

Key6 Group Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1273215

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Inspection date(s): 17 July 2018

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This is the first focused monitoring visit to Key6 Group Limited (Key6 Group) following publication of the monitoring visit report for new apprenticeship providers in February 2018, which found safeguarding arrangements to be ineffective.

The findings of this visit are outlined below.

Theme

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Significant progress

Leaders and managers took seriously the significant weaknesses, for safeguarding, identified at the original monitoring visit. They have worked tirelessly to ensure that the safeguarding arrangements have improved significantly and these now meet the provider's statutory duties. Leaders and managers produced an action plan swiftly to rectify the key weaknesses in safeguarding identified at the monitoring visit in February 2018. Leaders and managers implemented successfully the actions in the plan.

Comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures, which include the 'Prevent' duty, contain appropriate guidelines for staff to refer any safeguarding concerns they may have. The policies and procedures were yet to be ratified by the board of directors at the time of the original monitoring visit. These were subsequently ratified by the board in February 2018.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) in place at the original monitoring visit has now resigned from this role. Leaders appointed a DSO and a deputy designated safeguarding officer (DDSO) in May 2018. Both completed their designated safeguarding officer training successfully in June 2018. At the time of this monitoring visit, one referral had been made using Key6 Group's safeguarding procedures. The DSO handled the referral appropriately and she and the DDSO are currently working closely with the apprentice's employer's safeguarding team. Documentation to support the referral and actions arising from the referral are detailed, accurate and up to date.

A safeguarding sub-group was established in May 2018, chaired by the board member with responsibility for safeguarding. The board member has significant experience in safeguarding and is currently chair of several Local Safeguarding Children Boards and a Local Safeguarding Adults Board. The sub-group has overseen further revisions to Key6 Group's safeguarding policies and procedures and has developed a robust 'Prevent' duty risk assessment. The group has secured a range of safeguarding training with external agencies for Key6 Group staff. For example, this

includes 'Prevent' duty and 'Contest' training with the Department for Education's further education 'Prevent' duty coordinator, workshops to raise awareness of 'Prevent' (WRAPs) and online safety training with the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). Key6 Group managers, the DSO and the DDSO have recently started to liaise closely with external agencies such as Integrated Front Door, the single point of contact for all safeguarding and well-being concerns in Wirral, and Addaction, a nation-wide organisations dealing with drug and alcohol misuse and mental health issues, to ensure that apprentices who have safeguarding issues or concerns receive good support.

Apprentices have a good understanding of safeguarding, the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, and the potential for terrorist attacks in highly populated public areas. Apprentices know to whom they should report any issues or concerns when they are with their employer and at Key6 Group. Apprentices' employers give the highest priority to safeguarding. Apprentices benefit from training through Project Griffin, with briefing events presented by trained police advisers to increase staff awareness of how best to reduce and respond to the most likely types of terrorist activities, and employers' bespoke safeguarding training. Key6 Group complements employers' training and briefings with regular updates on safeguarding during reviews and off-the-job training. However, tutors often accept superficial answers from apprentices and do not challenge their knowledge rigorously to ascertain the extent of their understanding. For example, tutors record on review documents when apprentices have received safeguarding training from the employer, but they do not always ask apprentices, for example, how this has extended their knowledge and understanding or what they will do differently as a result of their training.

Leaders, managers and staff have developed a safeguarding workbook for apprentices to complete during induction. However, this has not yet been introduced as Key6 Group has not recruited any new apprentices since February 2018.

Priorities for improvement

- Ensure that tutors take advantage of all opportunities to improve and extend apprentices' knowledge and understanding of all aspects of safeguarding through effective and challenging questioning.
- Introduce the safeguarding workbook to enable apprentices to improve their knowledge and understanding of all aspects of safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty, during induction and to extend their knowledge and understanding further during the apprenticeship programme.

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