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Lawrence Barton
Managing Director
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Dear Lawrence Barton

Short inspection of G B Training (UK) Ltd

Following the short inspection on 14 and 15 February 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.

Having started your career and working life as an apprentice yourself, you appreciate the importance of apprenticeships, the value they can and do add to businesses, and learners' careers and lives. You have high ambitions for your learners. As a result of the sustained efforts of your leadership team, GB Training has made a substantial difference to the lives of learners, most of whom have poor prior attainment.

In realising your vision, you have the support, dedication and commitment of your team of staff and managers, who are well qualified and highly experienced. They form a stable team, sharing your vision and working assiduously to provide high-quality learning. Staff morale is high, and staff members enjoy working at GB Training. You set high standards of personal behaviour, presentation and skills by exposing learners to high-performing businesses. Tutors work well together; they know their learners and employers well and deal with any problems promptly.

An inclusive culture is at the core of your business and throughout the company, where diversity is valued highly alongside respect for others and a focus on achievement, regardless of the barriers many learners face. You have demonstrated that all learners can achieve, which is evident in the increasing rates of achievement of qualifications. Your 'can do' attitude has promoted a culture of success and high achievement in the company.

You and your leadership team are deeply involved with local businesses and in the

community. Your links, developed over many years, with care homes, local transport firms, and public venues are excellent. As a result, you identify and provide training in niche markets such as in passenger-carrying vehicles and driving goods vehicles. In addition to the local enterprise partnership priorities, you continue to develop new markets, such as your plan to offer higher apprenticeships with local firms involved in football and gymnastics. To meet such demand you actively seek partners – including further education colleges – to expand the range of provision and extend the provision from West Midlands to other parts of the country. These include providing training to the learners of some failed providers. Your company's reputation and track record is excellent in contributing to the growth of the businesses through supplying a well-trained workforce for sectors that have high staff turnover. As a result, many of the employers prefer to train their apprentices with GB Training.

Learners develop good vocationally relevant skills that their employers value. For example, learners in team-leading become more confident when dealing with conflict within their teams, and more skilful in dealing with difficult and dissatisfied customers. Learners in transport have improved their driving skills and awareness of the environmental issues associated with transport. By advanced planning and driving thoughtfully, they have reduced the transport bill for large employers such as NHS trusts. Learners' attendance is good, and learners enjoy their learning. Support for learners is good. Where a need is identified, your staff signpost learners to a range of support services.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have strengthened safeguarding arrangements since the previous inspection, successfully incorporating changes such as the introduction of the 'Prevent' duty. Learners and staff work in an inclusive learning and work environment that fosters mutual respect. Learners demonstrate tolerance and respect for others' views. Learners feel safe. Learners have a good level of awareness of British values and 'Prevent'.

Staff keep clear records of the incidents and make appropriate referrals to the relevant bodies. Managers conduct thorough checks on the backgrounds of all staff and their suitability to work with young people and vulnerable adults.

You and your leadership team have established and nurtured strong links with the local community, including the police and organisations such as Birmingham Healthy Minds. Designated officers use these strong links to seek advice and guidance, access training and make referrals. This leads to managers being aware of local issues and being able to refer learners to support agencies. Managers are proactive in enhancing safeguarding for all learners. For example, as a result of the requirements of adults with education and health care plans, managers have developed the safeguarding arrangements further.

Learners are well aware of the need to stay safe online, protecting themselves from grooming, bullying and becoming victims of online fraud. Staff and learners

complete a suite of online learning materials covering safeguarding, radicalisation and extremism which develop valuable knowledge and understanding of these topics. Learners are aware of how to look out for changes in people and to report any concerns. They know to whom to report concerns.

Inspection findings

- Of the 1,092 learners on apprenticeship programmes, 55% are on intermediate and 41% are on advanced apprenticeship programmes. The numbers on higher apprenticeships are small but growing. With 35% of all apprentices, the health and social care subject area has the largest number of apprentices. Other subject areas with high numbers are business administration, which has 25%, and information communication technology (ICT) and transportation, with 13% learners in each subject area. Other subject areas with a substantial number of learners are warehousing and distribution and hospitality. The percentage of young learners aged 16 to 18 is very low.
- Qualification achievement rates are good. The rate of achievement of qualifications in the planned period is high and continues to rise for most apprentices. Leaders and managers have maintained and improved high levels of achievement of apprenticeship frameworks by learners, while managing growth of over 65% in numbers since their previous inspection in 2015.
- Learners stay on their programme, make expected or better progress and the majority gain permanent employment. Learners develop good levels of vocational, interpersonal and essential skills such as team-working, problem-solving, and English and mathematics. Employers value these highly. Apprentices quickly become valued members of the workforce. However, managers do not routinely and systematically collect and use evidence of their progression and destinations, including to higher levels of apprenticeship, enhanced job roles, promotions, pay rises and higher education, to give a full account of the difference that apprenticeship programmes are making to the apprentices' lives and career prospects.
- Leaders and managers have high ambitions for their learners and stress the importance of English and mathematics to their careers. For example, some 38% and 28% of learners gain a level 2 functional skills in mathematics and English respectively, over and above the framework requirements.
- Tutors reiterate the opportunities to promote English and mathematics skills in vocational learning, which motivates learners to work on these skills. However, the quality of skills development in these subjects depends very much on the confidence, skills and knowledge of the individual member of staff. The quality of skills development in vocational sessions is not of consistently high quality. Staff do not have a sufficiently precise understanding of the English and mathematics requirements of the relevant employment sectors and businesses. Therefore, tutors do not challenge learners to excel at these skills.
- After thorough preparation you have introduced apprenticeship standards in roles in care, team-leading, operations department management, network engineering, customer service and supply chain management. In total, you have 106 learners

on these programmes. They are working well to develop a greater level of understanding, knowledge and skills to benefit their employers and are working towards their end-point assessment, which they will undertake in the coming months. You have successfully raised employers' awareness and built their capacity to provide a high-quality service. For example, through the introduction of a level 2 diploma in health and social care you have provided a better framework that helps employers to train the workforce better to satisfy stringent regulations in the care sector. By using the adult learning programmes budget, the recently introduced diploma in health and social care provides opportunities for unemployed adults to seek employment in the care sector. The promotion of apprenticeship to learners and employers requires further development as they do not fully understand the differences between the frameworks, NVQs and apprenticeship standards. Learners are not sufficiently well aware of the possibility of achieving merit and distinction.

- Since the previous inspection observers have improved their focus on measuring learning and evaluating the impact of teaching sessions on the apprentices' experience. Observers accurately identify strengths and weaknesses in sessions and provide useful guidance and staff training, including hints and tips to improve their practice. Through frequent visits to classes, observers have changed the culture of the company so that staff are comfortable with being observed and welcome feedback. As a result tutors, reflect more accurately on how they can improve their practice. The quality of teaching and learning is improving, in ensuring that teachers challenge learners to make excellent progress in their learning.
- Quality improvement planning is effective. Developing a specialist ICT facility with an internationally acclaimed company, improving verbal feedback to learners and embedding English and mathematics in lessons are notable examples of improvements. The greatest impact of quality improvement has been in higher rates of achievements in qualifications and a significant increase in completion of qualification in the planned period.
- Learners, including those with an education, health and care plan, receive good initial careers advice and guidance to place them on the right programme. While the number of learners aged 16 to 18 is small, insufficient careers and progression guidance is built into their learning programme.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they conduct a more detailed analysis of available data and use data effectively to produce a more comprehensive account of the difference they are making to the lives of learners by citing progression, destinations and achievements of learners
- they improve teaching, learning and assessment to a consistently high quality and that teachers challenge learners consistently to reflect on their learning, helping them to make excellent progress in their learning

- staff identify more thoroughly the knowledge of English and mathematics skills required in their employment sectors and businesses so that they can support apprentices to excel in these skills, thus preparing them exceptionally well for the next steps in their careers.
- learners aged 16 to 18 receive more complete careers advice to enable them to have a more comprehensive view of progression opportunities for future employment.

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

Yours sincerely

Harmesh Manghra
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, the team was assisted by the managing director as nominee. We held meetings with you, your senior leaders, and managers, teaching staff, employers and learners. We visited 10 apprentices, observed six teaching, learning and assessment sessions and evaluated learners' work. We spoke with learners at both your sites, including learners on adult learning programmes. We reviewed key documents, including those relating to safeguarding, the self-assessment report, quality improvement plan, staff development records, observations of teaching, learning and assessment. We considered the views of learners and employers, although no learners responded to the Ofsted's online questionnaires.