

# Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust

Monitoring visit report

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<b>Type of provider:</b>	Not for profit organisation
<b>Address:</b>	Robin Park Sports Centre Loire Drive Wigan WN5 0UL

## 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.

Wigan Leisure And Culture Trust (WLCT), trading as Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles, provides leisure services across Wigan, Cannock Chase and Selby. WLCT held a subcontracting agreement for apprenticeships with Wigan Council between 2013 and August 2018. It became a levy-funded employer provider and prime-contract provider for non-levy employers in May 2017. At present, there are no apprentices in Cannock Chase or Selby.

At the time of the monitoring visit, 25 apprentices are on apprenticeships, of whom 24 are on apprenticeship frameworks and one is on a standards-based apprenticeship. Fourteen apprentices are on the active leisure and learning apprenticeship at level 2, three are on business administration at level 2, two on supporting teaching and learning in physical education at level 2 and six on supporting teaching and learning at levels 2 and 3.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have a clearly defined apprenticeship strategy that they incorporate in WLCT's overarching strategic plan. Leaders have planned the growth of apprenticeships carefully. They are moving from apprenticeship frameworks to apprenticeship standards. Leaders have ensured that apprenticeship numbers remain low so that assessors can develop their skills in preparation for the implementation of apprenticeship standards in October 2018.

Leaders and managers have overcome several significant issues since becoming a levy-funded employer and prime-contract holder. They appointed a learning and skills development manager following a full-service review in late 2017. As a result, they have improved the planning for, and delivery of, the apprenticeship programmes. Many new systems such as electronic portfolios and an electronic tracking and monitoring system are in place so that leaders and managers can improve the quality of apprenticeships and their monitoring of apprentices' progress. However, staff are yet to implement these systems.

Managers recruit apprentices with integrity from within WLCT and local employers. Leaders, managers and assessors work closely and effectively with WLCT departments and employers, such as local primary schools. They ensure that apprenticeship programmes meet employers' needs and match apprentices' job roles and skills development needs. Additional qualifications such as 'Pool water testing' and 'Re-Bound trampolining for wheelchair users' ensure that apprentices develop new skills that enable them to progress in their careers and job roles.

The observation of teaching, learning and assessment policy is clear and comprehensive, yet succinct. It covers effectively all aspects of the lesson observation process, including how lesson observation links to staff appraisal. However, leaders have not undertaken sufficient observations to ensure that the observation policy and process bring about the required improvements to ensure consistently high-quality training.

Leaders maintain high levels of communication with managers across WLCT and with employers. They ensure that managers and employers have a good understanding of the requirements of apprenticeships. Consequently, apprentices and managers display high levels of commitment to apprenticeships. For example, apprentices receive their full entitlement to good-quality off-the-job training.

Quality assurance arrangements such as apprentices' focus groups and satisfaction surveys provide managers with good information to decide which improvements they need to make to apprenticeship programmes. As a result, apprentices are satisfied with the quality of their apprenticeships. Although leaders and managers regularly review the apprenticeship programme, the resulting self-assessment report lacks evaluation. As a result, it is unclear whether judgements relate to prime-contract apprenticeships or the run-down contract for subcontracted provision. The self-assessment report does not link sufficiently to the quality improvement plan. Consequently, the quality improvement plan does not focus fully on the key priorities for improvement.

Trustees challenge leaders and managers effectively and have an accurate oversight of WLCT. For example, trustees' concerns about the decline in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment led to the full-service review in 2017. Leaders and managers review key performance indicators against clear objectives in their quarterly updates to the board. The annual performance reviews include a full evaluation.

**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 career information, advice and guidance to ensure that they understand the requirements of the apprenticeship and their commitment to it. However, staff do not formally or consistently record careers guidance to help apprentices build on their initial plans or focus on their future career aspirations.

Apprentices' work is at least of the standard expected and often exceeds expectations. Apprentices' portfolios are clear and they organise them well. Written records and feedback following assessment show that apprentices receive effective support from their assessors. Apprentices receive frequent and detailed feedback from their assessors and managers that helps them understand what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve their knowledge or to develop new skills. Where feedback identifies that work can be improved, the majority of apprentices act on this feedback to ensure that the quality of their work meets the high standards of which they are capable.

Apprentices benefit from frequent reviews that clearly identify the progress they make. Employers contribute regularly to reviews, which support apprentices well in the development of their technical skills. Most apprentices receive good support from their assessors. They are complimentary about their apprenticeship and the support they receive. Apprentices explain how the apprenticeship helps them to improve their work in their job role.

Apprentices undertake detailed initial and diagnostic assessments, during enrolment to the apprenticeship, to establish their initial starting points. Managers and assessors do not use the results of these assessments sufficiently well in setting individualised targets that relate to apprentices' skills development needs. Most assessors set apprentices targets that focus on unit completion. A few apprentices have work-related targets, but these often refer to task completion rather than skills development.

Apprentices receive their full entitlement to off-the-job training. However, the off-the-job training records do not contain detail about the activities that apprentices have completed.

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

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Apprentices and staff, throughout WLCT and with employers, feel safe and are safe. This is because leaders and managers have a good understanding of safeguarding. They also have thorough safeguarding policies, procedures and processes in place. Apprentices and assessors have a good understanding of safeguarding, including how to keep themselves safe from the threats of radicalisation and extremism. They know to whom they should report any safeguarding concerns or issues.

All staff and apprentices receive mandatory safeguarding training, to at least level 2, on an annual basis. WLCT designated safeguarding leads receive training to an appropriate level and have regular update training from external agencies such as Wigan safeguarding children board. The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) for apprenticeships in WLCT receives training to an appropriate standard and has a good understanding of safeguarding, particularly with regard to the small number of apprentices who are under the age of 18. Although there have been no safeguarding referrals to date, the DSO, assessors and WLCT staff have a good understanding of the referral process.

WLCT's belief is that it can improve people's lives and the society in which we live by enabling more people to be active, creative and healthy. Mental and physical well-being is at the heart of this ethos. As a result, leaders and managers place a high priority on ensuring apprentices' well-being. Apprentices access a range of services within WLCT to ensure their continued well-being such as healthy living and counselling services. Managers in the human resources department complete thorough recruitment and selection checks when recruiting and employing apprentices and staff. These include eligibility for roles and identity checks. All staff and apprentices have Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) that managers update regularly. The single central register is current, and the central human resources staff check it frequently.

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