

G4S Care & Justice Services (UK) Ltd

Follow up re-inspection monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Monitoring Visit: Main Findings

Context and focus of visit

This is the second follow up re-inspection monitoring visit to G4S Care & Justice Services (UK) Ltd following publication of the inspection report on 7 November 2013 that found the provider to be inadequate overall. The areas for improvement were the success rates for learners; the monitoring of the progress of apprentices; teaching, learning and assessment and the processes for improvement, including the rigour and accuracy of self-assessment. Inspectors judged public services and early years and playwork to be inadequate. At the time of the second monitoring visit, 88 apprentices were undertaking training.

Themes

What action has been taken to improve the amount of good and better teaching?

Reasonable progress

Since the last monitoring visit, managers at G4S have taken swift action to improve the management of training that has resulted in a more effective monitoring and improvement of teaching and learning for all apprentices. They have formalised links with the specialist education provision within the secure training centres (STC) and the head of education of the STCs is now fully involved with the improvement strategy for the apprenticeship programme. Working links between the head of education and the training manager of the apprenticeship provision are good and leading to a systematic and consistent response to improving teaching.

Managers and staff have redesigned the observation process for taught sessions modelled on the existing practice within the G4S's education department. This assessment of the quality of taught sessions through direct observations now focuses correctly on learning and is leading to improvement. The sharing of good practice is more effective. For example, as part of their development, tutors have the opportunity to observe good and outstanding teaching sessions within the education department. Education staff provide support to apprenticeship tutors that is raising standards in the quality of taught sessions. However, the observation of all tutors has yet to take place and this needs urgent completion to identify further areas for staff development. Improvements, identified from teaching session observations, in the materials used for learning support are incomplete. Further work needs to be undertaken so that the observation process links fully to the performance management of tutors.

What action has been taken to improve the quality and frequency of work place assessment and to increase the number of work place assessors?**Reasonable progress**

G4S managers have undertaken a review of professional practice in this area and introduced developments that support apprentices' success effectively. Since the previous visit by inspectors, managers have established arrangements for the effective monitoring of learners' progress. The recording of assessment outcomes for learners is now accurate and the analysis of this information identifies those failing to meet their planned assessment targets. This new system links to a colour-coded rating system that helps assessors and learners check progress towards agreed goals. Assessors now appropriately plan and prioritise assessment activities to maximise apprentices' success. Assessments take place more frequently and emphasise appropriately what learners need to achieve to demonstrate successful competence.

G4S has invested in their employees' development to ensure all full-time assessors are fully qualified. In addition, managers have made good use of an external consultancy to help develop the provider's overall assessment strategy. They set performance targets for assessors that are appropriate and are based firmly on apprentices' success rates and progress.

Managers use weekly meetings to check effectively the monitoring of the assessment frequency. However, they have not formalised the provider's assessment strategy to ensure that all assessors are clear about the level of assessment that should take place and the timescale. The quantity of individual assessment for learners to support quicker progress is not a key focus of monitoring meetings. Progress in ensuring that learners' success links effectively to the performance management of assessors has been slow.

What actions have been taken to improve the planning and monitoring of individual learning?**Reasonable progress**

Managers and staff have implemented effective procedures to ensure individual learning plans receive appropriate updating and include the outcomes of apprentices' initial assessment. In addition, all learners now receive a progress review every three months where assessors and apprentices identify individual training and assessment opportunities. This improvement is reflected in the feedback inspectors received from learners on their experiences. For example, learners identified that functional skill provision has moved away from a workbook-based approach to more individual training and support that better meets their needs.

Assessors have established good links between learners' work roles and their personal development to support future development. More frequent interim reviews take place at weekly or monthly intervals. These provide opportunities for assessors to discuss with learners what they need to do to progress and agree relevant personalised short-term targets. However, targets set at interim reviews are not always appropriately specific or detailed and do not prioritise what activities

apprentices need to complete to allow quicker progress. Interim action plans are not yet part of the three-month review. The lack of review and updating of longer-term targets for completion do not help increase apprentices' success rates.

What action has been taken to improve the delivery and learners' achievement of functional English and mathematics and to provide support to ensure that they achieve? **Reasonable progress**

Since the previous monitoring visit, G4S managers have introduced a written apprenticeship training programme strategy that focuses on the provision of initial assessment of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), functional skills and learning support. A coordinator for the apprenticeship programme, including functional skills training, had been seconded from an external organisation and contributed to the implementation of the strategy that has led to improvements in learners' achievement. At the time of the monitoring visit, the coordinator was transferring the role to the G4S learning and development manager.

Unlike at the inspection, all except one learner has now completed a full initial assessment of skills levels. All tests take place in work time. In addition, the introduction of an ICT electronic learning package is resolving shortfalls in capacity for those studying above level 2. Staff have also started providing support for apprentices to master electronic learning packages. However, it is too early to judge the full the impact of these initiatives. Procedures are now in place to ensure that learners recruited in the future receive an initial assessment during the early stages of their programme.

Managers have implemented arrangements that are more coherent in improving learners' functional skills throughout their apprenticeship. Assessors have identified learners with good English and/or mathematics skills and 'fast track' them so they gain functional skills before their planned end date. Staff now effectively communicate outcomes from the initial assessment to the STC education teams that they use to inform the content of learners' support sessions. Functional skills achievement rates have increased substantially compared with those identified at inspection. However, rates are still low and too many learners pass their full apprenticeship framework completion date without achieving a qualification for functional skills.

Managers and staff have undertaken much work to ensure that the learning materials that support the development of functional skills link to subject areas and help apprentices demonstrate appropriate skills in their workplace and life settings. However, managers and staff recognise that further improvement activities need to be undertaken, particularly in monitoring and raising the quality of learning materials to support functional skills.

All three full-time and 16 part-time assessors have undertaken the functional skills tests at level 2 for English, mathematics and ICT. Managers have yet to use the results to inform actions so that all assessors are working at level 2 and/or operating at their highest level.

What action has been taken to support robust self-assessment and quality improvement arrangements?**Insufficient progress**

Following the first monitoring visit, a self-assessment report has been produced that is realistic in its assessment and identifies areas for improvement. Managers have integrated improvement actions into the most current version of the post-inspection action plan to resolve issues. However, the collection and analysis of data have not informed the report's judgements effectively. Progress in completing actions identified through self-assessment has not been swift enough. The report was mainly produced by one person and does not use feedback from a range of stakeholders appropriately to inform its judgements. The current written self-assessment report does not contain sufficient detail to identify what actions, processes and information will be collected, and by when, to inform self-assessment.

Managers have set a range of quantitative performance indicators that they have shared widely within G4S, and this supports the monitoring of improvement initiatives effectively. They have implemented more appropriate quality assurance processes, but these need urgent reviewing to test whether their implementation is of the standard required and whether they are reliable and lead to improvement.

A survey of apprentices' views on the quality of their learning experience has been carried out and led to the identification and implementation of remedial action where concerns have been raised. However, surveys are not undertaken at other key times with the apprenticeship programme to inform improvement.

What action has been taken to improve the use and management of data to contribute to improvement, particularly in ensuring that learners achieve their apprenticeships within the allocated time?**Reasonable progress**

Assessors and training officers have received training to improve their skills and knowledge relating to the updating and interrogating of the central learner database. Staff are now able to access the database remotely and use the information to track learners' progress and plan training and assessment needs more effectively. This has contributed to both staff's and learners' understanding of progress made in completing the apprenticeship framework and what needs to be done to raise achievement.

Relevant staff, managers and senior managers produce and review a monthly report on learners' progress, the performance of different training centres and overall headline data in achieving the various elements of the apprenticeship framework. They have revised all learners' completion dates to identify a realistically challenging target to aid monitoring of progress. More effective performance management has resulted in interventions that have helped improve learners' success within agreed timescales. However, whilst this work has had a valuable impact, the speed of achievement and increase in success rates have yet to gain a pace that benefits all learners sufficiently.

What action have leaders and managers taken to secure good outcomes for learners and high quality provision?**Reasonable progress**

Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders and managers have implemented an apprenticeship strategy, with an appropriate scope, that tackles important functions such as the provision of training, governance and performance management of the apprenticeships. In addition, they have established a clear staff structure with defined roles and accountability to drive improvement and performance management. Leaders and managers recognise that the impact of this development has been slower than expected as they have spent much time in building capacity to deliver apprenticeships and integrating functions across geographically dispersed training centres.

Managers have updated the post-inspection plan to include key objectives and targets for staff at the appropriate tier of management within the organisational structure of G4S monitors. Managers have introduced weekly monitoring to check how effectively operational activities have been implemented to raise standards and outcomes for learners.

Managers set milestones targets for the achievement of actions, but they have not reviewed them effectively to ensure they are fully challenging and contribute to raising standards quickly. In addition, progress measures need reviewing so that managers and staff are clear that improvement actions have been fully successful in providing a high standard of learning experience for apprentices.

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