

WS Training Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates

31 January–3 August 2017

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement	16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement	Adult learning programmes	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement	Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement	Provision for learners with high needs	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Good

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Too few assessors and tutors plan teaching, learning and assessment well enough to help learners to make good progress from their starting points.
- Assessors and tutors lack the confidence and skills to improve apprentices' and learners' English, mathematics and information communications technology skills.
- Not all employers are routinely involved in planning apprentices' learning.
- Assessors and tutors do not always have high enough expectations of what learners can achieve, and too few challenge them beyond the minimum requirements of their qualifications.
- Leaders do not take sufficient account of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in self-assessment or improvement planning.
- Learners on study programmes have yet to benefit from work placements or work related activity.

The provider has the following strengths

- Leaders work effectively with partners to meet the needs of learners, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with complex high needs.
- The large majority of apprentices develop good practical skills, and make a good contribution to their workplaces.
- Apprentices and learners develop a good understanding of life and work in modern British society and work well with a diverse range of clients and customers.
- Learners with high needs benefit greatly from a programme closely matched to their individual strengths, needs and aspirations. They develop their social and work-related skills effectively.

Full report

Information about the provider

- WS Training is a medium-sized independent learning provider located in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, with four satellite sites located around Ipswich and in Colchester. The provider recruits apprentices and learners from a wide range of localities in the East of England. WS Training contracts with six subcontractors across Suffolk and Norfolk.
- A total of 681 apprentices are enrolled, of whom 422 follow programmes at intermediate level, 246 follow programmes at advanced level and the small remainder follow higher apprenticeships programmes. Some 78 adult learners are enrolled on substantial programmes in the workplace, with a small proportion of these enrolled on employability courses. WS Training also provides learning provision for a small group of learners with complex high needs. Around 40 learners follow study programmes at level 1 and a further 10 learners are enrolled on traineeships.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that assessors and tutors make better use of information about learners' and apprentices' existing skills and knowledge to plan effective and challenging training.
- Make sure that assessors and tutors motivate apprentices and learners at all levels to excel in their subjects and develop their skills and knowledge to the highest possible levels.
- Support tutors and assessors to develop learners' and apprentices' English and mathematics skills within their vocational subjects and make sure they are confident and able to show apprentices and learners how to produce high quality written work.
- Work closely with employers and ensure that they are all better involved in planning apprentices' programmes, reviewing their skills development and monitoring their progress.
- Make sure that information on the quality of teaching and learning, and on learners' progress and outcomes better informs self-assessment and improvement planning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Significant changes in personnel have taken place within the management team since the previous inspection. Against this background, leaders and managers acknowledge that they were slow in identifying weaknesses and did not take swift enough action to improve provision. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has deteriorated since the previous inspection and now requires improvement. The proportion of 16-19 year-olds on study programmes who achieve their qualifications has declined and is too low.
- Leaders monitor apprentices' and learners' progress effectively, and the large majority of learners are making good progress in the current year. However, targets set with apprentices concentrate too much on compliance and qualification achievement rather than enhancing their personal skill development. During 2015/16, leaders set too many unrealistic performance targets across all types of provision that did not demonstrate a robust understanding of each subject area.
- Leaders' and managers' assessments of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are too generous. They do not identify sufficiently well the strengths and weaknesses within the different types of provision to secure improvement. Observations of teaching and learning focus too much on the actions of teachers and assessors and not enough on learners' and apprentices' progress. Leaders identified the need to improve the achievement of learners within planned timescales, but did not plan actions to rectify poor teaching and assessment that led to slower achievement.
- Leaders and managers work closely with partners to provide a broad range of courses that employers, parents and carers value. However, leaders and managers do not involve employers and other external partners sufficiently in the design of learning for apprentices and adult learners. A number of apprentices on business administration programmes benefit from additional qualifications to bolster their employment opportunities, but too few apprentices on other programmes receive such opportunities.
- Leaders and managers have recently improved the quality of study programmes and traineeships. These now better provide younger learners with chances to get jobs or study for qualifications. Managers have also developed close partnerships with the local authority and specialist advisers to secure high-quality learning programmes for learners with complex high needs.
- Leaders' self-assessment requires improvement. In recent years, leaders and managers have been too slow to make links between the low achievement rates for many learners and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, they did not plan and monitor performance targets for managers and staff effectively, or challenge and improve weak performance. Recent changes in management have significantly improved leaders' understanding and use of data.
- Leaders and managers now have reliable systems in place to better monitor apprentices' and learners' in-year progress. Leaders routinely provide accurate reports to managers and team leaders on the progress of apprentices. However, managers do not always hold assessors to account effectively when identifying slow progress and poor achievement. Recently appointed managers have started to improve the quality of provision, such as

the hair academy apprenticeships, where apprentices now benefit from regular, effective reviews of their performance within the workplace and in their vocational qualifications.

- Leaders have improved their monitoring of subcontractors since the previous inspection. Their observations of teaching and assessment with subcontractors' managers enable teachers and assessors in those organisations to understand the quality of their practice, and plan actions to improve it. However, a minority of apprentices on sub-contracted sports programmes achieve less well than others in similar providers.

The leadership of adult learning provision requires improvement. Of the small numbers of adult learners enrolled on employability courses, too few have yet secured employment. Leaders have not taken decisive actions to ensure that all adult learners benefit from high-quality teaching, learning and assessment, make good progress and achieve their qualifications.

The governance of the provider

- Governance requires improvement.
- Governance is provided through the chief executive officer and external consultants. They have placed insufficient emphasis on actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and failed to prevent the decline in outcomes for learners. They do not hold leaders and managers sufficiently to account for the declining levels of achievement in 2015-16, notably for 16-18 year-old learners on study programmes and adult learners.
- The chief executive officer has a clear strategic vision for the growth of the company. The governing body has steered the company through a period of significant change in the senior leadership and management team and has ensured the organisation's financial stability. The governing body has recently been refreshed to ensure that there is now the appropriate expertise available to monitor apprentices' and learners' progress effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and managers have made sure that safeguarding procedures are suitable to keep learners safe, including those most vulnerable. They have reliable procedures for employers to report apprentices' absences from their workplace, and staff then follow up absence reports with calls to apprentices, their parents or carers.
- Safeguarding arrangements for learners aged 16 to 18 on study programmes and those with complex high needs are effective. Learners feel safe and know how to report any concerns. Leaders and managers make sure that any apprentices who have additional needs or identified vulnerabilities undergo risk assessment and are monitored to ensure that they are safe.
- Managers monitor effectively the health and safety arrangements in apprentices' and learners' workplaces. Learners' and apprentices' understanding of how to stay safe is good, including how to keep safe online. Learners and staff benefit from effective policies to protect them from bullying and harassment. Managers conduct thorough recruitment checks to ensure the suitability of all staff.

- Leaders and managers ensure that staff receive frequent training to improve their promotion of British values and to make sure that apprentices and learners understand the potential threats from those with extremist views.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Assessors and tutors do not always set high enough expectations for what apprentices and learners, in particular the most able, can achieve. Managers have not dealt with this weakness since the previous inspection.
- Assessors and tutors do not make sufficient use of information about apprentices' and learners' starting points when planning learning. For example, too few tutors and assessors on adult learning courses identify learners' existing vocational skills and knowledge. As a result, these learners do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Assessors do not routinely plan apprentices' off-the-job training to develop their wider skills and knowledge beyond the minimum requirements of the qualification. Too many assessors set learning targets and objectives for apprentices that focus solely on completing the units of their qualification. Such targets do not deepen apprentices' higher-level thinking skills and knowledge.
- Employers are not involved sufficiently in setting clear targets for apprentices, or in planning their future learning so that they add value in the workplace. Managers and assessors do not work collaboratively with employers to ensure that they coordinate workplace activities with off-the-job training to speed up learning further.
- Assessors do not have high enough expectations of apprentices' written work and do not highlight spelling mistakes or grammatical errors to help them improve. Too few assessors and tutors promote the importance of English, mathematics and information communication and technology (ICT) in vocational subjects. They do not routinely use the results of assessment within apprentices' and learners' learning plans to develop skills in these essential subjects. Within business administration, health and social care and engineering programmes, assessors do not help their apprentices to identify and correct errors of structure in their writing or in their spelling, punctuation and grammar. Too few apprentices and learners achieve their functional skills qualifications at the first attempt. Managers now recognise this concern and have put in place more specialist support to gain these important skills.
- A minority of assessors do not review apprentices' and adult learners' progress effectively. They do not check or extend learners' understanding sufficiently to ensure that they know how to improve their work. Too many assessors set unambitious targets with their apprentices and learners that focus exclusively on compliance to fulfil the minimum requirements of the qualification. As a result, too few apprentices and learners produce high standards of written work.
- Assessors and tutors do not use questioning skilfully to promote learning. Too few tutors and assessors check learners' understanding sufficiently or help them contribute better in lessons. They do not challenge learners routinely to deepen their thinking, consolidate their skills and extend their understanding of the subjects they study.
- The majority of assessors and tutors in hairdressing and ICT have high levels of specialist

vocational skills and industry experience that they use to make learning more meaningful. Consequently, most apprentices develop good practical skills, use technical terms well and work to high industry standards. For example, hairdressing apprentices at intermediate level learn quickly how to assess a broad range of clients' hair types and apply chemicals successfully and safely in the salon, in accordance with current industry practice and standards.

- Managers ensure that learners with high needs receive very carefully planned provision that enables them to develop the skills they require for academic and social independence. Managers and tutors work closely with parents, carers, the local authority and specialist partners to carefully identify learners' needs. As a result, learners develop their sensory awareness and improve their levels of personal confidence and independence. They develop valuable social and work-related skills at well-selected work placements.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Managers have recently begun to monitor the attendance of learners following study programmes and traineeship programmes. Attendance rates for learners following study programmes were low during the inspection.
- Learners do not take enough pride in their work. They do not always participate in activities set by the tutor and too often the standard of their written work is poor.
- A high proportion of learners with high needs improve their social and work-related skills because of effective learning programmes managed by highly qualified staff. Learners develop their confidence and employability skills well at carefully-selected work placements.
- Learners aged 16 to 18 benefit from well-planned enrichment activities to match their needs; for example, one external group works with a group of female learners with high levels of anxiety. Learners who are deemed to be at risk of exploitation benefit from specialised support from another programme, while other external agencies enable learners to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- Most apprentices receive good initial advice and guidance from their assessors, and particularly when progressing from intermediate to advanced programmes. Staff also make sure apprentices receive good guidance from a range of external agencies. However, assessors do not record when apprentices have received relevant advice and guidance. As a result, managers are unable to identify the effectiveness of the information offered.
- Most apprentices and learners exhibit high levels of respect, tolerance and understanding for each other and for staff. The majority of apprentices and learners are aware of the risks they may face online and know how to avoid these. Apprentices have a good understanding of how to work safely. Managers conduct detailed risk assessments in relation to the most vulnerable 16- to 18-year-old learners following study programmes.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the achievement rate for the very large majority of learners

enrolled on study programmes has declined and is significantly below that for similar providers. In 2015/16, too few learners following study programmes and traineeships at entry level and level 1 achieved their qualifications. However, a greater proportion of current learners are making better progress than in previous years.

- In 2015/16, the proportion of apprentices who successfully completed their programmes was in line with other similar providers. The majority of current apprentices make at least the progress expected of them. The proportion of adults who achieve their qualifications has declined over a period of time and in 2015/16 was below the national rate. During the current year a good proportion of adults have achieved their qualifications.
- Apprentices develop good practical skills. Their employers value them and, as a result, they gain enhanced roles. For example, an apprentice on completion of their intermediate care apprenticeship progressed to an advanced apprenticeship while at the same time gaining promotion to senior carer and eventually to a care coordinator position.
- In 2015/16 and 2016/7, the majority of apprentices studying programmes at advanced level in health and social care, ICT and business administration completed their programmes successfully. Leaders' data indicates that achievement levels were at or above those of similar providers.
- The majority of apprentices make the progress expected of them in relation to their starting points. As a result, the large majority are on track to achieve. However, they do not produce work routinely that is of a high standard, particularly apprentices following programmes at advanced level.
- Too few apprentices and learners improve their English and mathematical skills or appreciate the importance of these skills in helping them achieve their career aims. For example, adult learners in health and social care subjects do not develop skills to write with fluency, and too often make grammatical errors in their written records.
- In the current year, managers have improved their monitoring of learners' progress on study programmes, apprenticeships and traineeships. As a result, barriers to learning are identified and dealt with more quickly and learners are now improving their skills more effectively in these areas.
- In 2015/16 and 2016/17, learners who were in receipt of bursaries, who had been in local authority care or who received free school meals achieved as well as their peers. However, female learners in almost all areas achieve better than their male peers. Most learners with high needs make good progress as a result of effective support and guidance. Most realise their potential and, consequently, their rate of achievement is high.
- Leaders effectively collate information and data regarding apprentices' destinations. A large majority of apprentices on completion of their programmes remain in employment or undertake further training, including progressing to the next level of study.
- Too many learners studying on traineeships and study programmes remain unemployed at the end of their courses, and too few unemployed adult learners secure purposeful employment. The large majority of learners with high needs progress to further study, and a majority progress to the next level.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- At the time of inspection, there were 38 full-time learners aged 16 to 18 on a level 1 employability study programme. The learners recruited on this programme are from various disadvantaged backgrounds. Some are living in sheltered accommodation or deemed to be at risk of exploitation; others have been referred by youth offending teams or are being supported through early assessment schemes designed to monitor their progress carefully and offer extra help where needed.
- Newly appointed managers have recognised the weaknesses in the design of the study programme in the previous year. As a result, they have designed an effective new programme which focuses on learners' skills in employability, English and mathematics. However, progress in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too slow.
- Too few learners following study programmes took part in work experience or work-related activities in 2015/16. Managers have recently developed plans for work experience. However, at the time of the inspection, learners had yet to benefit from work experience.
- Tutors do not effectively plan learning so that all learners make good progress in lessons. Too often, activities planned are at the same level for all learners. As a result, the most able learners find the work too easy. For example, in an enterprise lesson, ineffective planning of activities resulted in a slow pace of learning; the more able learners were not stretched, lost concentration and did not make sufficient progress.
- Tutors do not make enough use of learners' starting points to set challenging tasks and activities that meet individual needs. Tutors' use of questioning is not effective. They do not encourage learners to give more considered and extensive answers in lessons, nor do they use further questioning to check or consolidate learning. For example, in a session to develop effective communication, a significant minority of learners did not participate or engage in discussions because the tutor did not challenge or coach them sufficiently to join the debate.
- Most tutors do not link theoretical concepts with the workplace. Tutors do not draw sufficiently on the plentiful array of enrichment activities which learners enjoy to help them understand the importance of skills such as working in a team or problem solving.
- Tutors do not set learners challenging targets that help them accelerate their learning and make good progress. They give good support to learners to develop their confidence and participate in worthwhile work-related tasks, but they rarely review learners' performance and tell them how they can improve next time.
- Tutors in discrete English and mathematics lessons track and monitor learners' progress well. They provide targeted support for learners who are at risk of not achieving. Tutors skilfully identify gaps in learners' skills in these subjects, and provide extra support sessions to help them catch up and make good progress towards their functional skills qualifications. In lessons, learners write letters to employers with confidence, and identify informal and formal written and spoken language functions. They have lively debates on how newspaper articles and magazines use bias to influence readers.
- Learners develop their confidence and social skills well by working with a range of outside agencies to gain access to a wide range of enrichment activities. Most learners develop

important skills related to the world of work, which they value highly. For example, participation in a residential trip to undertake outdoor pursuit activities helped learners to work collaboratively, solve problems and communicate effectively with staff and peers.

- Managers and staff provide learners with realistic environments that enhance their understanding of the world of work and of British values. During a recent visit to a county council, learners took part in 'Takeover Day', when young people learn about the democratic processes by taking part in meetings with councillors in their area. As a result of the successful visit, learners are to participate in the recruitment process for a member of staff and are involved in the selection panel.
- Learners feel safe and know who to contact if they have any concerns about the safety of themselves or others. Staff provide good support to many vulnerable learners to remain in learning. Managers set high expectations for behaviour, and staff challenge learners appropriately to maintain a positive and tolerant culture.
- In 2015/16, too few learners progressed to a positive destination after their programmes. To tackle this problem, staff now record learners' intended destinations, and newly appointed 'personal progress coaches' routinely provide impartial advice and guidance through regular reviews. Learners now receive help from external agencies to support them in making informed choices about their future plans.

Adult learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. The vast majority of assessors do not plan assessments and learning activities well enough to meet the needs of learners and to help them excel. Assessors do not effectively use information from assessments to help learners to build on their existing skills, knowledge and understanding and fulfil their potential beyond the requirements of their course.
- The majority of assessors do not have high expectations for what learners can achieve beyond the minimum requirements of the qualification. Too often, work is too easy for those who are most-able and they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Assessors and tutors do not develop learners' English skills sufficiently quickly. As a result, their written work contains too many spelling and grammatical mistakes. A minority of assessors take insufficient care when writing documents for learners and these also contain grammatical errors.
- Too few assessors provide learners with specific or developmental feedback on how to improve the standards of their work. Too few assessors challenge learners adequately, or check their understanding, by using effective questioning. Only a minority of assessors use information from workplace mentors or employers to help learners link the skills they learn at work to their qualifications.
- Leaders respond well to the training requirements in the region. They support the needs of local employers and the community by providing courses that give adult learners good vocational skills, such as care of older people, essential work skills and skills in English. For example, managers and staff responded to the needs of a large local employer by developing the communication skills of the workforce, the majority of whom have English as a second language, by providing English and management training qualifications.
- Assessors and workplace mentors ensure that learners improve their confidence,

communication and team working skills. For example, learners taking team-leader qualifications are able to chair meetings when previously they were reluctant to participate in them. Learners also use their mentoring skills effectively to support new members of staff.

- Learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity matters and value the diverse workforces and client groups they work with. For example, learners following business administration programmes adapt their language appropriately to ensure that clients have a good understanding of the procedures they need to follow when claiming benefits. Learners adopt safe working practices and are aware of how to keep themselves safe.

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- A total of 681 apprentices follow programmes in six subject areas. Of these, around three fifths are following intermediate apprenticeships, a quarter are studying advanced apprenticeships and the remainder are on higher-level programmes. Around a third of apprentices are aged 16 to 18. A total of 104 apprentices are in training with subcontractors.
- The large majority of current apprentices make good or better progress, but a minority do not stay and complete their programmes, and the number of apprentices on level 3 programmes who achieve their qualifications has declined slightly. A small minority of apprentices do not make the progress expected of them, considering their individual starting points.
- When planning learning programmes, assessors take too little account of information about apprentices' starting points. A minority of apprentices have existing skills and knowledge in the subjects they study but assessors do not always recognise this prior learning or help such apprentices develop skills and knowledge more quickly. As a result, assessors are not always aware of the new skills and knowledge apprentices have acquired, particularly on advanced programmes, in subjects such as health and social care, business administration and engineering.
- A minority of assessors do not routinely record the skills and knowledge apprentices gain in their on-the-job training. Too many apprentices view their on-the-job training as separate from their off-the-job work. As a result, they are insufficiently aware of how they can enhance their contributions at work and bring together theory and practical knowledge. In a minority of cases, assessors do not involve employers in reviews and employers' comments do not inform apprentices' future learning. In most reviews of learners' progress, however, assessors do record the progress apprentices make in all aspects of their programme.
- Assessors do not set effective targets to help apprentices make better progress. They set targets at reviews which do not challenge the most able, and only focus on achieving the minimum required for the qualification. They do not set ambitious enough targets to help apprentices improve the standard of their written work.
- Too few assessors focus on the English and mathematical skills apprentices need to do better at work. Assessors do not routinely prepare apprentices to calculate sums, use effective communication in meetings and with clients, or improve the clarity of their

written work. Too much written work contains spelling and grammatical errors.

- Too few apprentices achieve their functional skills qualifications in English, mathematics and ICT on their first attempt. A minority of assessors lack the confidence and expertise to enhance apprentices' skills in these subjects. Managers' recent actions to recruit specialist staff mean that more apprentices now benefit from individualised training. As a result, an increasing proportion of apprentices make good progress towards achieving their functional skills qualifications.
- Most assessors have good industry knowledge in their subjects, which they use effectively to plan assessment activities. Apprentices develop their practical skills well as a result of effective coaching from their assessors and benefit from detailed discussions about their assessments.
- Apprentices develop their interpersonal skills well in the workplace. They work well with the diverse range of clients they encounter. For example, a health and social care apprentice demonstrated high levels of social skills when working with elderly residents in a care home, and a business administration apprentice demonstrated good skills when working with parents in a nursery to complete confidential records.
- Apprentices are able to outline arrangements put in place by their employers to keep them safe at work. For example, a health and social care learner dealing with adults with behavioural difficulties and potentially violent behaviour outlined the planning of escape routes within his workplace should a dangerous situation arise.

Provision for learners with high needs

Requires improvement

- WS Training provides courses for 62 learners receiving high needs funding from two local authorities. The learners are all following discrete provision on three pathways at entry levels and level 1, with a different focus depending on their aspirations and ability. All learners attend for three days each week.
- The development of learners' employability skills requires improvement. Learners on the independent living strand have too few opportunities for work-related and enterprise experiences. Staff do not link the experiences of those learners who take part in work placements sufficiently well to the employability programme, so opportunities to consolidate learning and develop wider understanding are lost. However, learners on the employability pathway do benefit significantly from one or more days of work experience, which frequently leads to paid employment.
- Arrangements to observe and improve the quality of teaching and learning require improvement. Observations do not provide managers with sufficiently clear information about the overall quality of teaching. As a result, managers are not able to provide closely targeted support, or to plan training to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- Staff lack the expertise and qualifications to provide high quality teaching. Too few members of staff have a specialist teaching qualification or a higher level teaching qualification in English or mathematics. All teaching staff have, or are shortly to complete, general teaching qualifications and have Functional Skills qualifications at Level 2. Many learning support staff have social care qualifications. All staff complete mandatory training units and have frequent updates on relevant topics such as safeguarding and medication.

- Staff make good links between information about learners' abilities and skills on entry and their education health and care plans. They use this information well to form the 'baseline' for further learning. Personal tutors capture the progress made by learners in relation to their targets on a monthly basis, and respond well to any concerns that learners have. However, arrangements to capture fully the progress made by learners in relation to their starting points need further improvement where such progress is made outside of a targeted area.
- Learners gain significantly from the way staff focus on developing their social confidence and resilience. Staff monitor levels of support carefully, reducing it gradually where appropriate, so that learners become more self-reliant. Learners and parents spoke eloquently about the confidence with which learners can now talk to others, and the ways they have overcome fears of engaging socially.
- Teachers focus particularly well on meeting individual needs. This is a significant strength of the provision. Many learners from troubled backgrounds, often with additional mental ill-health and anxieties, benefit from the way that staff focus on providing programmes based on individual strengths and aspirations. For example, one learner started his training with high levels of anxiety, had frequent incidents of disruptive behaviour and found attendance challenging. After close personal support and training, matched to his needs, he is now about to start training on a vocational course in a further education college. He has learnt to manage his behaviour, and can talk with confidence about how he has developed the confidence to engage in social situations. He can describe what he has learnt in lessons and in his work experience, and the way in which the course has helped him to progress.
- Learners improve their English and mathematics skills, but many would benefit from some individual or small group work to consolidate the skills learnt during their vocational programmes and work experience.
- Managers use high needs funding effectively to meet the individual and specialist needs of learners. The curriculum includes a good range of options and opportunities, with a mixture of arts and sporting options on lower level courses that match learners' interests and help them to become more confident. However, staff sometimes focus too much on providing qualification-based courses for learners, and on meeting qualification requirements. This sometimes limits opportunities for learners to broaden their learning in realistic contexts. Staff recognise this and are currently developing more non-accredited opportunities.
- The arrangements to communicate with parents and carers are good. Parents and carers value the introduction of a parents' forum that enables them to discuss topics of importance and raise any concerns. Staff respond positively to their suggestions, and readily make changes where appropriate.
- Careers guidance is embedded well into the tutorial arrangements, so that learners can explore their next steps fully. However, staff recognise the need to start the practical arrangements for transition earlier in the programme, so that learners and their parents or carers are better prepared for a move into work or further study.
- Effective safeguarding arrangements help learners to feel secure and safe in training and at placements. Learners have very good contact their personal tutors, including outside training hours. Teachers include aspects of equality, diversity and safeguarding in schemes of work so the learners discuss topics and learn how to live in a diverse society.

Managers carry out thorough risk assessments of activities and of placements, and implement medical protocols where appropriate.

Provider details

Unique reference number	55448
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+/16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	871
Principal/CEO	Jane Wood
Telephone number	01284 788 005
Website	http://www.wstraining.co.uk

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	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	39							
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	206	216	47	199			13	
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	10				10			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	63							
Funding received from:	Education and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	A14 Inspire Suffolk Ltd Jets Academy Needham Market Football Club Onside-Sports Training Ltd Premier Sports Coach Solutions Ltd							

Information about this inspection

- Following the original inspection, undertaken by two of Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI) and four Ofsted Inspectors in January 2017, Ofsted decided that additional evidence was needed to secure the judgements. On 2 and 3 August, two HMI returned with an Ofsted Inspector to complete the inspection and ensure that the inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.
- The inspection team was assisted by the executive director, as nominee. In the original inspection, 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. In the original inspection, inspectors observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews.

Inspection team

Harpreet Nagra, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Angus	Her Majesty's Inspector
Roger Pilgrim	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Winchcombe	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Masterson	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Aslett	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Beynon	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Steve Hunsley	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Joyce Deere	Ofsted Inspector

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