

Nova Payroll Management Services Limited

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Jacquie Brown Her Majesty's Inspector

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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 four themes set out below.

Nova Payroll Management Services Limited operates under the trading name of Pin Point Training. It is based in Gateshead and was established in 2012. Since 2017, Pinpoint Training has supported 2,106 learners and apprentices to move into work and provided training for 330 employees in work, of whom 230 are apprentices. Currently, there are 19 apprentices enrolled on standards-based and framework-based programmes in warehousing, adult care, customer service, business administration and business management. Eight adult learners are enrolled on levels 1 and 2 functional skills English and mathematics courses. Adult learners who previously attended Pin Point Training were enrolled on employability courses at levels 1 and 2, focusing on progression to employment in areas such as food production, warehousing, engineering and manufacturing.

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 strategy for developing their provision and meeting apprenticeship requirements. Managers ensure that apprentices have access to effective off-the-job training to develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours in areas such as warehousing, customer service and adult care. Managers provide apprentices who do not have level 2 qualifications in English and mathematics with the opportunity to develop these skills through enrolling on functional skills courses. Apprentices are making expected progress towards achieving their functional skills qualifications.

Managers make sure that staff have appropriate qualifications and vocational expertise. Staff use their expertise and knowledge well to develop apprentices' skills, knowledge and behaviours.

Managers make effective use of feedback from apprentices to improve the quality of training. For example, apprentices commented that there was too much written work in classroom sessions. Managers responded by ensuring that tutors introduced a

wider range of learning activities, such as role play, group projects and online quizzes.

Senior leaders were too slow to introduce processes to oversee the apprenticeship provision when it was initially introduced. As a result, apprentices did not make the expected progress. However, leaders and managers recognised this and now have an effective approach to quality assurance. As a result, they are able to identify issues and take prompt action to make improvements. For example, they have introduced an electronic system which enables staff to track apprentices' progress. Staff provide feedback on progress to managers at fortnightly meetings. Managers monitor the performance of staff effectively through an appropriate performance management process.

Leaders and managers do not have effective enough governance arrangements in place to provide support and challenge to leaders and managers. They recognise this and are currently in the process of creating a formal governing body.

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
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Assessors accurately assess apprentices' existing knowledge and skills at the start of the programme. They use this information effectively to plan learning to meet individual needs.

Tutors support apprentices effectively to develop new skills, knowledge, understanding and valuable workplace behaviours. As a result, most apprentices improve their performance in their role and take on additional responsibilities. Assessors provide effective professional support to meet the individual needs of apprentices.

Apprentices are clear about their career goals, which range from working in a warehouse to working in adult care. Staff provide good guidance to apprentices on further training and employment opportunities. Apprentices can identify how achieving their apprenticeship will help them to progress and develop their career. In a few instances, apprentices in customer service have gained permanent employment in advance of completion of their apprenticeship.

Apprentices benefit from the professional support that assessors provide and the arrangements to meet their individual needs. Assessors have frequent contact with apprentices and know them well. They monitor closely the progress that apprentices make. They provide effective feedback that identifies how apprentices can improve their work. As a result, apprentices make at least expected progress.

Apprentices' written work in most areas of the provision is of an appropriate standard. However, the standard of written English produced by apprentices in warehousing occupations is not high enough.

Apprentices develop good skills for work that they are able to transfer to the workplace. Managers have developed productive working relationships with employers and work well with them to ensure that delivery arrangements meet apprenticeship requirements and apprentices' individual needs.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring 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

Leaders and managers have improved their adult learning provision significantly as a result of effective links with employers. They have worked closely with a local employer to adapt the curriculum so that it is responsive to employer need and to ensure that potential employees are appropriate for job roles. For example, they have introduced dexterity assessments and made appropriate changes to the English and mathematics curriculum.

Most adult learners develop new knowledge and skills that help them move into employment in areas such as engineering, manufacturing and food production. A large number of adults are taking the first steps into agency work or temporary employment. However, too few learners have secured sustainable employment.

Staff provide good guidance to learners before enrolling to ensure that learners join courses that will help them to meet their career aspirations. They accurately identify learners' prior knowledge and qualifications at the start of the programme to ensure that the learning programme is suitable for them.

Staff have good subject knowledge and industrial experience which they use effectively to help learners develop new skills. Consequently, learners make at least expected progress. Most learners who attend employability courses achieve their qualifications.

On the warehousing course, tutors do not use information about learners' starting points well enough to support learners with different levels of ability and experience. They place insufficient emphasis on improving learners' English and mathematics skills.

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

Leaders and managers have implemented appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard apprentices and adult learners. Managers ensure that staff complete high-quality training and, as a result, staff have a thorough understanding of how to keep apprentices and adult learners safe. Leaders and managers ensure that staff are safe to work with apprentices and adults through a suitable safe recruitment process.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) has a clear understanding of the requirements of the role. She has implemented suitable reporting procedures for safeguarding concerns. She is undertaking appropriate training and is being supported by an experienced DSO in another department.

Apprentices and adult learners complete effective training on safeguarding through induction and on their programmes. As a result, they know how to keep themselves safe and to whom they should report any safeguarding concerns. Apprentices and adult learners have a good understanding of health and safety in the workplace that they use to keep themselves safe. They have a basic understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

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