

Chadsgrove Educational Trust Specialist College

Address: Meadow Road, Catshill, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 0JL

Unique reference number (URN): 144729

Inspection report: 21 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, learners are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect providers for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The provider has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- **Not met:** The provider has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

1. Inclusion, and leadership and governance

Strong standard



Expected standard



Strong standard

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders have an ambitious inclusion strategy. Working closely with local area partners, they use their sector expertise to very good effect, identifying gaps in the regional provision, including for the visually impaired and those with moderate learning difficulties. They have well-developed plans to meet these needs.

Leaders are extremely ambitious for their students. They skilfully implement a graduated approach to learning in which staff set accurate and meaningful targets, taking time to build a comprehensive understanding of students' wants and needs before agreeing on learning plans and support. Staff use these thorough student insights to great effect. They set challenging learning and personal development targets and raise the aspirations of parents and students for the next steps.

Therapists work very closely with managers and tutors to design individual programmes for students. Structured medical and care routines, such as PEG feeding, are carefully planned so that students continue to attend lessons and make sustained progress despite significant medical needs.

Leaders have created an environment that ensures all students are given the best opportunity to participate in their learning. High-quality facilities, including purpose-designed therapy pools, sunken rebound areas and calming and engaging outdoor spaces, reduce barriers to learning by helping students maintain and improve their wellbeing.

Expected standard

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders drive curriculum improvement through systematic reflection and external collaboration. They frequently engage with national networks for providers working with students with profound and multiple learning difficulties and student voice forums. They carry out professional review and development activities and cross-college collaboration to review curriculum approaches. Leaders use these relationships and activities to strengthen curriculum practice continually and ensure it continues to adapt in response to evidence-based professional learning and emerging learner needs.

Leaders provide staff with opportunities to progress their careers into teaching and specialist positions. They invest in appropriate training to develop the teaching skills of newly appointed tutors. The college has a largely new team of teachers who need to continue to develop their skills in order to teach to a very high standard.

Leaders have recently refreshed the governing body. Directors' wide-ranging experience includes leading providers that specialise in education for learners with high needs and disability sport in Worcestershire. Directors understand well the strengths, emerging areas for development and the strategic direction of the college. They use their experience to great effect, providing informed support and challenge to college leaders. They are an integral part of the college, working closely with leaders to secure new growth initiatives and maintaining close oversight of safeguarding arrangements.

Leaders adopt an individual approach to supporting their staff. They provide access to a health helpline and college wellbeing day. They ensure that during challenging times such as bereavement or illness, they adopt a flexible approach to working patterns to support improved mental health and wellbeing.

2. Provision for learners with high needs

Strong standard	
Expected standard	

Strong standard

Achievement

Strong standard

Students significantly exceed their targets in their education, health, and care plans and make considerable progress. They become more independent at home. They start by learning how to make snacks, such as toast, and then progress to making simple meals for themselves.

In work experience sessions, students collaborate with staff to prepare food for celebrations and create crafts to sell at the college's annual summer fair. They build portfolios of work that demonstrate the substantial progress that they make.

Students develop the resilience, confidence and social skills they need to progress successfully to the next stage of their lives. They are very well prepared for their transition into social care during their time at the college. Therapists and learning support assistants work closely with their next placement to ensure that all relevant support and therapies remain in place during students' transitions and beyond.

Participation and development

Strong standard 

Tutors skilfully embed fundamental British values throughout college life, enabling students to appreciate diverse cultures and the importance of respecting differences. Staff encourage students' involvement in cultural events such as Christmas and Eid to raise awareness of different cultures and traditions. Tutors challenge students' misconceptions of cultural diversity and negative cultural profiling, particularly when identifying who may pose a risk towards them.

Tutors help students understand personal relationships by increasing awareness and confidence when managing interactions. They sensitively use social stories to help students discuss appropriate relationships and to develop better communication and boundary-setting skills. The use of educational demonstrational dolls helps students express their feelings and understand their bodies and supports emotional literacy and body awareness.

Students participate in a careers programme that enables them to experience the world of work. Leaders have worked closely with local employers, such as the library adviser, to ensure they are well prepared to support learners effectively during their placements. Staff introduce students to placements during orientation visits. Learning support assistants and the therapy team discuss how employers can best respond to students' needs and support them to ensure that activities are fully accessible and appropriately paced to meet students' needs.

Expected standard

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders design curriculum content carefully to prepare students for adulthood and independent living. Leaders and tutors structure learning around themes such as 'looking after myself' and 'my healthy lifestyle', ensuring that students build practical understanding and develop the skills they need to live as independently as possible.

Leaders plan transition into college thoughtfully and proactively, using early engagement to gather meaningful information about students before enrolment. Staff collaborate very closely with schools, arranging visits to the college, gathering feedback about the students who plan to enrol and visiting the schools as part of transition planning. As a result, students experience a smooth transition into college, with carefully planned support realistically and responsively implemented from the outset.

Teaching is mostly effective. Tutors design appropriate learning activities and create tasks that support the development of employability skills and involve the application of literacy skills. In a few cases, lessons are less well planned and leave some students unprepared to learn and unable to actively participate, particularly at the start of lessons.

Learning support assistants tailor support to each student's individual needs, helping students to participate in lessons and activities as independently as possible. They effectively adapt their support, allowing students to work independently where possible.

Where necessary, they provide one-to-one guidance, gestures, reminders or choices, allowing students to participate at an appropriate level without disrupting the flow of the lesson.

What it's like to be a learner and/or an apprentice at this provider

Students demonstrate high levels of respect and support for each other. They participate in a range of activities together, such as the student ambassadors' group, in which they allow each other time to think and engage, and respect each other's contributions to the meeting.

Students are proud to talk to people about their experience of having high needs. They review business accessibility for the city-wide magazine and effectively communicate their expectations and needs to local members of parliament. They demonstrate the confidence that they have gained while at the college.

Students develop strong communication skills. Working with Worcestershire County Council, they create videos to help practitioners improve how they capture the learner voice. They share their opinions and ideas on how to make their voices heard.

Students actively and enthusiastically participate in their college and linked school community. They collaborate with peers on projects such as college celebrations, providing refreshments for parents at the school sports day and planning playlists for school and college discos. They are motivated to participate and often demonstrate skills that stretch their capabilities.

Students feel safe and supported when participating in activities outside of the college. They describe the college as friendly and highlight that they make friends. Students confidently explain how they would report any incident that would make them feel uncomfortable.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to work with new tutors to ensure that teaching is well planned and delivered, so that students benefit from the highest quality teaching and learning.
 - Leaders should continue to develop career advice and guidance to ensure all students have a detailed progression plan in place and experience extensive work experience opportunities, in order to have a transformative impact as they progress into adulthood.
 - Leaders should continue to be highly ambitious for their students through developing future projects that support students in acting as advocates for themselves, further raising the profile of the barriers faced by students with high needs in their communities.
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About this inspection

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with leaders, students, tutors, learning support assistants, therapists, directors, employers, community partners and parents during the inspection.

Chadsgrove Educational Trust Specialist College is an independent specialist college based in Worcestershire. The college provides education and training to young people aged 19 to 25 with severe and profound special educational needs and/or disabilities, including complex physical, health and medical conditions. At the time of the inspection, there were 16 learners with education, health and care plans.

The college is situated in a separate, self-contained building on the site of Chadsgrove School and operates independently of the school. It shares therapeutic facilities with the school, including a hydrotherapy pool, therapy rooms and a sensory garden.

Students follow individualised non-accredited learning plans that help to prepare them for adulthood. The curriculum aims to develop the skills that learners need for adulthood, including English, mathematics, health and wellbeing, workplace skills, independence and communication.

The college offers a range of therapies to support learners, including speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, occupational therapy, music therapy and, more recently, liquid listening to promote their physical wellbeing.

Principal: Deb Rattley

Lead inspector:

Sharon Dowling, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Steve Kelly, His Majesty's Inspector

Kevin Charley, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 21 April 2026

Number of learners

Percentage of learning aims successfully achieved

Adult learning programmes

Year	This provider	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	67	87	Below
2023/24	67	87	Below
2022/23	100	87	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other providers can learn from it.

Strong standard

The provider reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The provider is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The provider needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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