

On Course South West Cic

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1270915

Name of lead inspector: Christine Lacey, Ofsted Inspector

Inspection date(s): 11–12 June 2019

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: Hyde Park House
Mutley Plain
Plymouth
Devon
PL4 6LF



Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From March 2019, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of adult learning provision which began to be funded from August 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). 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 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly funded to deliver adult learning provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

On Course South West Cic (OCSW) enrolled 90 learners in the current year, of whom 64 were on level 1 and below and 26 on level 2 programmes. The large majority of these learners were on functional skills programmes, but a small number of learners were on certificate and award programmes in health and care. At the time of the monitoring visit, 15 learners are on functional skills programmes in English and mathematics, from entry level to level 2. OCSW provides training as a subcontractor, but this provision is not within the scope of this monitoring visit.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose? **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have built successfully on their extensive experience of delivering adult learning as a subcontractor. The curriculum, including online delivery, supports learners to develop the skills required to meet Plymouth's main priorities for adult education. It is effective in helping learners to have productive professional and personal lives. For example, learners progress from introductory programmes in English and mathematics, through community learning and functional skills qualifications, and into voluntary and paid employment.

Effective procedures for tracking the progress of learners enable managers to monitor the attendance and achievements of different groups of learners closely. Leaders, managers and board members use the monthly reports they receive to evaluate and monitor learners' performance carefully. They identify quickly any learners at risk of leaving the programme or not achieving. Consequently, the large majority of learners remain in learning and achieve their qualifications. However, leaders and managers do not record learners' destination information effectively. They are therefore unable to use this information to evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum.

Leaders and managers use an effective strategy to target disadvantaged learners who are least likely to access education. They use their strong partnerships with a wide range of charitable and voluntary organisations to support the engagement of these hard-to-reach learners. A carefully planned and well-designed curriculum is meeting the needs identified by these partners successfully.

Senior leaders receive good support from a board of directors who have a wide range of relevant experience. The directors are clear about their role and have a good understanding and knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They provide significant challenge to leaders and managers on the comprehensive self-assessment process and meeting key performance indicators.

How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aim and/or personal goals? **Reasonable progress**

Learners benefit from good support to overcome significant barriers and so return to education. Staff assess learners' starting points accurately and ensure that learners enrol on an appropriate course to meet their goals and aspirations. Typically, learners complete an introductory three-week programme, which tutors use to carry out a more in-depth diagnostic assessment, in order to create a detailed individual learning plan.

Learners receive effective and impartial careers information, advice and guidance throughout their learning. This supports them effectively in improving their life opportunities and moving on to further study.

Learners recognise the benefits of study and gaining qualifications in improving their life chances and helping them to achieve their career goals and aspirations.

Tutors and staff are highly motivated, well qualified and have significant experience in working with and supporting adult learners in a wide range of settings. They use their expertise well to support learners to improve their independent living and personal skills. They also enable learners to develop their professional skills, helping them to achieve their goals.

Tutors support learners well to improve the English and mathematical skills which they use in everyday lives. For example, learners' enhanced English skills enable them to write letters, prepare curriculum vitae and communicate more effectively with colleagues in the workplace. Learners use mathematical skills and knowledge well for personal budgeting.

Tutors plan additional learning support well. It helps learners to make good progress. They benefit from the small group size, which ensures that tutors provide more

individual tuition. For example, learners have opportunities to explain and present to their peers ideas for using graphs, including how to label axes and how to use correct titles. These opportunities enhance their confidence and skills.

Tutors do not always monitor and review learners' short- and long-term targets effectively enough. The recording of learners' progress is not yet consistent. Consequently, a small minority of learners do not make the progress of which they are capable.

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

Leaders and managers have established a clear focus on ensuring that staff and board members receive good training in safeguarding. The three designated safeguarding leads have had suitable training and are qualified to an appropriate level. All staff undertake safeguarding training and the large majority acquire appropriate qualifications. They record and deal with safeguarding incidents appropriately. Board members monitor safeguarding arrangements routinely.

Leaders and managers have developed an appropriate 'Prevent' duty policy and risk assessment, in which all staff receive training.

Leaders and managers have established appropriate procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff. All staff undertaking regulated activity are subject to the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

Learners report that they feel safe and are aware of how to keep themselves safe online. They are aware of whom to contact if they have concerns. However, their awareness of the risks and dangers of radicalisation are underdeveloped.

Leaders and managers have good links with external bodies to ensure that they keep up to date with safeguarding issues.

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