



BLACKBURNE
HOUSE

SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT 2024-2025

WOMEN'S TECHNOLOGY
TRAINING LIMITED

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Introduction and Context

Women's Technology Training Limited, operating as Blackburne House Education (BHE), is a training-led organisation dedicated to delivering high-quality education and skills development for women across the Liverpool City Region.

Our home is a landmark Grade II listed building, constructed in 1788, with a proud and enduring educational legacy. Formerly the Liverpool Institute High School for Girls - the country's first non-fee-paying girls' school - the building served generations of young women until the school's closure in 1986. In 1992, it was re-imagined as a Technical Training College for Women, marking the beginning of Blackburne House's mission to create opportunity, progression, and economic independence for women who face disadvantage.

This strong sense of heritage continues to shape our identity and ethos. Former pupils of both the girls' school and the college regularly return to Blackburne House, sharing memories and reinforcing the building's long-standing role as a place of learning, aspiration, and transformation. Situated in Liverpool's historic Georgian Quarter, Blackburne House benefits from close proximity to the city centre while remaining firmly embedded within one of the city's most diverse and culturally rich communities.

At the heart of Blackburne House Education are our core values: Independence, Transformation, Inspiration, and Equality. These values underpin our strategic direction, curriculum design, and day-to-day practice. We have intentionally created a culturally sensitive, safe, and nurturing learning environment that promotes confidence, resilience, and belonging. Learners are supported not only to achieve qualifications, but to develop the skills, self-belief, and aspirations needed to progress into employment, further learning, or self-employment.

Our mission is clear: to provide high-quality education and training that empowers disadvantaged women to unlock their full potential and achieve economic independence. We adopt a holistic approach to education, recognising and actively addressing barriers to participation and progression. Through tailored support and inclusive practice, Blackburne House Education enables learners to achieve meaningful personal and professional outcomes, contributing positively to their families, communities, and the wider regional economy.

Curriculum Offer and Learner Engagement

Blackburne House Education (BHE) engages learners across the Liverpool City Region through a diverse, inclusive, and intentionally designed curriculum. Provision is structured into clear, sector-based pathways, enabling learners to understand progression routes from the outset and supporting sustained movement into further learning, employment, or career development.

Curriculum planning is informed by learner starting points, community need, and local labour market priorities. Leaders ensure that learners can enter provision at an appropriate level and progress through well-sequenced pathways that build subject knowledge, essential skills, confidence, and employability over time.

Sector-Based Curriculum Pathways and Progression Routes

Health, Wellbeing and Social Care Pathway

This pathway supports progression into health, care, and community-based roles and responds directly to regional workforce demand. Provision includes:

- Health and Social Care (Levels 2 and 3)
- Holistic and Complementary Therapies
- Mental Health and Wellbeing short courses

Learners develop sector-specific knowledge, professional behaviours, and practical skills aligned to employment within health and care settings. Progression routes include employment within care services, community roles, and further study, including Access to Higher Education programmes.

Education, Childcare and Teaching Pathway

This pathway addresses identified skills shortages within education and early years and includes:

- Supporting Teaching and Learning
- Teacher Training
- Childcare and Education provision

Learners progress into roles within schools, early years settings, and education support services, as well as further professional training. Clear progression routes are supported by practical experience and employer engagement, enabling learners to move confidently into employment or higher-level study.

Mental Health, Counselling and Therapeutic Practice Pathway

This pathway prepares learners for careers within mental health support and therapeutic services and includes:

- Counselling (Levels 2–3)
- Young People's Mental Health

Learners benefit from structured progression routes into supervised practice, further qualifications, and employment. Provision is strengthened by access to on-site wellbeing and counselling services, enabling learners to contextualise learning and develop sector-relevant professional skills.

English, ESOL and Core Skills Pathway

This pathway underpins progression across all curriculum areas and includes:

- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) (Pre-Entry to Level 1)
- GCSE English and Mathematics
- Functional Skills in English and Mathematics

Provision supports learners with diverse linguistic and educational starting points to develop communication skills, confidence, and employability. Progression routes include vocational programmes, further academic study, and improved readiness for employment.

Preparation for Employment and Progression Pathway

This pathway supports learners who are not yet ready for accredited learning or immediate employment

and includes:

- Access to Higher Education
- Community Interpreting
- Summer School provision
- Short, non-accredited courses focused on wellbeing, confidence, and readiness for learning

These programmes act as effective **stepping stones**, particularly for learners who have been distant from education. Learners are supported to rebuild confidence, develop study skills, and progress into accredited provision or employment pathways aligned to their aspirations.

Learner Engagement and Progression

Learner engagement is strengthened through flexible delivery models, strong pastoral and wrap-around support, and a culture of high expectations. Short courses and non-regulated provision provide accessible entry points and support learners to re-engage with education at a pace appropriate to their circumstances.

Leaders ensure that progression pathways are clearly communicated through effective information, advice and guidance. Learners understand how their current programme links to future opportunities and are supported to make informed choices aligned to their aspirations, personal circumstances, and local employment opportunities.

As a result, learners are not only retained on programmes but are supported to make **sustained progress** into further learning, employment, or higher-level training, contributing to improved economic participation for themselves and their families.

Summer School 2025 – Family Learning and Progression

In summer 2025, BHE delivered a highly successful Summer School programme that focused on family learning and progression. Mothers were offered the opportunity to gain an accredited qualification in *Creative Play*, delivered alongside their children. This inclusive model enabled women who may otherwise face barriers to education—such as childcare, confidence, or prior negative educational experiences—to re-engage with learning in a supportive and welcoming environment.

Children participating in the Summer School benefitted from a full, transformative programme focused on teamwork, sharing, resilience, and social development. The programme was extremely successful, strengthening family learning bonds and creating positive educational experiences for both mothers and children.

Importantly, the Summer School acted as a clear progression pathway, enabling a number of mothers to transition successfully into BHE's main education offer. Due to its impact and strong learner outcomes, this programme will be offered again in 2026 as part of our wider engagement and progression strategy.

Meeting Regional Skills Needs and Inclusivity

BHE's curriculum is closely aligned to Liverpool City Region priorities and identified skills gaps. For example, demand for Supporting Teaching and Learning provision has increased significantly, reflecting growth across primary, further, and higher education sectors. BHE has responded effectively by prioritising this

area and supporting learners into sustainable employment.

A significant proportion of BHE learners include refugees and asylum seekers, lone parents, carers, long-term unemployed individuals, and women with no or low prior qualifications. While our primary focus is adult women, BHE is fully committed to inclusivity and the removal of barriers to learning. Targeted engagement strategies include ESOL-specific open days, multilingual information, bilingual staff support, and accessible enrolment processes.

Blackburne House is located in Toxteth, one of Liverpool's most deprived areas, where 32% of children live in low-income households. While rooted in this community, BHE serves learners from across the wider Liverpool City Region. Through comprehensive wraparound support — including learning support, financial advice and grants, childcare, and mental wellbeing services — learners are empowered to view education as a realistic and transformative pathway. This integrated model is a defining and unique feature of BHE's provision.

To further remove barriers to participation and progression, BH has developed a range of aligned social enterprise initiatives that directly support learner success. These include:

- A 52-place nursery, enabling access to childcare for learners with young children.
- An on-site Bistro, providing practical training and employment opportunities.
- The School for Social Entrepreneurs Northwest, supporting entrepreneurs to create social impact and drive change in their communities.
- A women-only Wellness Centre, offering a range of holistic and mental health services.
- A grant-giving programme, strengthening financial resilience, participation and reinforcing our commitment to improving the life chances of women in the region.

Together, these initiatives reinforce BHE's holistic approach and contribute significantly to learner engagement, retention, and progression

In September 2023, Blackburne House Education was judged **Good** by Ofsted for overall effectiveness. Since the inspection, leaders and managers have remained firmly committed to maintaining high standards while working strategically towards outstanding practice.

Enhancing ESOL provision remains a key priority, reflecting its position as one of the largest learner cohorts. Focus has been placed on improving stretch and challenge, strengthening progression pathways, and ensuring high-quality teaching and learning. In 2024/25, progression outcomes improved, with 100% of learners progressing from Pre Entry to Entry One. However, we remain committed to further improving achievement and progression outcomes across all levels of ESOL provision.

The review and improvement of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) has also been a focus. While sampling demonstrated generally effective practice, staff feedback highlighted opportunities for greater consistency and personalisation. A revised ILP process will be implemented in 2025/26 to ensure plans remain robust, meaningful, and consistently used to support and track learner progress.

Staff development was prioritised in 2024/25. The introduction of Microsoft Teams supported a more structured CPD programme, delivered with the support of an external Digital Support Manager. This included one-to-one sessions, group workshops, and digital learning resources. Staff also participated in

CPD sessions per term, focussing on teaching and learning enhancement, quality assurance, and continuous improvement.

Through these strategic actions, we remain confident that Blackburne House Education will not only maintain its well-established high standards of education and learner support but also strengthen and enhance them. These improvements will ensure a richer learning experience, increased outcomes for our learners, and sustained value for all stakeholders, while reinforcing our commitment to continuous improvement and excellence.

Looking Ahead

BHE's future focus is to build on existing strengths while expanding provision in response to identified workforce gaps, particularly within Early Years and Health and Social Care.

Following careful review, the 16–19 offer was refined to ensure delivery of a high-quality, full study programme aligned to both learner aspirations and labour market demand. In 2025/26, BHE enrolled 18 young women aged 16–19 onto the Early Years Practitioner Level 2 programme. This decision was informed by strong national and local demand for Level 2 practitioners and clear progression opportunities into Level 3 training and sustained employment.

A key strength of this model is the availability of BHE's on-site nursery, which enables learners to complete work experience in a high-quality, professionally supervised environment. This removes common placement barriers, strengthens the link between theory and practice, and supports confidence, employability skills, and sector readiness.

Identifying Gaps in Early Years Recruitment Using National Data

National workforce data highlights a significant and ongoing recruitment and retention challenge within the Early Years sector. Across England, there is a well-documented shortage of qualified Early Years practitioners, particularly at Levels 2 and 3, driven by increased demand for childcare places, staff turnover, and difficulties attracting young people into the sector. Employers consistently report vacancies, reliance on agency staff, and limited progression pipelines, creating pressure on service quality and sustainability. These national trends are reflected locally, reinforcing the need for targeted, employer-informed training provision that supports entry into the workforce and progression routes for new practitioners.

Enhancing Community and Employer Engagement

BHE will continue to strengthen relationships with employers, community organisations, and support services to enhance learner progression and destination outcomes. This collaborative approach supports clearer progression routes, improved transition into employment or further learning, and more responsive curriculum design.

In response to workforce pressures, BHE is also expanding employer-led provision, including targeted bootcamps within Health and Social Care and Early Years. These programmes are designed in partnership with employers to address skills shortages, upskill existing staff, and provide rapid entry routes into priority roles.

Our Commitment

Blackburne House Education is committed to enabling all learners to realise their full potential through the delivery of high-quality, inclusive education and training. We provide a safe, supportive, and aspirational learning environment where learners are respected, valued, and empowered to succeed.

Our curriculum is responsive to learner need, labour market priorities, and employer expectations, underpinned by strong partnerships and a culture of continuous improvement.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are central to our practice, ensuring learners develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and confidence required for sustained employment, progression, and positive participation in society.

MAIN REPORT

**Women's Technology Training Limited
(known as Blackburne House Education)**

Overall Effectiveness

The overall self-assessment judgement for Women’s Technology Training Limited, operating as Blackburne House Education (BHE), is Good (Grade 2). This judgement reflects the consistent quality of education, strong learner support, inclusive culture, and effective leadership and management across the organisation.

The key judgements informing this overall grade are summarised below and are explored in detail within the following sections of this report.

Judgement	Grade
Quality of Education	2
Behaviour and Attitudes	2
Personal Development	2
Leadership & Management	2
Overall grade:	2

Quality of Education (Grade 2)

Intent

Leaders and managers at Blackburne House Education (BHE) have a clear and well-defined curriculum intent that places learner wellbeing, safeguarding, and progression at its core. This intent is underpinned by a comprehensive and well-coordinated network of learner support services, designed to remove the personal, financial, and emotional barriers that many learners face and to enable them to engage fully and consistently in education and training.

BHE’s integrated, wraparound approach includes access to professional counselling services and targeted financial support through external grant programmes such as the Smallwood Trust and the Bishop David Sheppard Fund. Approximately £40,000 is distributed annually to learners, supporting them to stabilise their circumstances, address immediate financial hardship, and sustain participation in learning. Leaders recognise that without this targeted intervention, many learners would be unable to remain engaged. This support contributes positively to improved attendance, retention, and progression.

For many women, engagement with BHE begins through support services or informal learning before progressing into accredited provision. This phased and responsive approach allows learners to rebuild confidence, develop emotional resilience, and achieve the stability required to re-engage successfully with education. As a result, learners are better prepared to progress and to achieve their individual educational and employment goals.

The curriculum is deliberately designed to empower women, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, who make up 86% of the learner cohort. Leaders and managers demonstrate a strong understanding of the complex and intersecting barriers faced by learners and have sequenced the curriculum to develop confidence, essential skills, and employability behaviours alongside subject knowledge. Clear and realistic progression pathways are embedded within curriculum planning, supporting learners to move into further education, training, or sustained employment.

BHE offers a broad and inclusive curriculum that meets a wide range of needs, from pre-entry ESOL

through to GCSE English and Mathematics, alongside vocational provision at Levels 2 and 3 in priority growth sectors including Health and Social Care, Counselling, and Complementary Therapies. Curriculum planning is informed by labour market information and employer engagement, ensuring that learners develop relevant, transferable, and sector-specific skills.

Leaders prioritise high-quality teaching and learning through targeted and ongoing continuing professional development (CPD) for tutors. CPD focuses on improving consistency, assessment practice, and effective teaching strategies. The impact of this approach is evident in classroom delivery. For example, the proportion of tutors effectively varying questioning techniques increased from 87% in October 2024 to 91% by June 2025, following focused CPD activities including standardisation sessions, effective questioning strategies, and collaborative practice delivered through Microsoft Teams. As a result, learners are more actively engaged in lessons, provide more reflective and detailed responses, and demonstrate stronger understanding and sustained progress.

BHE is firmly committed to removing barriers to learning and creating an educational environment that is responsive to individual learner needs. Staff demonstrate a strong collective responsibility for each learner's journey, ensuring learners receive personalised support, encouragement, and challenge. Progress is recognised and celebrated at all stages, reinforcing confidence and motivation. Leaders, managers, and staff consistently hold high aspirations for learners and do not underestimate the potential or capabilities of the women they support.

Non-regulated programmes play a significant role in engaging learners who are not yet ready for accredited learning or who have been away from education for extended periods. These programmes act as effective stepping stones, supporting progression into regulated qualifications such as Counselling, ESOL, and Health and Social Care. Feedback from the February 2025 learner survey demonstrates the effectiveness of this approach, with 100% of learners on non-regulated courses reporting that they felt supported by their tutors, and 97% stating they would recommend Blackburne House Education to friends and family.

Learner feedback consistently reflects the strength of the learning experience at BHE:

- **94%** of learners agree that lessons are well organised
- **97%** feel that the information, advice, and guidance provided by tutors is sufficient
- **95%** rate the teaching on their course as good or better

This strong learner voice reinforces leaders' confidence that the curriculum intent is being realised effectively in practice. The ongoing focus on quality, responsiveness, and learner-centred support underpins BHE's ambition to sustain high standards and to continue progressing towards outstanding practice.

Implementation

Tutors at Blackburne House Education (BHE) implement the curriculum effectively through well-sequenced teaching that is informed by robust initial assessment processes. Learners' starting points are accurately identified, enabling tutors to plan appropriately and ensure that individual support needs are in place from the outset. Teaching is personalised and responsive, enabling learners to recall and build on prior learning and to apply new knowledge and skills with increasing confidence.

Learner progress is monitored systematically through Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), regular formative assessment, and ongoing feedback. This approach enables tutors to identify learners at risk of falling behind and to intervene promptly. Continuous feedback supports learners to understand their progress,

refine their work, and remain focused on achieving their learning goals.

The curriculum is further strengthened through the consistent embedding of English, mathematics, British Values, and equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). Tutors actively promote critical thinking and challenge stereotypes and negative societal perceptions, creating an inclusive and respectful learning environment. Learners develop increased awareness, confidence, and the ability to engage thoughtfully with wider social issues alongside their academic and vocational studies.

Strength of Level 2 Provision (2024/25)

Level 2 provision was a significant strength in the 2024/25 academic year. Programmes including Level 2 Counselling, Level 2 Health and Social Care, and Level 2 Complementary Therapies were carefully planned and effectively delivered to meet learners' needs and aspirations. Teaching, learning, and assessment across these pathways were consistently strong, enabling learners to make substantial and sustained progress from their starting points.

Learners benefitted from a well-sequenced curriculum that developed both subject-specific knowledge and essential employability skills. Staff set high expectations and provided effective academic and pastoral support, ensuring that learners remained engaged and motivated. As a result, learners demonstrated improved confidence, resilience, and commitment to their studies.

Achievement outcomes at Level 2 were particularly strong, with an overall achievement rate of **89.8%**, representing overachievement against targets. Leaders attribute this success to effective teaching strategies, robust monitoring of learner progress, and timely intervention for learners at risk of underachievement.

Importantly, Level 2 programmes provided clear and coherent progression pathways into 2025/26. A high proportion of learners progressed successfully into higher-level study, apprenticeships, or relevant employment. Progression routes were clearly communicated, and learners received effective careers guidance to support informed decision-making. This demonstrates that provision is well aligned to both learners' longer-term goals and local labour market needs.

Overall, the strength of Level 2 provision in 2024/25 made a significant contribution to positive learner outcomes and ensured that learners were well prepared for their next steps. This strong foundation positions the provision well for continued success and further improvement in 2025/26.

Tutors delivering vocational programmes draw effectively on their extensive industry experience to contextualise learning and provide meaningful, real-world applications of theoretical concepts. Learners benefit from examples and scenarios that reflect current industry practice, enhancing relevance and employability.

The curriculum is further strengthened by the systematic integration of high-quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG). BHE was awarded the **Matrix Standard in 2024/25**, recognising the effectiveness of its careers provision. Learner feedback consistently highlights the positive impact of careers interventions, with learners reporting that they feel well supported to make informed decisions about their next steps. As a result, learners are well prepared for progression into employment or further study within their chosen sectors.

The Student Support Officer and Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision work closely with tutors to ensure learners with additional needs receive timely and appropriate support. Learners undertake thorough assessments to identify support requirements, which may include additional exam time, adapted learning materials, one-to-one support, or referral for external assessments such as dyslexia screening. This coordinated approach ensures that learners with additional needs are supported effectively and are able to achieve their learning goals without unnecessary barriers.

Impact

The consistent and effective use of the quality improvement calendar has strengthened the impact of teaching, learning, and assessment across Blackburne House Education (BHE). Leaders and managers use a comprehensive range of quality assurance activities to evaluate performance, drive improvement, and secure consistency across provision. These include lesson observations, learner surveys, destination tracking, standardisation activities, curriculum deep dives, and peer-to-peer observations. Together, these processes enable leaders to identify strengths, address areas for development, and ensure that improvements are sustained over time.

Leaders have achieved Direct Claims Status in several programmes, including Level 2 Counselling and Level 2 Health and Social Care. This reflects strong confidence in assessment practice and the effectiveness of internal quality assurance systems. As a result of these measures, 95% of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) meet the required quality standards, ensuring that learners benefit from highly personalised support and that progress is monitored, reviewed, and acted upon effectively.

Leaders and managers monitor learners' progress in learning systematically through a combination of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), formative assessment, attendance and engagement data, lesson observations, and regular curriculum performance reviews. Progress data is analysed at course, cohort, and individual learner level to identify patterns, strengths, and any learners at risk of underachievement.

Continuous professional development remains a key driver of impact. Regular, well-planned CPD days focus on enhancing tutors' pedagogical practice, assessment confidence, and subject knowledge. These are complemented by frequent one-to-one performance and development meetings, providing staff with clear, constructive feedback and targeted support. The introduction of Microsoft Teams has further strengthened communication and consistency, enabling timely submission of learner work and prompt, high-quality feedback. The positive impact of these actions is reflected in high learner satisfaction and a strong retention rate of 93.7%, indicating that learners feel supported, motivated, and able to sustain their learning.

Key quality improvements that have contributed to strengthened outcomes include:

- Schemes of Work (SoW): Redesigned to ensure clear sequencing, coherence, and alignment to learning objectives. All SoWs are stored centrally and subject to regular quality assurance, promoting consistency across programmes.
- Group Profiles: Implemented across all provision to identify learners' strengths and support needs early, enabling proactive intervention and maximising learner potential.
- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs): Fully embedded across both regulated and non-regulated

provision, driving personalised support, learner engagement, and progress tracking.

Learner feedback continues to be highly positive, demonstrating the impact of these improvements. Survey results from June 2025 show that:

- 95% of learners are satisfied with the quality of teaching
- 97% value the support they receive from their tutor
- 97% of ESOL learners feel lessons are well organised, with 93% reporting that they are making good progress
- 98% of learners would recommend Blackburne House Education to friends and family

Leaders and managers routinely share course performance data with tutors, enabling informed and timely decision-making that supports learner retention and achievement. As a result, outcomes have continued to improve, with particularly strong performance in Counselling, Health and Social Care, and Complementary Therapies.

The commitment of leaders, managers, and tutors is reflected in the consistently high-quality learning experience offered at BHE. A learner-centred approach, underpinned by robust quality assurance, a well-designed and responsive curriculum, and strong pastoral support, ensures that learners are empowered to progress and achieve their goals. Continuous improvement and responsiveness to learner and employer need remain central to BHE’s mission to deliver high-quality education and training for women across the Liverpool City Region.

Achievement Data

Blackburne House Education (BHE) has demonstrated a sustained upward trend in learner achievement over time, reflecting the strengthening impact of curriculum design, teaching quality, and targeted learner support.

Achievement overall (and percentage of learners)	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	71.6% (+23%)	76.2% (+5.3)	81.7%	80.6%
Level 1 77.2% (including Entry)	74%	80% (+6%)	80.9%	79.5%
Level 2 19.9%	66.7%	66.8% (+0.1%)	83.5%	89.8%
Level 3 2.3%	41.4%	62.2% (+20.8%)	90.6%	67.1%
Level 4 0.4%	/	83.3%	100%	/

Overall achievement has increased steadily from 71.6% in 2021/22 to 80.6% in 2024/25, representing a significant improvement over four years. While there was a marginal decrease of 1.1 percentage points between 2023/24 and 2024/25, leaders consider this a position of stability rather than decline, particularly given changes in cohort profile and increased learner volume.

Importantly, this slight fluctuation masks strong performance and continued improvement at key levels, most notably Level 2.

Achievement by Level

- **Level 1 (including Entry):** Achievement has remained stable over time, at 79.5% in 2024/25, reflecting the complex barriers faced by learners entering provision at lower levels and the continued need for strong pastoral and academic support.
- **Level 2:** Achievement increased significantly to 89.8% in 2024/25, an improvement of 6.3 percentage points on the previous year. This represents a major strength of provision and reflects effective initial assessment, accurate placement, strong teaching, and timely intervention.
- **Level 3:** Achievement at Level 3 declined in 2024/25 to **67.1%**, following a period of significant improvement in 2021/22 and 2023/24. Leaders have reviewed this variation carefully and have a clear and accurate understanding of the contributing factors. Level 3 cohorts are relatively small and include a higher proportion of learners with complex personal, financial, and wellbeing barriers, many of whom are returning to education after extended periods or progressing from lower-level provision.

In addition, Level 3 programmes place increased academic and professional demands on learners, including higher expectations around independent study, assessment volume, and, in some pathways, mandatory work placement requirements. For a small number of learners, these increased demands impacted achievement despite strong engagement and retention.

Leaders do not underestimate the significance of this decline and have implemented targeted actions to strengthen Level 3 outcomes. These include enhanced readiness assessment prior to enrolment, clearer progression criteria from Level 2, earlier diagnostic assessment of academic writing and study skills, and increased structured academic support during the early stages of programmes. Initial monitoring in-year indicates improved learner confidence, stronger engagement with assessment, and more secure progress against planned milestones.

Curriculum Area Performance (2024/25)

Headline QAR data below shows a strong overall position:

- Achievement: 80.8%
- Retention: 93.7%
- Pass rate: 86.2%

Particular strengths include:

- Health, Public Services and Care: 92.4% achievement
- Retail and Commercial Enterprise: 100% achievement and retention
- Preparation for Life and Work: Strong retention at 94.9%, reflecting effective learner engagement and support

These outcomes compare positively with previous years and demonstrate consistent improvement across most curriculum areas, particularly those aligned to labour market demand and clear progression routes.

Learner Progression and Retention

Retention remains a significant strength, with 93.7% of learners retained in 2024/25. This reflects the effectiveness of BHE's wraparound support model, early identification of learners at risk of withdrawal, and strong tutor–learner relationships.

Learners on vocational programmes such as Counselling, Health and Social Care, and Complementary Therapies continue to achieve particularly strong outcomes, supported by clear progression pathways into further study and employment.

Achievement (Ethnicity group)

Achievement data shows variation between ethnic groups. In 2024/25:

- White learners achieved at 87.3% (565 enrolments)
- Learners from ethnic minority backgrounds achieved at 77.6% (941 enrolments)

YEAR/SSA	# in ILR	# in QAR	# leave	# complete	# achieve	ACH	RET	PASS
2024/25	941	882	882	831	684	77.6%	94.2%	82.3%
African	119	108	108	99	71	65.7%	91.7%	71.7%
Any other								
Asian	42	38	38	37	32	84.2%	97.4%	86.5%
Any other								
Black / African								
background	14	11	11	11	11	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Any other								
ethnic group	186	172	172	157	128	74.4%	91.3%	81.5%
Any other								
Mixed /								
multiple								
ethnic								
background	56	54	54	48	43	79.6%	88.9%	89.6%
Arab	336	325	325	313	256	78.8%	96.3%	81.8%
Bangladeshi	29	26	26	26	26	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Caribbean	14	14	14	14	13	92.9%	100.0%	92.9%
Chinese	23	22	22	21	15	68.2%	95.5%	71.4%
Pakistani	25	22	22	19	18	81.8%	86.4%	94.7%
White and								
Asian	28	25	25	25	19	76.0%	100.0%	76.0%
White and								
Black African	45	43	43	39	33	76.7%	90.7%	84.6%
White and								
Black								
Caribbean	24	22	22	22	19	86.4%	100.0%	86.4%

Leaders recognise this achievement gap and understand that it is influenced by cohort composition, with a significantly higher proportion of learners from ethnic minority backgrounds entering provision at lower starting points, including ESOL and Entry-level programmes.

While many ethnic minority learners demonstrate strong retention and progress, leaders acknowledge that further work is required to improve achievement rates and close the gap. Targeted actions include:

- Enhanced initial assessment and diagnostic processes
- Increased academic language support within vocational and ESOL provision
- More frequent progress reviews for learners at risk of underachievement
- Continued professional development for tutors on culturally responsive teaching

These actions are already embedded within quality improvement planning and will remain a priority area for monitoring and evaluation.

Summary Evaluation

Overall achievement data demonstrates that BHE is an improving provider, with strong performance at Level 2, high retention, and consistently positive outcomes across priority curriculum areas. Where achievement is less strong, leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the underlying factors and have implemented targeted, proportionate actions to secure further improvement.

Achievement trends, when considered alongside high learner satisfaction, strong retention, and clear progression routes, confirm that learners at Blackburne House Education are supported effectively to achieve meaningful outcomes and progress towards their individual goals.

Actions for the 2025/26 Academic Year

In response to the identified achievement gap between white learners (87.3%) and learners from ethnic minority backgrounds (77.6%), alongside the significantly higher enrolment of learners from ethnic minority groups (941 learners), leaders have identified this as a key improvement priority for the 2025/26 academic year.

Targeted and proportionate actions will be implemented to improve outcomes and reduce this gap:

- **Targeted learner analysis:**
Leaders will undertake detailed analysis of achievement, retention, and attendance data for learners from ethnic minority backgrounds to identify specific programmes, levels, or stages where outcomes are weaker. This analysis will inform targeted curriculum and support interventions.
- **Enhanced early intervention:**
Initial assessment and early monitoring processes will be strengthened to identify learners at risk of underachievement or withdrawal at the earliest opportunity. This will ensure timely academic and pastoral interventions are put in place, particularly during the early stages of learning.
- **Focused support strategies:**
Tailored support for learners from ethnic minority backgrounds will be reviewed and enhanced, including academic skills development, mentoring, and wellbeing services. Support will be proportionate to the needs of a larger and more diverse cohort and responsive to identified barriers.
- **Staff development and awareness:**
Focused staff development will be delivered to strengthen inclusive teaching practices and cultural awareness, ensuring tutors are well equipped to support learner engagement, confidence, and progression across all programmes.
- **Monitoring and accountability:**
Regular progress reviews will be implemented to evaluate the impact of these interventions on achievement gaps. Clear accountability will be embedded at curriculum and programme level, with actions reviewed through quality meetings and the quality improvement cycle.

These actions form part of BHE's wider quality improvement strategy and demonstrate leaders' commitment to addressing identified gaps, improving equity of outcomes, and ensuring all learners are supported to achieve their full potential during the 2025/26 academic year.

Achievement (Difficulty or Disability)

YEAR/SSA	# in ILR	# in QAR	# leave	# complete	# achieve	ACH	RET	PASS
2024/25	1409	1324	1324	1241	1070	80.8%	93.7%	86.2%
Learner considers himself or herself to have a learning difficulty and/or disability and/or health problem.	277	260	260	236	208	80.0%	90.8%	88.1%
Learner does not consider himself or herself to have a learning difficulty and/or disability and/or health problem.	1130	1063	1063	1004	862	81.1%	94.4%	85.9%
No information provided by the learner.	2	1	1	1	0	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

Achievement outcomes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at Blackburne House Education (BHE) are strong and closely aligned with those of learners without declared additional needs.

The achievement variance between learners with and without a learning difficulty or disability is 1.1%, which is well within the accepted 3% tolerance. Leaders consider this a strong indicator that inclusive teaching strategies, targeted support, and reasonable adjustments are effective.

Retention for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities remains high at 90.8%, demonstrating that learners feel supported and able to sustain engagement with their programmes. Pass rates are also strong at 88.1%, exceeding those of learners without declared additional needs.

Leaders recognise that learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities may experience barriers such as slower processing speeds, memory retention challenges, organisational difficulties, and communication needs. The close alignment in outcomes indicates that current support arrangements are mitigating these barriers effectively. Nonetheless, leaders remain vigilant and recognise the importance of maintaining and strengthening inclusive practice to ensure equity of outcomes.

Actions for the 2025/26 Academic Year

In light of the small achievement variance and strong outcomes, actions for 2025/26 will focus on sustaining and strengthening effective inclusive practice. Planned actions include:

- Sustained and targeted one-to-one support:**
 Continuing personalised academic and pastoral support where required, ensuring interventions remain proportionate, responsive, and focused on developing learner independence.
- Early and accurate assessment:**
 Maintaining robust initial and early-stage assessment processes to identify support needs promptly and ensure appropriate differentiation and reasonable adjustments are embedded from the outset.
- Focused and timely interventions:**
 Implementing targeted interventions to address emerging learning challenges, with regular review to ensure continued progress and responsiveness to learner need.

These actions will consolidate current strengths, reinforce an inclusive learning environment, and support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve outcomes in line with their peers.

Destinations

Destination data shows a mixed but improving picture, reflecting both the complexity of the learner cohort and the impact of strengthened careers guidance and employability support.

<u>Destinations</u>	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	var.
EDU 1 - 6	20.2%	47%	63.3%	42.3%	-21%
EMP 1 - 5	11.8%	10.6%	8.9%	11.4%	+2.5%
NPE 1 & 2	62.9%	41.3%	27.4%	44.5%	+17.1%
OTH 1 & 2	4.9%	0.8%	0%	1.2%	+1.2%
VOL.	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0%	-0.5%
Positive destination:	37.2%	58.7%	72.7%	54.9%	-17.8%

*ILR defined destinations as destination outcomes for LCRCA funded enrolments.

EDU 1 - HE	EMP 4 - employed voluntary work
EDU 2 - other FE Full time	NPE 1 - not in paid employ, looking for work
EDU 3 - other FE Part time	NPE 2 - not in paid employ, not looking for work
EMP 1 - paid employment, 16 hrs or more	OTH 1 - not known
EMP 2 - paid employment, less than 16 hrs	OTH 2 - unable to contact the learner
EMP 3 - self-employed, less than 16 hrs	VOL1- Undertaking voluntary work

While the overall proportion of learners entering a positive destination decreased in 2024/25, leaders have reviewed this carefully and attribute the change to cohort composition and the increased proportion of learners with complex personal, social, and linguistic barriers who require longer-term and staged progression routes. For many learners, particularly those on ESOL and Preparation for Life and Work programmes, progression into further learning, increased confidence, and improved readiness for employment represents significant and meaningful progress.

Importantly, the proportion of learners entering employment increased from 8.9% in 2023/24 to 11.4% in 2024/25. This reflects the growing impact of strengthened Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), improved employer engagement, and vocational pathways aligned to local labour market demand. Learners entering employment do so across a range of sectors, including health and social care, childcare, hospitality, and community services.

Economic and Family Impact

Leaders recognise that destination outcomes at Blackburne House Education should be understood not only in terms of immediate employment or further study, but also through their wider economic and social impact on families and communities. As a women-only provider, BHE primarily supports adult women, many of whom are mothers, carers, or the main economic contributors within their households.

Progression into employment, increased working hours, or further learning contributes directly to improved household income, financial stability, and reduced reliance on benefits. In turn, this has a positive impact on children and families, including improved access to childcare, housing stability, and increased aspiration for education and employment within the home. Learners frequently report that their participation in education enables them to better support their children's learning, model positive attitudes towards education, and make informed decisions about work and wellbeing.

For learners who progress into further education rather than immediate employment, this staged approach supports sustainable long-term economic participation. Leaders recognise that for many women facing multiple barriers, rapid entry into low-paid or insecure work is not always the most appropriate outcome. Instead, progression into higher-level qualifications or sector-specific training increases employability, earning potential, and long-term contribution to the local economy.

Destination tracking therefore considers distance travelled as well as final outcomes. Leaders use this information to refine careers guidance, strengthen employer partnerships, and support sustained transitions that lead to stable employment and improved economic outcomes for learners and their families.

Destination tracking remains a key focus for ongoing improvement, with actions embedded to strengthen employer links, progression planning, and sustained transitions into employment, further education, and training.

Behaviour and Attitudes (Grade 2)

At Blackburne House Education (BHE), leaders and staff establish and sustain high expectations for learners' behaviour, attendance, and commitment to learning. These expectations are clearly communicated, consistently reinforced, and embedded through a structured induction process that ensures learners understand their responsibilities from the outset.

A recently enhanced induction programme supports learners to transition successfully into learning and to understand expectations within both their course and the wider learning environment. Central to this is the clearly articulated 'ABC of Blackburne House Education', which reinforces the importance of attending punctually, behaving appropriately, and committing fully to learning. This approach provides a shared framework for expectations and supports consistency across provision.

The induction process is carefully adapted to meet the diverse linguistic needs of learners, including those at pre-entry ESOL through to fluent English speakers. Learners at Entry Level 2 and above complete an induction booklet that reinforces key expectations and supports early engagement. All learners have access to a comprehensive student handbook via a QR code, which clearly outlines policies relating to behaviour management, disciplinary procedures, safeguarding, and complaints. Learners value this clear and accessible information, which contributes to strong engagement and a shared understanding of acceptable conduct.

Tutors play a central role in promoting positive behaviour and regular attendance. Leaders have introduced effective systems, including a text alert process, to support punctuality and reinforce

expectations. While leaders recognise that attendance remains an area for continued improvement, staff respond promptly and proportionately to lateness and absence through targeted interventions that address individual barriers, maintain engagement, and support safeguarding.

BHE provides a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment in which learners behave well and demonstrate mutual respect for staff and peers. Staff are skilled at identifying learners with low confidence or self-esteem and provide timely and appropriate support to help them build resilience and self-belief. This supportive culture is reflected in exceptionally low levels of poor behaviour. During the 2024/25 academic year, there was **only one suspension**, and **no reported incidents of bullying or discrimination**. Learners actively support one another, value diversity, and contribute positively to a calm and collaborative learning environment.

Leaders successfully embed the organisation's core values of **Inspiration, Transformation, Equality, and Independence** throughout the curriculum, enrichment activities, and wider learner experience. Learners also benefit from well-coordinated pastoral and practical support, including access to food and clothing provision and wellbeing and counselling services where required. As a result, learners feel valued, safe, and motivated to remain engaged with their learning, enabling them to focus on developing positive behaviours and attitudes that support their progress and achievement.

Personal Development (Grade 2)

At Blackburne House Education (BHE), learners are supported effectively to develop the personal skills, knowledge, and behaviours they need to progress successfully to further education, training, or employment. Staff create a highly inclusive and respectful learning environment in which learners feel safe, valued, and confident to express themselves. Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are promoted consistently across the organisation, enabling learners to develop a secure understanding of British values, mutual respect, and tolerance. Staff are vigilant and proactive in identifying and addressing concerns, contributing to a positive culture that supports learners' personal growth and wellbeing.

Tutors have a strong understanding of learners' starting points, aspirations, and potential barriers to progression. Careers education, information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) is well planned and embedded across all programmes. Learners receive tailored guidance at the start of their courses to explore aspirations and set clear, realistic goals. This is reinforced through workshops delivered by the National Careers Service (NCS), providing impartial advice and a broad understanding of progression routes and employment opportunities across sectors. Learners can also access informal CIAG sessions during and at the end of their programmes, ensuring they are well prepared and confident to make informed decisions about their next steps.

The Learner Support Officer provides a comprehensive and holistic service that supports learners' personal, social, and professional development. Weekly drop-in sessions enable learners to access IT facilities and receive practical support with job searching, CV writing, and interview preparation. Learners also benefit from targeted one-to-one support, including:

- wellbeing referrals and access to counselling services
- learning support assessments to identify additional needs and implement appropriate strategies
- attendance monitoring and targeted interventions to sustain engagement and retention

In response to an increasing number of learners requiring advice related to immigration and legal matters, BHE has introduced a dedicated drop-in service in partnership with MSB Solicitors. This

provision enables learners to access specialist advice on immigration status, family law, and financial matters. This timely and relevant support reduces anxiety, removes significant barriers to participation, and enables learners to remain focused on their learning.

Learners' personal development and social inclusion are further enhanced through a range of enrichment activities. The weekly 'Chatty Café', hosted in the on-site Bistro, provides a safe and welcoming space where learners, staff, and members of the wider community can build relationships, reduce social isolation, and develop confidence through informal interaction.

Staff demonstrate a strong awareness of the social and economic challenges faced by many learners and take effective action to remove barriers to learning. A comprehensive bursary scheme supports learners with travel, childcare, and meal costs, enabling disadvantaged learners to attend regularly, engage fully, and achieve their goals without undue financial pressure.

BHE actively promotes cultural awareness and respect, particularly through its ESOL provision. Learners are encouraged to share their cultural backgrounds, traditions, and experiences, including food associated with significant celebrations. These carefully planned activities strengthen relationships, promote mutual understanding, and foster a strong sense of belonging.

The organisation is responsive to learners' religious needs. Staff make appropriate and sensitive adjustments during periods of religious observance, such as fasting, including timetable adaptations where necessary. For example, lessons may start earlier to support learners' wellbeing later in the day, demonstrating a thoughtful and respectful approach to individual needs.

As an all-female education provider, BHE places strong emphasis on empowering women and celebrating their achievements. A comprehensive programme was delivered to mark International Women's Day, including a week of activities where inspirational women shared their personal and professional journeys. The programme concluded with a celebratory event recognising women nominated by learners and staff for their positive impact on families, communities, and education. This initiative strongly reflects organisational values and has a significant positive impact on learners' confidence, aspirations, and sense of identity.

Learners' wellbeing is promoted effectively through a combination of planned and responsive strategies. BHE offers accredited qualifications in mental health and stress awareness, equipping learners with practical strategies to manage their own wellbeing and support others. Learners also have access to an in-house counselling service that provides timely, confidential support, enabling them to manage personal challenges and remain focused on their goals.

The organisation routinely reviews wellbeing and safeguarding referrals to identify emerging themes and trends. In response, BHE delivers targeted workshops as part of the personal development curriculum, including sessions on healthy relationships and resilience. These workshops contribute positively to learners' understanding of personal safety, emotional wellbeing, and self-regulation.

British values and the Prevent duty are embedded consistently across the curriculum. Learners develop a secure understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance. Tutors use naturally occurring opportunities within lessons to promote discussion and reflection, enabling learners to develop critical thinking skills and a strong sense of social responsibility. BHE works closely with external partners, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Police Anti-Terrorism Unit, strengthening safeguarding arrangements and reinforcing learners' awareness of radicalisation risks and how to keep themselves and others safe.

Through a coherent and integrated approach that combines high-quality pastoral support, financial assistance, enrichment, and impartial careers guidance, Blackburne House Education ensures learners

develop the confidence, skills, and knowledge required to progress successfully and participate positively in society.

Learner Voice

“The organisation gives me confidence to become independent. It gives me hope and encouragement. I feel inspired and welcomed.”

“I have felt bullied before and was home with nothing to do. Now I make my own decisions about my time.”

“I have been developing myself. This is transformation and I am confident.”

Leadership and Management (Grade 2)

During 2024/25, leaders and managers at Blackburne House Education (BHE) have demonstrated a strong and sustained commitment to continuous improvement and the delivery of high-quality education and training. Leaders use performance data effectively to evaluate the quality of provision, identify trends, and inform strategic decision-making. The Quality Improvement Plan (QUIP) is used well to set clear priorities, with actions carefully targeted to address areas for improvement and to strengthen outcomes for learners.

Policies, procedures, and operational processes are reviewed systematically to ensure they remain fit for purpose, aligned with sector best practice, and compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements. This structured and reflective approach supports consistency, accountability, and effective risk management across the organisation.

Leaders place high value on learners’ views and use feedback purposefully to inform improvement. Learner voice activities, including multiple surveys conducted throughout the year, provide meaningful insight into the learner experience. Feedback is overwhelmingly positive and confirms that learners value the quality of teaching, the effectiveness of support services, and the inclusive and supportive learning environment. Leaders use this feedback alongside performance data to shape priorities and refine provision.

Staff benefit from a structured and well-planned continuing professional development (CPD) programme that supports high-quality curriculum delivery and pedagogical practice. The CPD offer is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains responsive to identified needs, organisational priorities, and external requirements. As a result, staff are well supported to develop their practice and to meet the diverse needs of learners effectively.

Governance is strong and effective. The Board of Governors, which includes senior leaders from a range of professional sectors, provides clear strategic direction and robust challenge. Governors scrutinise performance information closely and hold senior leaders to account for the quality of provision and learner outcomes. Their active involvement ensures that the QUIP remains a dynamic and effective tool for driving sustained improvement.

To strengthen data-informed leadership, BHE has implemented improved Management Information System (MIS) reporting and an enhanced suite of management reports. These provide timely and accurate information on attendance, progress, and achievement, enabling leaders and managers to intervene

promptly and proportionately where required. As a result of these improvements, overall achievement rates stood at 80.6% in 2024/25, reflecting stability and continued improvement over time.

Communication across the organisation is well established. Monthly team meetings and regular one-to-one supervision sessions support a culture of openness, collaboration, and mutual accountability. These forums enable staff to manage workloads, raise concerns, contribute to quality improvement activity, and maintain their wellbeing. Staff feedback confirms that these arrangements promote a positive working culture and strong team cohesion.

Safeguarding and inclusion are high priorities for leaders and managers. A comprehensive induction programme for new staff includes mandatory training in safeguarding, Prevent, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), online safety, and mental health awareness. Plans are in place to extend elements of this programme to existing staff, ensuring a consistent and robust approach to staff development and learner safety across the organisation.

Since the appointment of the current leadership team, there has been a clear and focused drive for improvement. Leaders have strengthened the quality assurance framework through more rigorous compliance checks, earlier intervention strategies, and sharper use of data to improve provision. During 2024/25, an Advanced Practitioner role was introduced to further strengthen teaching and learning. This role provides mentoring for newly appointed staff, supports the standardised use of Microsoft Teams, and increases capacity for learning walks and lesson observations. This has contributed positively to the consistency and quality of teaching practice across provision.

Leaders and managers also engage in external professional development through a partnership with Liverpool John Moores University. Managers participate in a coaching and mentoring programme and receive training in lesson observation, which has strengthened leadership capacity and improved the quality of internal mentoring. The partnership has been effective in identifying further development needs and will continue into 2025/26.

Leaders remain ambitious for Blackburne House Education and are committed to meeting the evolving needs of the local community. Through reflective practice, effective governance, and a strong focus on equity and inclusion, leaders ensure that BHE continues to provide high-quality, responsive education and training that enables learners to achieve positive outcomes and progress successfully to their next steps.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding at Blackburne House Education (BHE) is highly effective and firmly embedded within the organisation's culture and day-to-day practice. Leaders, managers, and staff share a strong collective responsibility for safeguarding and demonstrate a secure understanding of their roles in identifying risk, recognising signs of harm, and responding promptly and appropriately to concerns. Learners' safety and wellbeing are prioritised at all times, and safeguarding underpins all aspects of the organisation's work with both young people and adults.

Leadership and Governance of Safeguarding

Safeguarding leadership is strong, well defined, and effective. The Head of Education acts as the

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and is supported by an expanded Safeguarding Team, increasing capacity and ensuring timely responses to concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) meets regularly with Annette Hennessey, the Board's named Link Governor for Safeguarding, to provide focused challenge, oversight, and assurance. These meetings focus on reviewing safeguarding data and emerging risks, monitoring individual cases to ensure appropriate action is taken, and identifying priorities for staff training and learner development.

Safeguarding governance is robust. Governors receive regular safeguarding and Prevent updates and training to ensure they remain informed about current legislation, local risks, and national priorities. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at Blackburne House Education & Quality Committee meetings, where leaders present detailed reports on incidents, trends, training compliance, and the impact of interventions. Governors also participate in learning walks to evaluate safeguarding arrangements in practice, assess the learning environment, and gather learners' views on how safe they feel. This ensures safeguarding arrangements are not only compliant but effective.

Safeguarding Policies and Procedures (2024/25)

During 2024/25, leaders reviewed and strengthened safeguarding policies and procedures in line with the most recent statutory guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and Prevent Duty requirements. Updated and embedded policies include:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Prevent Risk Assessment and Prevent Duty Action Plan
- Safer Recruitment Policy and procedures
- Low-level concerns policy
- Allegations against staff and whistleblowing procedures
- Online safety, including filtering and monitoring arrangements
- Peer-on-peer abuse and contextual safeguarding

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of these policies and apply them consistently. Safer recruitment practices are rigorous, with all required pre-employment checks completed and accurately recorded.

Responding to Emerging Risks

Leaders adopt a proactive and responsive approach to safeguarding. Analysis of safeguarding and welfare data has identified emerging risks, including increased mental health needs linked to financial hardship and housing insecurity, a rise in domestic abuse incidents, and heightened awareness of radicalisation risks following a local terrorist incident. In response, leaders have strengthened Prevent arrangements, reviewed risk assessments, and enhanced staff and learner training.

BHE works closely with the Regional Prevent Coordinator to ensure that the Prevent Risk Assessment and Action Plan reflect current local intelligence. This is supported by strong partnerships with the Liverpool Safeguarding Board, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and the Police Anti-Terrorism Unit.

Specialist external speakers are used effectively to strengthen learners' awareness of safeguarding risks. During 2024/25, workshops covered topics including coercive control, healthy relationships, domestic abuse, county lines, and exploitation. These sessions enable learners to recognise risk and understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

Recording, Monitoring and Early Intervention

Leaders have strengthened systems for recording and monitoring safeguarding and welfare concerns. A secure digital recording system is used consistently to log safeguarding incidents and lower-level concerns, enabling early identification of need and timely intervention. Monthly safeguarding summaries are shared with senior leaders and governors, ensuring transparency and effective oversight.

A wellbeing log has been introduced to categorise and track learner support across six key areas. Analysis shows that the most common areas of need relate to careers information, advice and guidance, pastoral support, and poverty-related issues. This information is reviewed regularly by teams and informs targeted and proportionate support strategies.

Staff Training and Awareness

Safeguarding training is comprehensive and mandatory for all staff. New staff complete role-specific safeguarding and Prevent training as part of induction, including Education and Training Foundation (ETF) training. During 2024/25, enhanced safeguarding and Prevent training was extended to existing staff to ensure consistency and confidence across the organisation. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of procedures and know how to escalate concerns appropriately.

Learner Voice and Impact

Learners are well informed about safeguarding and how to access support. Learner surveys conducted in February and July 2025 show a clear improvement in perceptions of safety, with the proportion of learners reporting that they feel safe increasing from 97% to 100%. Learners know who to speak to if they have concerns and report that information about safeguarding and support services is clear, visible, and easy to understand.

Learners consistently describe BHE as a safe, welcoming, and non-judgemental environment. Strong, trusting relationships with staff enable learners to raise concerns with confidence and access support when needed.

Wellbeing and External Support

Safeguarding is further strengthened through close collaboration with the in-house Counselling and Wellbeing Service. Learners experiencing mental health or welfare challenges receive timely, appropriate support. Leaders also work effectively with external agencies and specialist services to provide coordinated support for learners with complex needs, enabling them to overcome barriers and remain engaged in

learning.

Overall Safeguarding Evaluation

Through strong leadership, effective governance, up-to-date policies, comprehensive training, and a culture of vigilance and care, Blackburne House Education maintains a robust and responsive safeguarding framework. As a result, learners are safe, well supported, and able to engage confidently in their education and personal development.

Committed to continuous improvement

Leaders and managers at Blackburne House Education (BHE) demonstrate a strong and sustained commitment to continuous improvement and to the organisation's core values of Inspiration, Transformation, Equality, and Independence. Self-assessment is accurate and reflective. Leaders recognise that, while outcomes have improved over time, further work is required to ensure that all learners achieve their full potential and that achievement continues to rise across all programmes and learner groups.

Achievement

Overall achievement rates have improved by 5.5 percentage points compared to the previous academic year. However, outcomes remain below the national benchmark of 86%, and leaders have identified this as a key strategic priority. In response, a coherent, well-sequenced improvement strategy has been implemented to strengthen learner achievement, retention, and progression. This strategy is closely monitored through the Quality Improvement Plan (QUIP) and supported by enhanced use of performance data to inform timely intervention.

Improving Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Leaders have strengthened both initial and ongoing information, advice and guidance to ensure learners are placed on the most appropriate programmes and are clear about expectations from the outset. A revised Learner Agreement has been introduced and is embedded within the open-day and enrolment process. This is reinforced consistently through teaching and learning and clearly articulates the 'ABC of Blackburne House Education' expectations:

- A – Attend punctually
- B – Behave appropriately
- C – Commit fully

Tutors and support staff revisit these expectations at key points throughout learners' programmes. This supports early identification of potential barriers to learning and ensures learners receive timely, tailored academic and pastoral support to sustain engagement and progress.

Strengthening Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)

Leaders have introduced a more rigorous and consistent approach to monitoring learner progress through strengthened use of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Managers undertake half-termly sampling

of ILPs in line with the Quality Calendar to evaluate the quality of target-setting, review progress, and ensure consistency across provision. Weekly attendance reports are scrutinised closely, enabling swift intervention and the implementation of personalised engagement plans for learners at risk of disengagement.

Targeted Interventions to Support Progress

A wider range of targeted academic and pastoral interventions has been introduced to support learners who are at risk of falling behind. These include increased access to mentoring and one-to-one coaching, structured peer study groups to promote collaborative learning, and regular progress reviews with tutors to sustain motivation and accountability. Early indications show that these interventions are having a positive impact on learner engagement and retention, and their effectiveness will continue to be evaluated during 2025/26.

Curriculum Development and Employability

Leaders ensure that the curriculum remains responsive to local labour market needs and aligned to learners' aspirations, progression routes, and staff expertise. During 2024/25, the curriculum was restructured into five clearly defined divisions, each offering a core qualification, clear progression pathways, and specialist short courses designed to enhance employability, confidence, and career readiness.

A significant development during 2024/25 was the introduction of mandatory work placements for all Level 3 Health and Social Care learners. Learners completed placements with local care homes and community services, gaining valuable practical experience. Employer and service-user feedback has been highly positive, confirming that learners are well prepared and demonstrate strong professional behaviours.

The five curriculum divisions are:

- **Health and Social Care (Level 2 to Access to HE)**
Programmes provide clear progression into healthcare professions, supported by strong employer partnerships, including the NHS and local care providers.
- **Childcare and Education (Level 2 to Level 3)**
Provision meets regional workforce demand and prepares learners for employment and further study through practical experience and structured progression routes.
- **Complementary Therapy (Level 2 to Level 3)**
Courses respond effectively to the growing wellness and healthcare sector, equipping learners with specialist, industry-relevant skills.
- **Counselling and Supporting Mental Health (Level 2 to Level 3)**
Learners are prepared for careers in mental health support, with progression routes into supervised practice through the on-site Wellbeing Centre.
- **ESOL (Pre-Entry to Level 1)**
Programmes support learners from diverse backgrounds to develop English language skills and progress into employment or further learning.

Leaders continue to strengthen employer and community partnerships, including those with Liverpool Women’s Hospital, Clatterbridge Health Services, and local care providers. These partnerships enhance curriculum relevance and ensure learners develop the skills, knowledge, and behaviours valued by employers.

Wrap-Around Support and Removing Barriers to Learning

Leaders recognise that many learners face significant personal, financial, and social barriers to participation and achievement. In response, wrap-around support has been strengthened to enable learners to engage fully with their education. This includes expanded bursary support for travel, childcare, and essential learning resources; increased access to counselling and mental health services; and initiatives to improve digital inclusion through access to technology and digital skills development.

Overall Evaluation

Through accurate self-assessment, ambitious planning, and targeted action, leaders demonstrate strong capacity to improve. Blackburne House Education remains firmly focused on raising achievement, reducing gaps, and delivering high-quality, inclusive education that meets community needs, supports women to achieve their aspirations, and contributes positively to local workforce development.