

Cornwall Marine Network 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 themes set out below.

Cornwall Marine Network Ltd (CMN) gained an ESFA contract in April 2018 and started to deliver apprenticeships for levy- and non-levy-paying employers in August 2018. All apprentices are employed in companies in Cornwall on programmes from level 2 to level 4. CMN has appointed two subcontractors: Dynamo Healthcare Training Ltd and Accountancy Learning, which between them deliver 30 apprenticeships. Currently, 16 apprentices are on framework programmes in business administration, warehousing and storage, customer service, management, ICT and performing manufacturing operations. There are 34 apprentices on standards-based programmes in healthcare support, accounting and finance, business administration, customer service and management.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Senior leaders have a clear strategy for implementing apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are central to CMN's objectives to generate employment and improve workforce skills in the region. Senior leaders have ensured that, during a period of rapid growth, apprentices continue to receive good training and support.

The new management team has a good understanding of the expectations of apprenticeships. The vast majority of apprentices are new employees or have transferred to new roles within their company; they develop substantial new skills, knowledge and behaviours.

Employers receive good guidance from knowledgeable staff. Managers make sure that all applicants for apprenticeships receive useful initial advice and guidance, from well-qualified staff.

Leaders and managers ensure that apprentices undertaking standards apprenticeships receive appropriate support to prepare them for their end-point

assessment (EPA). Employers are enthusiastic about the opportunities that standards apprenticeships offer to develop apprentices' behaviours.

Leaders and managers have appropriate quality assurance processes in place to ensure the quality of subcontractors. Staff and subcontractors work collaboratively to provide good vocational, academic and pastoral support to apprentices, for example in conducting joint progress reviews.

Managers' comprehensive quality improvement plan identifies key improvement actions. However, it lacks measurable success indicators to enable them to evaluate the impact with sufficient precision.

Managers do not have accurate data to enable them to monitor all aspects of apprentices' progress effectively, in particular in the subcontracted provision.

Managers ensure that off-the-job training is recorded and monitored. A small minority of employers do not give sufficient time for study during working hours. However, managers have very recently taken action to ensure that all apprentices are now receiving their full entitlement.

The board of directors has oversight of the apprenticeship programme and directors receive general updates on relevant issues; however, directors do not currently have sufficient knowledge to provide the necessary challenge to managers. Senior leaders have recognised this and are making appropriate improvements.

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 enjoy their learning and gain relevant skills, knowledge and behaviours that benefit their employer's business. For example, three ICT apprentices progressed from level 2 at school to become responsible for IT support across three schools in an academy trust.

Apprentices develop their self-confidence and are more effective in their workplace. Some apprentices gain useful additional qualifications. For example, business management apprentices who achieve health and safety qualifications are given additional responsibilities at work.

Apprentices receive good vocational and pastoral support from assessors who work flexibly to meet apprentices' needs. For example, assessors visit security night-shift supervisors in their workplace. Assessors are occupationally skilled and qualified and use their industry expertise well to improve apprentices' knowledge, understanding and skills.

Apprentices develop their English and mathematical skills effectively. They receive regular individual teaching sessions that meet their individual needs. This has resulted in the vast majority of apprentices passing their functional skills examinations at their first attempt. However, some apprentices do not progress beyond the level required for their qualification.

Managers ensure that assessors and tutors receive regular observations of their teaching, learning and assessment skills. However, they do not use this information effectively to further develop individuals' teaching skills, for example to improve the quality of written feedback to apprentices, which is inconsistent between assessors.

Managers identify apprentices' prior knowledge, experience and qualifications. However, staff do not use this information to plan the duration of apprentices' programmes, which are currently all set to the same length. The impact of this is not yet clear as the majority of apprentices are still early on in their programmes.

Some apprentices do not know what progress they are making towards completing their overall programme. Most reviews are focused on unit completion. Assessors do not record in sufficient detail the skills that apprentices have developed, or how they can further improve these to support their employers or gain promotion.

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

Apprentices feel safe in their workplaces. They know whom to contact if they have safeguarding concerns.

All staff have a good understanding of how to promote and improve safeguarding within CMN. They have attended appropriate 'Prevent' duty training and understand the risks of extremism and radicalisation.

Managers undertake appropriate checks on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with young people. All staff have Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, which are renewed every three years.

Managers are informed of local safeguarding arrangements and know to whom to refer concerns.

Apprentices gain a basic understanding of equality and diversity, British values, safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty during their induction. 'Hot topic' discussions at reviews reinforce apprentices' understanding of safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty.

Managers check on safety at apprentices' workplaces. They conduct thorough risk assessments, monitor apprentices' working conditions and ensure appropriate actions are taken to mitigate risks.

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