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Derek Freeman
Managing Director
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Dear Mr Freeman

Short inspection of Youngsave Company Limited

Following the short inspection on 28 and 29 June 2017, 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 June 2013.

This provider continues to be good.

You and your leaders set high expectations for your apprentices and staff. Your staff share your strategy to provide high-quality provision which meets local skills needs and priorities. Leaders and managers have created a culture where all apprentices and staff show mutual respect and tolerance towards each other.

Since the last inspection, the proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualifications has increased, as has the proportion who do so within their planned timescales. As a result, achievement rates are high and well above those of other similar providers.

Since the last inspection, you and your leaders have continued to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, with the result that your staff help apprentices to develop the personal skills and workplace knowledge that they need to progress successfully to employment. You and your leaders have been successful in improving most of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.

At the last inspection, partnership links were strong. You have developed these links further to include opportunities for apprentices to progress to study at a higher level. Your partnerships with employers have enabled you to introduce delivery of the new apprenticeship standards for customer service practitioners, to develop your training to meet required skills, and to improve apprentices' employment prospects.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your managers ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective, and you take appropriate actions to safeguard apprentices. As a result, apprentices are safe and report that they feel safe while attending sessions and at their workplaces.

Safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. All staff have received enhanced checks on their suitability for employment through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), and managers record these in an up-to-date single central register. Managers renew DBS checks every three years.

Leaders have implemented an appropriate 'Prevent' duty action plan after conducting a full risk assessment. Staff receive regular updates on safeguarding issues, such as child protection and radicalisation and extremism, to ensure that they can spot any early signs of concern. Apprentices and staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and know to whom they should report safeguarding issues if they arise. Managers have good links with other agencies, such as those dealing with homelessness or substance misuse, to which they can refer apprentices. Staff make appropriate referrals when the need arises. Leaders acted swiftly during the inspection to ensure that managers began working towards qualifications appropriate to their safeguarding roles.

Training officers use visits and reviews with apprentices to reinforce and discuss the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Most apprentices have a well-developed awareness, and they can explain how to protect themselves from the dangers in relation to their local context and everyday lives.

Inspection findings

- A high proportion of apprentices achieve their qualification. In 2016, leaders were quick to identify the cause for poor performance in motor vehicle, business administration and health and social care. Leaders acted promptly to tackle the issues; they ceased the delivery of health and social care programmes and stopped working with a small number of employers and one subcontractor. As a result, retention has improved on all programmes, and the provider's own data indicates improvement in achievement in the current year, particularly on business administration and motor vehicle programmes. However, even if all motor vehicle apprentices successfully complete their qualification, the achievement rate will remain just below those of other similar providers.
- Leaders ensure effective management of the performance of the two subcontractors. Managers conduct regular reviews of performance, aligned with frequent quality monitoring visits, to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is of a high standard. This contributes to ensuring that a high proportion of apprentices stay on their programme and make good progress.
- Leaders have implemented new and improved quality assurance and improvement systems to address the weaknesses identified at the last inspection, such as regular review of apprentices' performance and a shared online improvement plan that staff clearly understand. They make effective use of

external support to improve practice and to provide challenge on financial performance. Staff are now much more involved in all the stages of self-assessment and performance monitoring, and they accurately identify and implement many actions to improve the provision. However, leaders recognise that, to improve further, evaluation at a strategic level needs to be more rigorous. The strategic objectives in the quality improvement plan and discussions during performance monitoring meetings are often insufficiently precise about how managers and staff will improve outcomes for apprentices.

- Leaders ensure that the monitoring of individual apprentices' progress is good. Staff now have better access to data on how well apprentices are progressing, which they use well in individual reviews. Training officers identify where apprentices are falling behind and act swiftly to provide support or address any gaps. Consequently, a higher proportion of apprentices now make good progress.
- Staff provide effective impartial advice and guidance at the start of programmes, which helps apprentices to choose the right course and complete their qualifications. Apprentices benefit from relevant information about the different careers open to them. As a result, approximately three quarters of all apprentices achieve sustained employment. A large proportion of apprentices progress to study at a higher level or gain promotion at work, such as moving from being a member of the sales team to the role of sales manager. Leaders follow up closely instances when apprentices do not gain employment at the end of their programme, and work with employers to avoid this happening in the future.
- Training officers effectively use their industry experience and skills to establish the starting points of apprentices and to plan programmes that enable a high proportion of apprentices to make good progress. They use their expertise well to deliver effective training, and set specific and helpful targets and objectives that provide most apprentices with opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve their full potential.
- Reviews of the progress of most apprentices are good. Training officers provide helpful feedback so that apprentices know what they need to do to improve. Training officers and employers work well together. They negotiate targets that ensure that workplace activities are available for apprentices to develop the personal and industry skills that they need. Staff place apprentices with employers who support them well. Consequently, good links exist between the training provided by the employer and off-the-job training.
- Apprentices develop good communication and interpersonal skills and most display positive behaviour and attitudes to their learning and in the workplace.
- Most apprentices make good progress in developing their English and mathematics skills, and apply these skills well in the workplace. For example, apprentices on business administration programmes confidently use an accountancy package and an electronic spreadsheet tool to complete payroll and banking tasks accurately. Apprentices receive good support to achieve the English and mathematics qualifications that they need to complete their programme. The achievement rates for English and mathematics qualifications are just above the rates of similar providers.
- Leaders have strengthened the process for evaluating the quality of teaching,

learning and assessment. This now covers an evaluation of all aspects of apprentices' learning including induction, training, assessment and progress reviews. The new model involves staff completing peer observations and working together to share professional practice.

- Observations are carried out frequently, but do not focus sufficiently on the impact of teaching on apprentices' progress. Too many action plans following observations lack precise and helpful objectives to support staff to improve their practice quickly.
- Training officers in a high proportion of sessions do not provide sufficient opportunities for apprentices to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Apprentices develop ICT skills through the use of web-based tests and portfolios. However, leaders and managers recognise that more work is required to develop the ICT skills that apprentices need in the workplace.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- apprentices' progress on motor vehicle programmes is closely monitored and achievement rates improve to good or better
- observations of teaching, learning and assessment focus on ensuring that training officers set high expectations of what apprentices can achieve and provide activities that challenge apprentices to make better than good progress
- staff develop apprentices' ICT skills so that they can apply them effectively in the workplace
- evaluation at strategic level is strengthened, and discussions following the review of the impact of quality improvement actions challenge leaders to ensure that outcomes for apprentices remain good and improve further.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracey Mace-Akroyd
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors were assisted by the operations manager as nominee. We held meetings with a range of managers, training officers, apprentices, sub-contractors and employers. We visited sessions to collect information about apprentices' progress and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. We spoke to apprentices during sessions and informally. We reviewed key documents, including those in which leaders evaluate the quality of provision and standards achieved, the

provider's evidence of safeguarding and reports on apprentices' satisfaction with their programme.