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Mr Guy Helman
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Dear Mr Helman

Short inspection of The Child Care Company (Old Windsor) Limited

Following the short inspection on 24 and 25 January 2018, 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 January 2015.

This provider continues to be good.

You, senior leaders and tutoring staff continue to provide good education and training in a number of vocational subjects. Your introduction of education and training programmes for adults in receipt of learning loans has been particularly successful. These programmes meet an identified need and offer clear career and training opportunities that encourage learners to achieve further.

Leaders and managers demonstrate a good capacity to improve the provision further. You and your senior managers know the provision well and have an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The majority of areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been effectively resolved.

Leaders and managers make sure that learners make good progress and attain appropriately high standards. As a result, apprentices and learners develop good employment-related skills that improve their chances of progressing to higher levels of learning or getting jobs.

The directors and senior managers have put in place effective performance management arrangements to improve the quality of learning and improve success rates on the majority of training courses. However, you acknowledge that the evaluation of standards in taught sessions needs further improvement, so that it more quickly identifies and deals with weaker practice.

Target-setting for learners also requires further improvement, and tutors require

more guidance to ensure that this is consistently effective. Outcomes for the minority of apprentices who are on health and social care programmes require improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements support a caring culture that protects all learners and staff. Relevant policies are in place and safe recruitment practices are followed. Venues used for learning sessions are appropriately risk assessed.

The designated safeguarding officer takes appropriate action when staff or learners raise concerns. Managers use their good external links to refer learners for specialist support. Learners know how to raise any concerns they have about their safety; they are confident that tutors and managers will deal with these quickly and effectively.

All staff receive suitable safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty update training. Tutors effectively improve learners' appreciation of how British values apply to their lives. However, too many learners have a superficial awareness of the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism. Learners gain a good understanding of safe working when using internet-based media.

Inspection findings

- Directors provide a good standard of governance to monitor, challenge and improve managers' and tutors' performance. Consequently, the quality of the learners' experience continues to improve. You have recently restructured the company and are providing guidance and training to develop middle managers' skills and effectiveness. Directors have identified that the appointment of additional external specialists with a background in teaching, learning and assessment would give the board a better range of skills. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this improvement initiative.
- Through effective performance management, leaders and managers have successfully addressed the fall in overall apprenticeship achievement rates in 2015/16. In 2016/17, apprentices' achievement improved on almost all programmes and was high. Achievement by adult learners has been high since 2015/16.
- Apprentices now achieve their English and mathematics qualifications at an appropriately high rate, most at the first examination sitting. A good proportion of apprentices and learners move to further training or employment on completing their programme.
- Apprentices on health and social care programmes do not achieve as well as those on other programmes. Managers have introduced an improvement strategy to deal with this performance shortfall, and in the current academic year, an increasing proportion of these apprentices achieve all parts of their frameworks. However, managers accept that further improvement is required.
- Attendance on most programmes is good. However, apprentices' participation in

the regular webinars requires improvement. A minority of apprentices state that they do not enjoy distance or e-learning and find that these strategies do not meet their preferred learning styles.

- Almost all groups of learners achieve at a similar rate. Managers monitor the success of different groups of learners, but need to link this more closely to improvement planning. For example, managers closely monitor the progress of apprentices and learners who have identified learning disabilities and/or difficulties, and they are able to provide evidence of how effectively care leavers are succeeding on request. However, this analysis had not been used routinely to support improvement planning.
- The self-assessment process is well established. It provides a clear view of how the provision has developed over time. The associated improvement action plan includes a sufficient range of relevant objectives to raise standards across the provision. Seniors managers review the plan effectively to ensure that programme quality improves for all apprentices and learners. However, some small parts of the report are overly descriptive and not sufficiently evaluative. For example, the commentary on teaching, learning and assessment does not give adequate weight to all areas for improvement.
- Tutors have maintained the good teaching identified at the previous inspection. Most tutors use their experience and professional expertise to develop learners' English and mathematical skills well. They successfully plan relevant activities that engage learners. For example, apprentices enthusiastically participate in planned learning sessions that effectively develop their mathematical skills in dealing with ratios and percentages. However, a few tutors do not demonstrate the skills, knowledge or confidence necessary to support apprentices to develop the essential mathematical skills required for their job roles.
- Tutors successfully support learners to use correct spelling and grammar. Learners on adult programmes value the opportunity to improve their skills and their employability. Learners enjoy learning and are inspired to learn further. Apprentices can clearly identify the progress they are making.
- Tutors embed British values effectively into taught sessions. Apprentices and learners on health and social care and childcare programmes demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities for those in their care, but are less secure in their understanding of their rights as employees and learners.
- Tutors set apprentices and learners clear, long-term targets related to their academic goals. These targets include milestone objectives that build learners' confidence as they make swift progress in manageable steps. However, tutors do not consistently provide apprentices and learners with challenging, skills-based targets that help them extend their individual learning fully. Too often, tutors set targets that only deal with assessment requirements. As a result, learners and apprentices do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Tutors provide apprentices and learners with appropriate careers advice and guidance to ensure that they enrol on the correct type and level of course. In many cases, tutors provide sufficient advice and information to help apprentices and learners identify longer term career plans and plan their next steps. However, too few apprentices and learners recall the advice and guidance they

received. Too few were challenged sufficiently to consider what education or training might help them achieve their career plans.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- managers implement agreed performance management arrangements
- managers analyse all available data to monitor the progress of all groups of apprentices and learners, including care leavers
- attendance improves and a consistently high proportion of apprentices participate in their scheduled webinar and e-learning sessions
- taught sessions are rigorously assessed and evaluated so that weaknesses can be identified and standards improved
- all tutors are suitably skilled and confident to deliver high-quality support that helps apprentices and learners develop their skills in English and mathematics
- all tutors set and monitor challenging targets that promote all aspects of apprentices' and learners' skills development and help them reach their full potential
- all apprentices and learners are provided with independent careers advice and guidance that help them identify their next steps in learning and support their long-term career aspirations.

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

Yours sincerely

Gerard McGrath
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, your operations director assisted us as nominee. We met with managers, tutors and employers and used individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners. These views are reflected within this letter. We reviewed learners' assessed work. We evaluated the effectiveness of key documents, including those relating to the planning of learning, quality improvement, performance monitoring and safeguarding. Inspectors took account of the organisation's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report.