

# People and Business Development Ltd

Independent learning provider

## Inspection dates

31 October–3 November 2016

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Apprenticeships	<b>Require improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Require improvement</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders have failed to work effectively with a number of employers to ensure that all apprentices receive at least the minimum level of tuition, support and guidance as per their contractual requirements.
- Not enough assessors enable apprentices to develop their written English skills or improve their mathematics skills in their assignments or daily work.
- The proportion of apprentices who complete their programmes successfully has declined over time.
- Assessors' written feedback on marked work is not sufficiently challenging and fails to identify areas for further improvement.
- Targets set for a majority of apprentices focus too much on the completion of assessments, activities and qualification completion.
- Too few apprentices are challenged sufficiently to improve their understanding of their subject beyond that of the qualification outcomes.
- Leaders and managers do not analyse sufficiently the quality of the provision or the progress apprentices and learners make, resulting in too many not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Too few apprentices achieve high grades or improve their higher-level thinking skills outside of those required by their qualifications.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Apprentices are valued highly by their employers, they benefit from good support to develop new work skills and almost all have a good understanding of industry standards.
- The proportion of apprentices and learners completing their English qualifications is high.
- Leaders and managers have high ambitions for their apprentices and their career development.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- People and Business Development is based in a rural community in North West Essex and provides apprenticeship training for around 450 apprentices at schools and nurseries across the country. Just over two thirds are following programmes at advanced level and around a quarter are aged 16–18. The large majority follow programmes in the early years with smaller numbers in playwork, supporting teaching and learning, youth work and business administration.

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

- Leaders, managers and employers should ensure that all apprentices are allocated and take up their full entitlement to their off-the-job learning time and resources.
- Leaders and managers should improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that assessors and tutors monitor and review the progress apprentices and learners are making with their online learning modules and challenge them to complete and achieve.
- Leaders should improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - apprentices make the progress of which they are capable by the use of effective target setting, involving apprentices and their employers, which challenges them to reach their full potential
  - assessors use information about apprentices' starting points in English, mathematics and ICT so that learning can be planned to ensure they continue to improve these skills throughout their learning programmes
  - assessors and tutors improve their craft of teaching and are adept at challenging apprentices to reach their potential and are encouraged to develop their high-level thinking skills
  - assessors provide apprentices with constructive feedback on their written work that enables them to understand what they have done well and what they need to do in order to improve the standard of their work.
- Leaders should upskill assessors to enable them to promote English, mathematics and ICT effectively and ensure that apprentices develop these vital skills well.
- Leaders and managers should produce more incisive and self-judgemental evaluation of the provision to enable them to identify and review the required improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, the progress apprentices make and the quality of the provision.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

- Leaders and managers have not focused sufficiently well on dealing robustly with weaknesses found at the previous inspection. Leaders have implemented a range of actions and improvements to deal with these weaknesses; for example, assessors now set targets for apprentices. However, these actions have not had sufficient impact on improving the quality of provision. Assessors do not use information about apprentices' starting points to set targets for those studying English and mathematics GCSE courses and, as a result, apprentices do not improve their English and mathematics skills effectively.
- Leaders have failed to work effectively with a number of employers to ensure that all apprentices receive at least the minimum level of tuition, support and guidance as per their contractual requirements. Contract agreements are clear with employers; however, almost all apprentices met by inspectors are doing work in their own time, which contributes to their slow progress.
- Leaders and managers know the organisation well. However, quality improvement lacks rigour and is not sufficiently well coordinated. The self-assessment report lacks detail and judgement. Leaders and managers do not use data sufficiently well to monitor the quality of the provision. Staff are not sufficiently clear about how well apprentices achieve or how achievement rates are an indicator of quality or the progress apprentices are making.
- Managers carry out appropriate quality assurance activities, such as observations of teaching, learning and assessment, and use the arising findings well to inform staff performance and development. However, the results are not used to inform leaders' assessment of quality and subsequent action planning. Leaders' quality improvement planning is focused on specific actions based on staff suggestions and ad hoc findings. Actions are not clear, based on robust analysis, given a completion date or have identified success measures.
- Leaders, managers and staff set apprentices high expectations for their career development. Staff are intent on providing apprentices with the qualifications, skills and knowledge that they need to further their career and work in the early years sector, and as a result a good proportion remain in employment on completion of their programmes and are valued highly by employers.
- Leaders have worked exceptionally well with partners and employers to establish very good progression opportunities for apprentices. As a result of good links with the early years sector, leaders have established the opportunity for apprentices to progress on to study a qualification in early years childcare at level 5 and negotiated successfully with universities to allow graduates of this programme direct access on to the second year of a honours degree. However, only a very few apprentices have achieved high grades and taken advantage of this route.
- Leaders have not planned the curriculum to ensure that apprentices are able to gain additional qualifications that meet the needs of employers and that enhance their future career options.
- Leaders monitor and review the progress of different groups of apprentices well and ensured that there are no significant achievement gaps between groups of apprentices. They carry out specific analyses, for example to monitor and review the achievements of learners with dyslexia; consequently, they make similar progress in line with their peers.

- Leaders manage the performance of assessors, tutors and administration staff well. Staff have regular meetings with their managers and discuss a broad range of subjects including staff performance and training needs. Staff take up opportunities to develop additional skills to enable them to develop in their role. Leaders deal robustly with underperformance of staff.
- Apprentices have access to good online learning resources for their English, mathematics and vocational training. However, the method of providing GCSE mathematics courses is not effective and the content of the online resources does not help apprentices to make sufficient progress and achieve their qualifications to the best of their ability. A few apprentices do not have sufficient access or abilities to use the online resources effectively.
- Leaders and managers ensure that all staff promote equality effectively through a comprehensive application process for apprentices and staff members, including safe recruiting procedures. Leaders' plans and organisational policies illustrate a clear commitment to ensuring that the promotion of diversity is an integral part of apprentices' training and work.

### **The governance of the provider**

- Governance is adequate.
- Leaders' challenge has yet to impact on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment or the progress a minority of apprentices make. Leaders have paid too little attention to the targets apprentices are set, the feedback they receive or the progress they make to improve their English and mathematics skills and those of the children they work with.
- Leaders are very close to the business on a day-to-day basis and demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of employers. They have good access to information and data but the process of analysing information is too informal and lacks sufficient detail to enable leaders to monitor the quality of provision.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers make appropriate checks when recruiting staff and apprentices to ensure they are suitable for working in schools and nurseries and with young children.
- All staff have completed training in safeguarding young and vulnerable people and in regard to 'Prevent' duty awareness. However, assessors have yet to ensure that all apprentices have a robust understanding of the threats from radicalisation and extremism.
- Apprentices say they feel safe and they know who to report any concerns to. Safeguarding concerns are dealt with appropriately. Assessors keep clear records of follow-up interventions to inform future discussions; however, the central recording by managers should be more robust.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment activities are not yet good enough to improve outcomes for all apprentices and learners. Apprentices and learners benefit from an increasing proportion of good online learning resources and support from remote tutors in subject areas such as early years, playwork, supporting teaching and learning and business administration. However, too many apprentices do not make the progress of which they are capable due to the lack of allocated learning time and, in a few instances, limited access to online resources.
- Assessors and employers use their extensive knowledge of the childcare sector well to enable apprentices to benefit and become more effective in the workplace. As a result, apprentices develop a good understanding of the expectations of industry and almost all work to high standards valued by their employers. The majority of apprentices benefit from online learning packages and find them easy to use. However, a minority do not and they are not supported sufficiently well so that they learn how to make best use of the learning materials.
- Assessors and tutors do not sufficiently help apprentices to further enhance their English and mathematics levels beyond the minimum level required by their qualifications. This does not help to prepare them for their future career progression or to help the children they are working with. Assessors determine apprentices' starting points well in regard to their functional skills or GCSE course requirements and plan customised programmes that enable apprentices to develop their skills further. As a result, pass rates are improving for mathematics but remain too low. However, pass rates remain high for English.
- Assessors and tutors do not challenge apprentices sufficiently to reach their potential and achieve high grades. Assessors and tutors do not use their craft of teaching well enough to inspire apprentices or encourage them to improve the quality of their work and to develop higher-level thinking skills. As a consequence, too few apprentices improve their understanding of the subject beyond that of the qualification outcomes.
- Assessors' written feedback on marked work is not sufficiently challenging and fails to identify areas for further improvement; it mostly consists of advice to add further content to meet the qualification outcomes. Although this advice focuses on what apprentices need to do to achieve all the criteria of their vocational units, it does not encourage apprentices to achieve as well as they can. For example, assessors do not routinely assess project work for its quality but only provide praise if the work has been completed. However, assessors provide digitally recorded feedback that enables apprentices to improve their practice and develop their knowledge and understanding and add value to the workplace.
- Employers cooperate willingly with assessors by responding to assessors' requests to change apprentices' activities so that they can complete required assessment tasks. However, employers and assessors do not collaborate sufficiently to ensure that employers' training and learning provided by assessors complement each other. For example, although employers receive regular verbal feedback about apprentices' progress and development needs following assessment activities, too few have access to apprentices' online feedback so that they can align this with their own in-house training. This limits their opportunities to reinforce apprentices' understanding and support their progress.

- Not enough assessors enable apprentices to improve their English skills well. Too many apprentices make grammatical and spelling errors in their assignments and written work. Assessors fail to set sufficiently high expectations for their apprentices by correcting spelling errors routinely or enabling them to improve the fluency of their written English. Too many apprentices working in educational settings and supporting children with their English and mathematics skill development do not receive good tuition themselves.
- Although tutors for English and mathematics courses communicate with assessors to ensure that apprentices develop these essential skills, assessors do not alert tutors to any barriers apprentices may have in developing their skills further or signpost for specialist help.
- Apprentices develop high standards of work in their employment setting. For example, they confidently apply important skills such as how to talk sensitively with parents to find out more about their children by using open questions. This enables them to make valuable contributions in their workplaces. A good proportion of apprentices undertake additional roles such as team leader and take on further responsibilities enthusiastically, such as completing risk assessments, mentoring new apprentices and planning learning activities for children.
- Assessors guide apprentices adeptly to plan progression routes into their chosen careers. Assessors ensure that apprentices have a good understanding of ways they can progress in their careers and through levels of qualifications from intermediate apprenticeships to degrees.
- Apprentices feel safe and adopt safe working practices. They understand how to recognise signs of abuse and are very sensitive to the health, safety and welfare needs of the children in their care. However, their understanding of the possible threats from radicalisation and/or extremism is too limited. Assessors do not regularly check or extend apprentices' understanding and knowledge of safeguarding, British values and the 'Prevent' duty during reviews and assessments.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

- Apprentices are highly motivated, show respect and professional attitudes towards colleagues and behave well in their workplace. They enjoy their job roles and appreciate the help they receive with their career aspirations. They are committed and take pride in their work and in completing their qualifications. Employers benefit from the skills and attitudes apprentices demonstrate while at work.
- Apprentices acquire good work-related skills, such as caring for young children, planning play and learning activities and communication skills when talking to parents. Many apprentices gain valuable experience as part of their apprenticeship and they value highly the experience of learning gained in the workplace.
- Apprentices produce good work to the expected level that meets their qualification aims. However, a good proportion of apprentices do not improve understanding of their subject beyond the minimum requirement by having challenging targets set.
- Apprentices know how to keep themselves and others safe, particularly when working in a school or nursery where young and possibly vulnerable children are attending. Through their work activities apprentices develop a good understanding of life in modern Britain. However, too few apprentices have a good enough understanding of the threats from extremist groups or from being radicalised.

- Apprentices feel safe in their working environments and have good relationships with their employers and colleagues, with whom they can raise any concerns.
- Apprentices' attendance at work is good. They are well prepared for their daily tasks and are punctual.
- A high proportion of apprentices and learners achieve their English and ICT qualifications. They gain and develop good personal, social and employability skills through working effectively in teams and having detailed and meaningful discussions with parents and colleagues. However, the proportion of apprentices and learners who achieve their mathematics qualifications, while improving, is still low.
- Apprentices benefit routinely from good career guidance and advice during and at the end of their apprenticeship. They receive a good level of well-informed information on a broad range of careers within the early years sector and the prospects available to them.

### Outcomes for learners

### Require improvement

- The proportion of apprentices who achieved their programmes in 2014/15, while in line with similar providers nationally, has declined over the last three years. The proportion of apprentices completing in their agreed planned timescales has also declined and is below that found at similar providers nationally.
- While a good proportion of current apprentices are making at least the progress expected of them, a significant number are not making sufficient progress and/or have gone beyond their allocated completion date. However, leaders' data for 2015/16 indicates an improvement in achievement rates for 2015/16, to be above that of similar providers.
- The proportion of apprentices achieving their GCSE mathematics qualifications, while above that for similar providers nationally, is still low and in a few instances is preventing apprentices from completing their full apprenticeship. However, a good proportion of apprentices and learners achieve their functional skills mathematics qualifications.
- A high proportion of apprentices and learners achieve their GCSE English qualifications, which are an integral part of their programme. Apprentices also benefit from gaining good speaking and listening skills through the communication they have in the workplace with colleagues, parents and children.
- There are no significant achievement gaps between different groups of apprentices or learners, other than for those apprentices aged 24+, who achieve slightly better than younger apprentices. Leaders' and managers' actions ensure that all apprentices perform to a similar standard through effective assessor support and guidance.
- Staff do not encourage apprentices to achieve high grades in their vocational specialist early years qualification. Only a very few apprentices achieve high grades or are encouraged to develop their higher-level thinking skills. Leaders do not ensure that apprentices have sufficient opportunity to develop their skills beyond the minimum level required for their programme. Very few apprentices gain any additional qualifications to enhance their future career options.
- Many apprentices demonstrate high standards of work in their job roles and benefit from good support from their employers. Employers value the contribution apprentices make in the workplace, such as nurseries and schools, and many take on extra responsibilities as part of their allocated job role, for example as room leaders.

- Leaders' data for 2015/16 indicates that of the apprentices who completed their programmes almost all progressed to sustainable and meaningful employment or higher-level study.



## Provider details

Unique reference number	58563
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	580
Principal/CEO	Mr Ross Midgley
Telephone number	01799 586 720
Website	<a href="http://www.pbdevelopment.co.uk">www.pbdevelopment.co.uk</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	41	72	79	271	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
Funding received from:	Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the managing director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

## Inspection team

Steve Hunsley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Derrick Baughan	Her Majesty's Inspector
Pauline Hawkesford	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Bealey	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Aslett	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Winchcombe	Ofsted Inspector

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