

# South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Monitoring visit report

---

**Unique reference number:** 1276376

**Name of lead inspector:** Charles Searle, HMI

**Inspection date(s):** 19–20 November 2018

**Type of provider:** Employer

**Address:** Marton Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS4 3BW



## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by ESFA and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the *Further education and skills inspection handbook*, especially the sections entitled 'Providers newly directly funded to deliver apprenticeship training provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the three themes set out below.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust) is the largest hospital trust in the Tees Valley, serving the people of Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Hambleton and Richmond. It is responsible for two acute hospitals, James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough and Friargate Hospital in Northallerton, and four community hospitals. It employs around 8,500 staff.

The Trust's Widening Participation and Learning Unit (WPLU) has delivered levy-funded apprenticeships since May 2017. Previously, it delivered apprenticeships as part of Health Education England's national contract. Currently, 88 apprentices are on standards-based programmes. Of these apprentices, 70 are on the customer service practitioner standard at level 2, five are on the healthcare support worker standard at level 2, and 13 apprentices are on the operations departmental manager standard at level 5. In addition, 52 apprentices are on the healthcare support services framework programme at level 2. The WPLU also commissions a range of other apprenticeship programmes from different providers to meet its workforce development objectives, but these are not in scope for this monitoring visit.

### 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 developed an apprenticeship programme that meets the strategic workforce needs of the Trust effectively. Apprenticeships are one part of an ambitious scheme to recruit new staff to the Trust through a range of employability programmes. These include traineeships, work experience for unemployed members of the community, volunteering opportunities and a specific project aimed at residents with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Through the combination of its directly delivered apprenticeships and the apprenticeship programmes that it commissions from other providers, the Trust has created progression pathways for its different groups of staff from level 2 up to level 7.

Training advisers have appropriate experience and qualifications in the vocational areas that they deliver. These include advisers with very recent experience of nursing, health care, business management and customer service. Leaders and managers have ensured that staff with a responsibility for line managing apprentices receive thorough briefings about the requirements and expectations of an apprenticeship programme. As a result, apprentices benefit from effective support from their immediate line managers to develop vocationally relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Leaders and managers ensure that the great majority of apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training. They plan this into delivery programmes that apprentices' line managers timetable when they draw up staff rotas, and that training advisers record. A small minority of apprentices do not benefit from their entitlement because of the demands of working on highly pressurised hospital wards. For these apprentices, the result is that they make slower progress.

Leaders and managers maintain an effective overview of the performance and quality of the apprenticeship programmes. The Trust's board and directors receive regular reports on the programmes through which they hold managers to account for their performance. Managers in the WPLU monitor the progress of apprentices rigorously and intervene quickly to support those apprentices who do not make their expected progress. Managers use their quality assurance arrangements effectively to identify areas for improvement and to implement action plans to improve the quality of the provision. For example, managers realised that the withdrawal of a supported probationary period on one of the programmes had resulted in an increase in the number of apprentices who withdrew early. They reinstated it immediately, resulting in more apprentices staying on to complete their qualifications.

Leaders and managers ensure that the great majority of apprentices are on programmes that meet the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship. The only exception to this is a cohort of apprentices on the customer service level 2 standard. They are part of a wider pilot preceptor scheme for newly qualified nursing and auxiliary health staff, such as physiotherapists. Many of these staff already have higher-level qualifications and already have the skills and knowledge that the programme delivers. Managers acknowledged this and so stopped recruiting staff on to the programme earlier in the year. This was as a prelude to ending its delivery to this level of employee, while retaining it for those staff in more administrative roles.

**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**

Most apprentices make at least the expected progress towards completing their programmes successfully. They improve their occupationally relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours as a result of their training. For a minority of apprentices, their programme has been transformational, giving them the confidence and

determination to pursue their careers in the health service. This includes those health care assistants who expressed their long-term aspiration to become nurses.

Apprentices benefit from good support from their training advisers and from managers in the areas of the hospital where they work. Training advisers work closely with apprentices and line managers to provide relevant off-the-job training that apprentices can apply in the workplace. For example, health care assistants learn how to handle and manoeuvre patients safely. They know how to maintain infection control, which they then practise on the wards. Dental laboratory assistants learn how to use a 3D printer to produce models of skulls. Apprentices reflect carefully and fully on their learning and progress. They use this reflection well in their professional discussions with their training advisers.

Managers and staff ensure that apprentices are fully aware of what they need to do to meet the requirements of an apprenticeship and complete it successfully. Apprentices understand the assessment requirements, including the arrangements for the end-point assessment on standards-based programmes.

With the exception of the level 2 customer service pilot programme, apprentices receive helpful advice and guidance at the beginning of their programmes. This informs them about the most appropriate apprenticeship to follow and how it will benefit them in their job roles and future careers. This ensures that apprentices follow a programme at an appropriate level that challenges them to make progress and achieve new knowledge and skills. Advice and guidance towards the end of programmes is effective for most apprentices. However, for apprentices on the health support programme at level 2, advice and guidance are not as effective because these apprentices receive it too late. As a result, they are unclear about their next steps, including whether they will retain a job with the Trust. Too many apprentices on this programme are unable to recall if they have had any careers guidance.

Managers and training advisers ensure that apprentices improve their English and mathematical skills. They identify accurately apprentices' starting points, including previous qualifications, and they deliver programmes to meet individual needs. The large majority of apprentices who need to gain a level 2 qualification in these subjects do so by the time they finish their programmes. Apprentices, including those who already have a level 2 qualification, receive good support to improve their written English skills further.

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

Leaders and managers ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and that apprentices feel safe.

Managers in the WPLU follow the wider Trust's robust and comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures. For example, the Trust recruits all staff, including new apprentices, through its safer recruitment procedures. This involves rigorous interrogation of prospective employees' previous employment histories and qualifications. All training advisers and apprentices who have direct contact with patients undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check. They all complete mandatory training on safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, health and safety, equality and diversity, and basic first aid. Apprentices' understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism receive reinforcement at their regular reviews. Managers check the completion of refresher training on safeguarding at each member of staff's annual appraisal.

Apprentices know how, and to whom, they should report any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead for the WPLU maintains a comprehensive, up-to-date incident log. This includes a helpful section on lessons learned from each incident. Managers use this to inform staff training and to track any emerging trends in safeguarding concerns. Managers have developed effective systems to follow up on apprentices who miss a review or teaching session. As a result, managers ensure that apprentices are safe, and they keep them on track to complete their programmes.

Apprentices learn about and apply safe working practices as part of their programmes. For example, apprentices on the customer service level 2 programme administer elements of the safe recruitment policy in their roles in the human resources department.

Apprentices have a good level of awareness of the various risks that they face, such as those from radicalisation and extremism and, more recently, knife crime.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

### **Learner View**

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to [www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk).

### **Employer View**

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to [www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2018