

Creative Sport & Leisure Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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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.

Creative Sport & Leisure Ltd (CSL) formerly acted as a subcontractor to a neighbouring college and two training providers before being awarded a prime contract to provide directly funded apprenticeship training from September 2017.

At the time of this monitoring visit, 158 apprentices were studying apprenticeship programmes at different levels, mostly in sport, leisure and recreation. Around a third of apprentices follow standards-based apprenticeships, with the remainder enrolled on frameworks programmes. Around a fifth of the public funding that CSL receives is through the employer levy. Almost all apprentices commenced their programmes in 2018.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders effectively design a curriculum with a variety of employers, such as schools, professional football clubs, and leisure and recreation companies, to ensure that their apprentices have the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours demanded by the sport, leisure and recreation industry. They place particular emphasis on ensuring that apprentices maximise their off-the-job training and study additional qualifications that bolster their chances of employment and promotion. For example, apprentices following community sport and health practitioner programmes study short qualifications in paediatric first aid.

Leaders' self-assessment pays good attention to teaching and its impact on apprentices' outcomes. They demonstrate a high level of self-critical analysis in identifying key strengths and weaknesses, but are overly generous in their assessment of the quality of provision. As a result, this impedes their action planning to secure improvement in some areas. Managers' performance management of tutors does not take sufficient account of the findings of the accurate and incisive observations of their practice.

Leaders' monitoring of apprentices' progress in their vocational studies focuses solely on whether apprentices pass or fail qualifications, and does not assess whether

apprentices make swift progress and deepen their knowledge and skills. As a result, apprentices make satisfactory progress, but rarely better than this. However, leaders' and managers' tracking of apprentices' progress in improving their English and mathematics skills is very effective. This ensures that the teaching of these essential subjects meets the needs of apprentices and enables them to rapidly improve their reading and writing skills and proficiently solve numeracy problems.

Leaders have recently ensured that non-executive directors with appropriate expertise provide effective challenge of leaders' actions and are now beginning to help drive improvement.

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

Tutors work collaboratively with employers to ensure that apprentices augment their practical skills and behaviours and add value in the workplace. Apprentices take much pride in their practical work, dress appropriately and work productively with colleagues, pupils in schools and clients in leisure centres and football clubs.

Tutors provide tasks that enable their apprentices to make satisfactory progress in their vocational studies. Tutors use questioning techniques, and self- and peer-assessment activities, and provide feedback that ensure apprentices improve their grasp of relevant theory. However, too many tutors do not set demanding targets that motivate their apprentices to excel. For example, they accept apprentices' work on how to structure coaching sessions to minimise the risk of injury to participants without probing apprentices to explore, extend and elaborate their thinking. As a result, too few apprentices produce high standards of vocational theory work. A few tutors do not challenge the most able apprentices to deepen and consolidate their learning. As a consequence, these apprentices often fail to make the accelerated progress that the most talented apprentices could sustain.

English and mathematics tutors provide stimulating activities that challenge apprentices to understand the value of such skills in the workplace and work hard to improve them. Consequently, most apprentices achieve their functional skills qualifications at their first attempt and progress to further hone their English and mathematics skills. These tutors set demanding writing and problem-solving tasks that ensure that most apprentices who are exempt from studying for examinations extend their higher-level English and mathematics skills. They effectively promote the value of independent working and self-evaluation, which helps apprentices to advance their knowledge and skills.

Staff conduct regular assessment and reviews of progress with most apprentices. However, a few apprentices enrolled on the community activator coach apprenticeship programme are visited less frequently. As a result, these apprentices complete little portfolio work and make slow progress.

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

Leaders ensure that apprentices are safe and feel safe. They place significant priority on making sure apprentices know how to, and whom to, report any arising concerns. Leaders ensure that all staff have received safeguarding training, including that of the 'Prevent' duty, and, as a result, they fully understand safeguarding reporting arrangements.

Leaders maintain an accurate and up-to-date single central register. All staff are appropriately vetted prior to working for CSL. Leaders check that apprentices working in schools are appropriately checked and authorised to work in such settings.

Managers operate a 'free phone' facility that is available 24 hours a day for any apprentice who wishes to report any concerns or anxieties. Reported safeguarding and welfare concerns are followed up diligently by designated leads to effective resolution. Managers ensure that apprentices who have raised concerns are sensitively supported.

Leaders have recently and effectively promoted the importance of supporting mental health in the workplace for both apprentices and staff.

Apprentices have a good understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism and how these may manifest in their work environments and personal lives.

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