

Bright Direction Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	1278604
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of a series of monitoring visits to a sample of new apprenticeship training providers that are funded through the apprenticeship levy. Ofsted's intention to carry out monitoring visits to these new providers was first announced by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in November 2017. The focus of these visits is on the three themes set out below.

Bright Direction Training Limited (BDT) was established in 2010 to deliver courses through subcontract-partnership arrangements. The company became a levy-funded apprenticeship provider in May 2017 and began delivering apprenticeships in September 2017. BDT currently has 19 apprentices in two cohorts working with two employers. All the apprentices are enrolled on the team-leader standards-based apprenticeship programme at level 3.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

Directors have used their specialist knowledge and skills to design and develop the apprenticeship programme in leadership and management at level 3. They have increased the apprenticeship provision slowly with a focus on developing a high-quality programme that meets the needs of employers and is in line with the company's mission and values.

Directors have a clear and purposeful plan to introduce higher-level programmes in this specific vocational area. These programmes will provide employers with clear progression routes for their employees to develop their leadership and management skills further. The directors' longer-term strategy is currently under review and development.

Directors and trainers have highly effective links with employers. They use these links very efficiently to plan the apprenticeship programme around the needs of the employers. Trainers work closely with employers to ensure that apprentices who are recruited onto the programme develop substantial new skills, knowledge and behaviours to support them in their job roles.

Employers demonstrate considerable commitment to off-the-job training. They participate actively in the development of their apprentices. Line managers provide good on-the-job support to apprentices in the workplace. Apprentices make good use of the knowledge, skills and behaviours they gain from the programme to find

solutions to real business problems. As a result, apprentices have a significant impact on their employers' businesses.

Directors and trainers have a good understanding of the requirements of standards-based apprenticeship programmes and have arrangements in place for end-point assessment. Directors have invested in additional staff and resources since becoming a levy-funded provider to support the development and delivery of the apprenticeship programme. They have devised a well-planned off-the-job training schedule.

Currently, all apprentices are making good progress and produce work of a high standard. However, trainers are not yet monitoring apprentices' progress towards achieving higher grades within the standards-based programme nor do they record routinely the ongoing development of apprentices' English and mathematical skills.

Directors have yet to develop a quality-improvement strategy to help them understand fully the strengths and weaknesses of the apprenticeship programme and help them bring about any necessary improvements. Directors do not have clear targets against which the success of the programme can be measured. While the performance of the current programme is good, directors acknowledge this approach is not sustainable in the longer term if the number of apprentices increases significantly.

Directors have very recently taken the decision to put governance arrangements in place to provide the leadership team with external scrutiny, challenge and support. However, this is in the very early stages of development.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Reasonable progress

Apprentices benefit from effective careers information, advice and guidance that ensures that they understand the requirements of the apprenticeship programme and their commitment to it. Trainers identify and take account of apprentices' initial starting points very successfully. They have a good understanding of each apprentice's individual job role. Apprentices undertake a personal analysis of their strengths and weaknesses that identifies what they want to gain from the programme and how it will help them to become better team leaders. The results of this analysis determine their personal targets precisely, and they work with their trainer to achieve them. As a result, apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours that they apply frequently, independently and effectively in their job role.

Apprentices receive regular off-the-job training which has been planned effectively. Trainers have created good-quality teaching and learning resources to help develop apprentices' knowledge and skills. Apprentices are enthusiastic about their learning

and state confidently that what they have learned has improved their effectiveness as team leaders. For example, they can identify readily that their approach to time management, communication with their teams and understanding of the culture of their organisations have improved significantly. A number of apprentices have also introduced processes successfully to ensure that all members of their team have a consistent approach to completing tasks that makes their team's performance more effective.

Standards of work in apprentices' portfolios are high. Apprentices use evidence directly from their job role to demonstrate the substantial development of their knowledge, skills and behaviours. Feedback from trainers is exceptionally prompt and detailed. It shows explicitly what apprentices have done well and what they can do to improve their work further. However, where written feedback shows that work can be improved, apprentices do not act routinely on this guidance to ensure that the quality of their work reaches the highest standard of which they are capable.

Trainers monitor and record closely the progress of individual apprentices. Trainers provide detailed schedules so that all apprentices know what they need to do and by when. The vast majority of apprentices adhere to these deadlines and expectations. At the time of the monitoring visit, all apprentices were on target to achieve their apprenticeship by the planned end date.

Employers, particularly apprentices' line managers, are involved routinely in apprentices' learning and progress. Line managers take part in, and sign off, regular progress reviews between the trainers and the apprentices. They understand how successfully their apprentice is progressing. Most line managers feed back regularly to their apprentices the improvements that they have identified in their performance.

Directors have implemented appropriate quality-assurance systems to check that the quality of apprentices' work meets the necessary standards and that assessment decisions are accurate. Apprentices report that they feel well prepared for their end-point assessment. However, they are not aware of the merit and distinction categories and what they need to do to achieve these higher outcomes.

Apprentices use high levels of English and mathematical skills in the workplace and in their assignment work. Employers identify that they have seen improvements in apprentices' writing styles and report writing. Apprentices use mathematical skills, for example in calculating the cost of an inefficient process in their organisation. However, trainers do not record this further development of apprentices' English and mathematical skills sufficiently.

Trainers do not focus early enough in the programme on the development of apprentices' behaviours. Records show that trainers concentrate on the development of apprentices' knowledge and skills only. However, apprentices develop improved behaviours in their workplaces as a result of their on- and off-the-job training. For example, several apprentices have been promoted from within an existing team. They found the move to a supervisory role challenging but the apprenticeship

programme has given them the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop the necessary leadership skills and to manage their teams effectively and objectively.

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

Directors have a range of safeguarding policies including a bullying and harassment policy, and British values and challenging extremist behaviours and terrorism policy. Safeguarding procedures provide staff with clear guidance on how to identify and report any concerns they and/or their apprentices have. Staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard apprentices.

The designated safeguarding officer has had relevant training to be able to carry out the lead role effectively. The managing director has also undertaken the designated safeguarding officer training to be able to deputise should the need arise. At the time of the monitoring visit, there had been no safeguarding concerns reported. Directors acknowledge that the effectiveness of their procedures will be monitored carefully when an incident occurs.

Directors ensure that they follow safe recruitment practices when appointing new staff. They carry out the appropriate checks including Disclosure and Barring Service checks. All staff receive safeguarding training during their induction. The training that tutors receive helps them to raise apprentices' awareness and understanding of safeguarding.

Apprentices receive safeguarding training in their induction. They have access to all the safeguarding policies. Their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding are reinforced during regular progress reviews with their trainers. As a result, apprentices have a good understanding of safeguarding. Apprentices who work with children have extensive knowledge of safeguarding and the importance of safeguarding to their workplace and the children. Apprentices feel safe and know to whom they can report any concerns they have.

All staff have recently undertaken appropriate 'Prevent' duty training. The majority of apprentices demonstrate a good understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Directors have implemented a 'Prevent' duty action plan. However, they do not monitor and review it frequently enough. They have invested in resources to ensure that their information and communication technology systems are secure to safeguard staff and apprentices.

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