

# Inspection of Future Horizons Leeds Limited

Inspection dates: 19 to 21 September 2023

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

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The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this provider

Future Horizons Leeds Limited is an independent specialist college that provides further education and training for students with high needs aged between 19 and 25. Students have a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including autism, profound and multiple learning disabilities and complex learning and communication needs. It operates across two sites in the south and west of Leeds. At the time of the inspection, there were 29 students enrolled on one of four pathways: sensory and communication; towards life skills, embedding life skills; and towards employability.

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

Students benefit from staff who know them very well and understand their support needs. Staff manage student behaviour well, quickly recognising when it is escalating, and use effective strategies to de-escalate incidents of challenging behaviour and to minimise its impact.

Most students settle quickly into learning at the start of the day with help from the lifelong learning assistants (LLAs). LLAs implement routines which are familiar to students so that they understand what will happen next. This enables students to feel calm and safe. Students benefit from the caring and respectful culture that staff have created. Staff focus on well-being and mindfulness activities with students in tutorials, which help students to self-regulate their emotions.

Most students have high attendance at college. When students do not attend, it is usually due to health and medical needs, which staff are aware of. Staff work closely with students, parents and carers to minimise the impact of any absence on students' learning.

Students attend useful external work placements where they learn to interact with the community and work on improving their communication skills and their confidence. Leaders and managers rightly recognise that there are too few high-quality work placements that are matched to individual students' interests and aspirations and that would enable students to make informed decisions about their next steps. They are in the process of sourcing these.

Students feel safe and know who they should speak to if they have a safeguarding concern. Tutors communicate effectively with students to help them understand potential risks. For example, they use symbols to support students to understand about the potential risks of radicalisation. They teach students about online safety, including what to do if they receive an unwanted message. Tutors also teach students about road safety to help to keep them safe in the community.

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

Leaders and managers work closely with the local authority and have responded positively to a request from the authority to provide more opportunities in the region for students with high needs, particularly those with more complex needs. This has given students, and their parents and carers, a greater choice in making decisions about their education. Leaders and managers have a clear curriculum rationale for the programmes they provide and offer pathways that are appropriate to the needs of the students. Students are enrolled on one of four pathways and cover a range of important topics such as independent living skills, healthy living, communication and employability, as appropriate to their needs.

When working with larger groups, tutors do not allow sufficient time for students to process complex concepts in lessons. They move on too quickly to the next topic,

and students often become confused and do not fully understand what they are being taught.

Most tutors use small group work activities effectively in lessons. Students work in small groups completing practical activities. LLAs support students to make clear choices. However, tutors do not always give the few students who are capable of following instructions more independently the opportunity to do so.

Tutors do not give consistently clear direction to LLAs about working with individual students in lessons. When they do, LLAs set clear boundaries for students, and students quickly engage with the curriculum topic. When tutors do not give clear direction, students do not understand how or why they should modify their behaviour, which impacts on their learning. For example, LLAs are not consistently clear with students about being overly tactile with staff.

Tutors are well qualified and have appropriate teaching qualifications. Staff have attended a range of useful training on topics such as Makaton and autism awareness. Leaders and managers have planned further training to enable tutors to improve their teaching skills. This includes training in planning activities in lessons effectively to enable students to work towards the outcomes in their education, health and care plans.

Staff identify accurate starting points for new students through a comprehensive assessment of what students know and can do at the beginning of the course. They repeat this process for returning students. However, they are too slow to set precise targets for these students to enable them to make rapid progress in developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Most tutors use a variety of assessment methods effectively to identify how well students are working towards the preparing for adulthood outcomes. Students who can complete written tasks produce written responses and others complete practical tasks. Staff photograph students completing tasks to highlight the progress that they make. However, in a few cases staff do not accurately assess what students can do and where they need to improve.

Tutors use social stories well to help students develop their understanding of complex topics such as preparing to move into supported living accommodation. This helps students to understand and cope with life-changing experiences. With the support of speech and language therapists, tutors are beginning to use more extensive communication aids to enhance further students' ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings in lessons.

Students develop knowledge, skills and behaviours in line with the preparing for adulthood curriculum. They learn to identify what they like and do not like and to tidy up when they have finished an activity. They are able to recognise coins and follow recipes. Students increase in confidence and initiate communication with their peers. They are able to recognise healthy and unhealthy choices.

Trustees and the newly appointed senior leadership team have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the provision. They have identified a number of measures that they need to implement to improve the quality of the provision. Senior leaders have recruited two experienced specialist tutors who will begin working at the college in the very near future and are in the process of recruiting instructors who have appropriate expertise. This will enable students to benefit from smaller group sizes and more personalised learning. However, it is too soon to see the impact of these actions.

Leaders and managers use high-needs funding appropriately to support most students effectively. For example, they provide a range of therapies such as occupational therapy. However, a few students do not have access to hydrotherapy or require additional specialist assistive technology to enable them to access the curriculum more effectively.

Staff ensure that learners on the towards employability pathway benefit from valuable careers information, advice and guidance from an external provider. Students attend one-to-one meetings to discuss their aspirations and to develop a careers plan. Leaders and managers rightly recognise that they need to provide more advice on transition opportunities to students with more complex needs who do not aspire to progress into employment.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers do not have references in place for all members of staff in line with their safe recruitment policy and procedure. They identified where there were gaps during the inspection and contacted referees requesting references. The chief executive officer is monitoring the return of these. Leaders and managers have other safe recruitment measures in place such as ensuring that staff have enhanced disclosure and barring checks in place and checking the identity of staff.

## **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Set appropriate targets with clear timeframes for all students that enable them to work towards the outcomes in their education, health and care plans.
- Ensure that tutors and LLAs continue to attend high-quality training to develop their teaching and support skills further.
- Ensure that all staff accurately measure the progress that students make.
- Source an increased number of high-quality work placements that are matched to individual students' interests and aspirations.
- Provide high-quality advice on transition opportunities to students with more complex needs who do not aspire to progress into employment.
- Ensure that all students have access to the therapeutic services that they need.

- Ensure that references are in place for all members of staff, in line with the safe recruitment policy and procedure.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148666
<b>Address</b>	Unit 7, Landmark Court Beeston Leeds LS11 8JT
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<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.futurehorizonsleeds.co.uk">www.futurehorizonsleeds.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Beckie Loosemore
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent specialist college
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the curriculum leader, 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

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