achieve the correct level of froth on a latte. They demonstrate how body language can give an indication of a person's confidence, so learners understand the importance of making eye contact with customers. Teachers provide appropriate time for learners to think carefully about what has been said or done, before moving on. As a result, learners can process information effectively and they remember more of what they are taught.

Learners acquire relevant knowledge and useful skills, which they learn in classrooms and the training cafés. Trainers help learners to understand, and remember, workplace tasks effectively. This prepares them for future work well. For example, they learn to handle money, giving customers the correct change and competently use electronic cash registers. Learners looking to work in hospitality learn barista skills. They make different types of coffee, such cappuccino and latte, with increasing independence. They confidently use correct technical vocabulary, such as 'purging' steam wands to avoid cross contamination, to describe activities they do in the commercial kitchen. Learners are polite and courteous in the classroom and the workplace. Most can communicate clearly and confidently with people who they are unfamiliar with.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Significant progress

Leaders have created a highly effective culture of safeguarding. They have acted swiftly and successfully to create, implement and embed a comprehensive range of new, age-appropriate policies and procedures, which very positively contribute to keeping learners safe. They ensure that staff they recruit are safe to work with vulnerable adults. They train staff skilfully, so they understand the specific vulnerabilities of the learners they work with and know how to support them. For example, they train staff about modern slavery, recognising hotspots in the area. They train staff about online radicalisation, recognising that young people with learning difficulties may be particularly susceptible to these approaches. As a result, staff keep learners safe very well.

Learners feel safe while at the college and in the workplace. As a result of the training they have had, they are confident to talk with staff about things that worry them. Staff make sure learners know how to travel independently, how to stay safe online and how to keep themselves safe in public facing roles, such as working in the café or in care settings. Learners develop a strong understanding of health and safety that they can apply in the workplace. They can move around and work safely in the community with increasing levels of autonomy.

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 2024