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29 July 2016

Mr Paul Dickinson
Managing Director
Philips Hair Salons Limited
7 Providence Street
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Dear Mr Dickinson

Short inspection Philips Hair Salons Limited

Following the short inspection on 30 June and 1 July 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the provider was judged to be good in November 2011.

This provider continues to be good.

You have ensured that apprentices continue to receive good education and training. You provide excellent care, support and guidance, which apprentices value highly, and which ensures that they make good progress. Tutors and assessors know their apprentices well and are quick to act if they are identified as being at risk. As a result, the vast majority of apprentices complete their training and go on to secure permanent employment, gain promotion or move on to further education. Achievement rates for most apprentices are high and retention in the current year is very high. The introduction of traineeships to help prepare young people for an apprenticeship is ensuring that the vast majority progress on to an apprenticeship.

You have resolved each of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. You have reduced significantly the number of early leavers by improving recruitment processes and monitoring closely the progress that apprentices make. You have increased the number of clients, so that apprentices develop the skills and attributes they need for employment. You have also increased the access that apprentices have to a range of good-quality retail products. You have developed effective relationships with schools and salons. The number of males and apprentices from minority ethnic heritage groups has increased.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have maintained the excellent safeguarding arrangements since the last inspection and have revised them in respect of the 'Prevent' duty. You, your senior managers, employers and all staff continue to prioritise safeguarding. Designated

safeguarding officers and the welfare officer have received training in a number of safeguarding topics, for example in sexual and mental health and the radicalisation of children. This is ensuring that apprentices are receiving very good care. Managers carry out the appropriate recruitment checks and keep accurate records. Through mandatory training, all staff know how to ensure and maintain safe working practices and are very clear about reporting procedures, should they have concerns about apprentices' safety. Apprentices know how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of the requirements to work safely in salons, both in the academy and in employers' premises. All staff have received training on the promotion of British values and the risks posed by extremism and radicalisation. However, apprentices and employers have a limited understanding of the risks posed by radicalisation and extremism and how this relates to the workplace.

Inspection findings

- Teaching, learning and assessment are very effective. Apprentices take pride in their work and demonstrate a good understanding of technical skills, customer care and health and safety in salons. Tutors effectively plan learning so that apprentices gain practical skills and knowledge in the academy with a range of clients, which they apply to their work within employers' salons. For example, they carry out professional consultations with their clients and take into account their individual needs when recommending treatments or products. Apprentices appreciate the additional training they receive from their employers in developing their specialist knowledge of premium products and services, which results in them improving profitability in their workplace.
- The rigorous selection of, and effective communication with, employers ensures that they are well prepared to support apprentices in their training. However, employers and assessors do not always have a clear individual action plan for apprentices to consolidate the skills they have learned in the academy. Tutors often set targets that focus on meeting the minimum standards of the qualification rather than extending the skills and knowledge that apprentices need to acquire. A minority of tutors fail to ensure that apprentices who have achieved their required English and mathematics qualifications develop these skills further in lessons.
- The proportion of hairdressing and barbering apprentices who achieve their studies within the planned time, often from low starting points, is good. Level 2 apprentices are well prepared for work, resulting in the vast majority gaining employment at the end of their studies and progressing to an advanced level apprenticeship. The vast majority of advanced level apprentices progress into sustained employment.
- Managers and tutors monitor the progress of each apprentice effectively through regular meetings. Where apprentices are not making good progress, tutors put effective plans in place to support them to improve their performance and catch up.
- Senior managers maintain the good standard of teaching, learning and assessment by accurately assessing the performance of tutors and assessors in lessons and providing appropriate support and challenge where necessary. Managers take swift action to remove any underperforming staff from the academy. Effective appraisal and staff development ensure that tutors are up to

date in their subject area and this benefits apprentices because they learn the up-to-date skills they need for work.

- The implementation of the new standards for apprentices is effective. Tutors and assessors plan a programme that includes appropriate on- and off-the-job training with employers and, as a result, apprentices develop a range of skills and become competent hairdressers or barbers.
- While data is analysed by the managing director, and the decline in barbering success rates in the previous year was accurately identified, data is not being used well enough to inform the self-assessment process and to set clear and measurable targets for improvement.
- Information on the website for apprentices and employers is out of date and does not inform them well enough about the requirements of the apprenticeship.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the analysis of data is used to inform the self-assessment process and the quality improvement action plan to ensure that specific and measurable targets are set so that achievement rates can be sustained and improved further
- tutors set challenging targets, so that all apprentices, including the most able, extend their skills and knowledge beyond that of achieving the qualification minimum standards, including those for English and mathematics
- apprentices and their employers develop a better understanding of the risks that radicalisation poses and how it applies to their apprentices' lives and work.

I am copying this letter to the Skills Funding Agency and the Education Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrea Machell
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Ofsted Inspectors were assisted by the provider's academy principal, as nominee. Inspectors met with members of the leadership team, tutors, assessors, support staff, employers and apprentices. Inspectors observed sessions in the workplace and reviewed learners' assessed work and portfolios. They reviewed key strategic and policy documents, including those relating to lesson planning and assessment, quality assurance and performance monitoring, safeguarding and curriculum planning.