

CareShield Limited

Monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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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.

CareShield Limited received a direct contract to be a provider of apprenticeships in April 2018. It offers a blended learning programme with a combination of online learning modules and individual coaching to apprentices across England. At the time of inspection, CareShield had 145 apprentices, with around half funded through the employer levy. All apprentices are adults on level 2 adult care worker and level 3 lead adult care worker apprenticeship standards programmes.

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 a clear rationale for the development and delivery of apprenticeships within the care sector. They understand clearly what the requirements of good-quality apprenticeship training are. Leaders and managers have planned effectively for the introduction and provision of standards-based apprenticeships.

Leaders and managers ensure that apprentices have appropriate learning resources to support high-quality training. Tutor/assessors are specialists in their subjects. They hold relevant vocational qualifications and have significant experience of working in the care sector. CareShield provides a wide range of high-quality online resources for off-the-job training.

Employers and managers advise apprentices effectively about careers within care. As a result, apprentices often progress to more senior roles and take on additional responsibilities in their work places. Apprentices' career aspirations are discussed throughout their training. However, the provider offers insufficient advice and guidance about progression routes to higher education.

Leaders' and managers' evaluation of the quality of their provision is accurate and drives improvement in the quality of learning. For example, senior managers have successfully addressed the underperformance of tutor/assessors who provided

ineffective support and challenge to apprentices. This has strengthened provision and ensured that apprentices who previously made slow progress now make better progress in their learning. Leaders and managers recognised that information about apprentices' progress was inaccurate and have already taken actions to improve the collection and analysis of relevant data.

Leaders and managers ensure that all employers and apprentices are informed about the requirements of the apprenticeship at the start of the programme.

Tutor/assessors monitor the attendance at off-the-job training during learning reviews with apprentices. Apprentices enjoy the flexibility to complete the online training modules at times that suit them and this helps them to progress in their learning. A few work place supervisors do not fully understand the requirements of the apprenticeship programme.

Governance is appropriate. Senior officers and directors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision that enables them to effectively support and challenge managers.

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

Tutor/assessors work closely with apprentices and employers to ensure that apprentices develop new knowledge and skills. As a result, apprentices are very effectively prepared for working with their vulnerable service users. Tutor/assessors schedule assessments and review visits to fit in with apprentices' work patterns, including during night shifts. They provide effective support and encouragement that help apprentices to progress well in their learning. As a result, almost all apprentices remain on their programme. Employers report that turnover rates are lower among apprentices.

Apprentices make good progress from their individual starting points. They develop appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, one learner has undertaken responsibility for staff rostering and another has taken the lead in carrying out manual-handling assessments in their work place. Tutor/assessors have formed effective, collaborative relationships with employers who are routinely involved in monitoring and supporting apprentices' progress. Apprentices are valued by their employers and make a positive contribution in their workplace.

Tutor/assessors accurately assess apprentices' starting points in English and mathematics. They use the results of initial assessments to plan effective support that helps apprentices develop their English and mathematics skills well. Apprentices understand the relevance of these skills in their work roles, for instance when completing care plans and recording clinical observations.

Apprentices produce written work of an appropriate standard to their level of study. They apply their knowledge appropriately and provide useful examples of their practice with the vulnerable service users in their care. Tutor/assessors provide useful feedback on apprentices' written work, including how to make further improvements. Apprentices with previous experience of care work develop a better understanding of the legislation and principles of care that underpin their daily practice.

Apprentices have a basic understanding of British values and of equality and diversity. They recognise the relevance of these issues to their workplace and how this helps them to give good support to the diverse groups of children and vulnerable adults in their care.

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have developed a good culture of safeguarding. They ensure the safe recruitment of staff. All staff who work with apprentices are subject to appropriate pre-employment checks. A suitably trained and experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is in post. Apprentices feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe in their workplaces and online.

Leaders and managers are taking reasonable steps to meet the requirements of the 'Prevent' duty. Apprentices have an adequate understanding of the general risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. However, few have a sufficient appreciation of the relevance of these topics to their work.

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