

# The Football League (Community) Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 1270895

**Name of lead inspector:** Alastair Mollon, Her Majesty's Inspector

**Inspection date(s):** 9–10 July 2019

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

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## 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 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.

The Football League (Community) Limited (EFL Trust) received its first publicly funded contract for adult education in November 2017. The EFL Trust is a national charity that provides adult learning opportunities through its subcontractor network of 72 football club community organisations (CCOs). The trust focuses on delivering programmes in education and employability and community engagement. Its aim is to use the 'power of football to change people's lives' and meet the employment needs of adults in the communities of the CCOs. The EFL Trust delivers traineeships for adults aged 19 and over and courses in functional skills and bespoke vocational programmes for adults aged 19 and over. Currently, there are 56 learners on adult learning programmes.

### 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**

The board of trustees and senior leaders have a clear vision and ambition for their learners. They are committed to providing high-quality education that helps learners to progress in life as individuals and members of the community. They focus resources on reaching the most disadvantaged adults to improve their life chances and outcomes. As a result, an increasing number of learners achieve their learning goals and move closer to the job market.

Leaders and CCOs have developed effective partnerships with Jobcentre Plus and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) staff to devise a well-designed curriculum that meets local community needs. They respond swiftly to these needs. For example, they worked with the DWP to set up courses for learners in substance misuse awareness, mental health and well-being, and financial management to remove barriers that stop them entering the job market. These helped learners to establish routines and re-engage with education before progressing to functional skills and employability programmes. As a result, the large majority of learners develop the personal confidence and skills they need to enter the labour market.

Leaders have identified accurately most areas that they need to improve. Performance during the early part of the new contract was poor. Very few learners achieved their qualifications, particularly in functional skills. Leaders intervened swiftly to improve the sequencing and staffing of the curriculum, which resulted in rapidly improving results. Consequently, more learners achieve their qualifications and progress to employment or volunteering.

Governance arrangements are effective. The board of trustees makes good use of its wide range of knowledge, expertise and resources to support and challenge leaders and staff to help learners achieve their potential. They are clear about actions to eliminate poor performance and what leaders need to do to bring about improvements.

**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**

Staff provide effective initial advice and guidance to learners to ensure that they understand the choice of courses and the commitment they need to succeed on their learning programme. As a result, the vast majority of learners are on the right programme, complete their courses and achieve their learning goals.

Tutors use effectively a range of tools and techniques to assess the skills and knowledge that learners have at the beginning of their course, including in English and mathematics. They use this information skilfully to support learners to develop their skills and confidence and prepare them for employment. For example, tutors intervene swiftly to redesign programmes to meet specific learner needs. Learners benefit from the development of employability skills, such as good customer service, as well as digital skills that help them to gain employment.

Tutors and external partners provide a supportive and caring learning environment in which learners develop their confidence and self-esteem. Partners' staff attend training sessions on a weekly basis and support learners effectively to improve.

Tutors are well qualified and experienced. They plan and deliver activities that help learners to develop the skills and behaviours they need to achieve their learning goals. As a result, learners enjoy their lessons, are motivated to learn, and develop their self-esteem, confidence and vocational skills well. They recognise the new attitudes and skills they have developed and increase their independence.

Most learners produce work that is appropriate to their level of study. Tutors check learners' work frequently and provide them with helpful and detailed feedback. For example, learners are encouraged to answer questions in full and complete sentences to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding fully. Tutors highlight

the specific skills and behaviours learners need to improve. As a result, most learners make good progress and know what they need to do to improve their work.

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

Leaders ensure that safeguarding has a high priority. The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) has the appropriate training and experience to carry out the role effectively. The DSO has developed a culture of safeguarding and vigilance that permeates the organisation. Managers ensure that they follow safe recruitment practices to assure the suitability of all staff when working in education and training.

Leaders have developed relevant safeguarding policies and procedures that staff understand. Staff have completed safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. Staff know how to report any concerns in relation to the safeguarding, including the risk of radicalisation of learners. Managers recognise the need to check the safeguarding training programme for CCO delivery staff to ensure that updates are timely.

Learners benefit from an effective induction, and training that ensures that they know how to keep themselves safe, including when online, and how to report any concerns. Learners have an appropriate insight into protecting themselves from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

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