

BNG Training Limited

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.

BNG Training Limited (BNG) is a training division of Bertram Nursery Group Limited. BNG was formed in 2013 as a provider of childcare training. It trained apprentices as a subcontractor of an independent training organisation. In July 2017, BNG began receiving public funding to deliver apprenticeship training in its own right. It currently has 74 apprentices, all of whom are on an apprenticeship framework in children and young people's workforce. Thirty-two apprentices are studying at level 2 and 42 at level 3.

Themes

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

Insufficient progress

Strategic and operational management are poor. Directors have not put in place sufficient staff to ensure that the apprenticeship provision is led and managed effectively. Directors' interim arrangements for leading and managing apprenticeships, since a senior training executive left the company four months ago, are inadequate.

Directors do not ensure that they meet the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship. They do not have effective arrangements in place to judge how much apprentices benefit from their training. Directors and senior managers do not check that apprentices receive individualised and coordinated on- and off-the-job training. Many apprentices do not associate theory with practice sufficiently, and this contributes to slow progress.

Directors do not have an overview of the extent to which apprentices acquire substantial new vocational knowledge, skills and understanding. They do not oversee the progress that different groups of apprentices make. Directors are unaware of the weaknesses in the apprenticeship provision. As a result, they have not implemented actions to improve aspects of poor-quality on- and off-the-job training that apprentices receive.

Directors do not place enough importance on the need for high-quality functional skills training in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Directors do not have sufficient specialist staff to deliver functional skills training. Apprentices make slow progress in these subjects because they do not receive enough tuition or development on and off the job.

Governance arrangements are poor. Directors are not held to account for the quality of on- and off-the-job training, apprentices' progress and apprentices' achievements by a supervisory body. Directors are not set specific training-related actions to improve the apprenticeship provision. Their effectiveness does not improve.

Managers and employers select apprentices with care. They ensure potential apprentices are appropriate for, and committed to, working with young children. Managers carry out the necessary suitability checks before apprentices are allowed to work in nurseries.

Managers and assessors have positive relationships with employers in early years settings throughout England. Vocational assessors are suitably qualified and experienced as early years practitioners.

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

Managers' and assessors' planning for off-the-job training is poor. They do not involve employers in planning apprentices' training. Assessors do not make sure that apprentices' starting points are assessed accurately at the beginning of their programme. Consequently, assessors do not plan learning to meet apprentices' individual needs to ensure that they make rapid progress on their apprenticeship and in their workplace.

The training that tutors and assessors provide is not stimulating or varied. It does not challenge all apprentices to work to their full potential. As a result, many apprentices are poorly motivated and do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Assessors do not routinely provide accurate information to employers about apprentices' progress. Many employers believe apprentices are making better progress than they are.

Assessors, in too many cases, do not give enough detailed feedback to help apprentices improve their work. As a result, the weaker apprentices do not improve the quality of their work and assessors do not challenge the most able apprentices to reach their full potential. For example, assessors do not set the most able apprentices additional activities when studying child development to help them to investigate cognitive, emotional and social development in greater depth.

Tutors and assessors do not correct or give feedback on spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors regularly. As a result, apprentices continue to make the same mistakes. For example, apprentices complete progress reports for parents that contain many spelling and grammatical errors. These errors are not corrected by assessors or supervisors before being sent to parents.

Most apprentices develop new vocational knowledge, skills and understanding as a result of on-the-job experience in their workplace nurseries. For example, apprentices at level 3 develop knowledge and skills relating to personal care for babies. They also become skilled in planning learning for children of different ages and abilities.

Apprentices develop professional and supportive relationships with parents, carers and children. Employers and children benefit as apprentices become more knowledgeable, skilled and confident.

Apprentices gain a range of qualifications in addition to their national vocational qualification. For example, they obtain qualifications in paediatric first aid, manual handling, food hygiene and safeguarding. Apprentices and their employers value the additional knowledge, skills and understanding these courses provide.

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

Directors and managers have developed an appropriate culture of safeguarding and protection. They ensure that all staff who work on the apprenticeship programme are risk assessed appropriately through the Disclosure and Barring Service. The designated safeguarding officer is qualified at the appropriate level.

Managers and assessors understand the need to safeguard apprentices. Apprentices have extensive knowledge of how to safeguard the children in their care. They work in safe early years environments and feel safe in them. Apprentices know how to report safeguarding or safeguarding-related concerns in their early years settings.

Apprentices have good knowledge and understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. They understand the different forms of abuse and know how to recognise them. For example, if they see bruises on a child or identify a change in a child's behaviour, they raise their concern immediately with a member of staff.

Apprentices are insufficiently knowledgeable about how to keep safe online. They do not understand fully the dangers of the internet and social media.

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