

Dv8 Training (Brighton) Limited

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Ann Monaghan, 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

This is the second re-inspection monitoring visit to DV8 following publication of the inspection report on 18 November 2018 which found the provider to be inadequate overall. The first re-inspection monitoring visit took place in May 2019 and set out areas for improvement for each main theme.

At the time of this monitoring visit there were 157 learners aged 16 to 18. The majority of learners are studying on level 2 and level 3 courses in media and music. There are 32 learners with high needs, many with education, health and care plans as well as other learners with significant barriers to their learning. The visit took place during the second week of teaching in the autumn term.

Themes

Review the provision for learners with high needs to ensure that staff review learners' education, health and care plans with partners frequently and provide appropriate support. **Reasonable progress**

Managers ensure that they review learners' education, health and care plans frequently. The review meetings are well attended by learners, parents/carers, representatives from the sponsoring local authorities and the provider's learning support coordinators. As a result, reviews focus well on the progress that learners make towards the achievement of their intended goals.

Learners with high needs benefit from appropriate support to ensure that their needs are met. Learning support staff design suitable profiles of each learner with high needs that contain information on their support needs and intended goals. Tutors use these profiles to plan and deliver learning so that learners with high needs contribute and make good progress.

Leaders are implementing well-considered plans to ensure that staff are appropriately trained to improve further the support they provide to all learners including those with education, health and care plans. The new learning support manager has commenced study for an appropriate postgraduate qualification and all staff are about to start level 2 qualifications in autism and behaviour management.

Ensure that staff set effective improvement targets with clear ownership, accurate monitoring of progress and measurement of impact on learners' experiences. **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have continued to focus well on their post-inspection action plan. They have improved the quality of the provision and the learners' experiences.

The advisory board provides an appropriate level of challenge and support to leaders and managers. Board members demonstrate a good understanding of their role in making sure that the provision continues to improve. They monitor the post-inspection action plan, including agreed key performance indicators, at each board meeting. However, they are not yet accurately prioritising the actions which will have most impact on improving learners' experience further.

All staff are more confidently implementing the priorities for improvement and understand their own responsibilities within the action plan. They demonstrate their high expectations for all learners. For example, the majority of staff have begun to set homework at a far earlier stage of the year than previously. Learners value the immediate feedback from tutors and know how to improve their work.

Leaders have invested in developing management skills and capacity to bring about further quality improvements. For example, the new curriculum leaders are undertaking an appropriate leadership and management qualification to ensure that they have the skills to build on recent quality improvements.

Formal and regular staff performance reviews are not yet in place and so individual staff members do not have targets to achieve. This makes it difficult to monitor staff performance over time and ensure that improvements are secure and sustainable.

Improve the weak aspects of the study programmes. Make sure that work-based programmes meet study programmes requirements, that learners benefit from impartial careers guidance and have suitable work placements and that the teaching of GCSE English and mathematics enables learners to succeed.

Reasonable progress

Leaders and staff have improved the weak aspects of education programmes for young people and are now meeting the requirements of these programmes.

Leaders are implementing a new careers strategy across the provision. They have invested in ensuring that staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver effective careers guidance for all learners. A recently appointed careers adviser has guided the strategy and delivered training to all staff to develop their knowledge and skills to implement it. In addition, five tutors are currently studying for a level 3 qualification in information, advice and guidance. Learners now complete a module based on their personal career aspirations and many of these learners have already benefited from personal advice sessions to guide their next steps planning. Learners attend careers days and a range of relevant events which helps them to benefit from their work-related learning and work experience placements.

Leaders and managers have introduced a range of initiatives which enthuse learners and develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. As a result, most learners now recognise the value of literacy and numeracy and are improving their skills. A significant majority of staff and all learners enjoyed participating in the newly

introduced 'drop everything and read' weekly session during the monitoring visit. Learners confidently shared why they had chosen their books or magazines and how the promotion of good reading skills within lessons is developing their confidence.

Learners are developing a range of relevant study skills. During induction and the start of their courses, learners are developing their research skills and wider communication skills. For example, tutors are encouraging learners on gaming courses to discuss their emerging knowledge so that they are better able to work together and communicate effectively.

Ensure that the tutor development programme and lesson observation process raise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Reasonable progress

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection.

Leaders have recently restructured line management responsibilities and introduced a new tier of newly appointed curriculum area leaders (CALs). Managers and CALs are effectively monitoring the quality of teaching and the learners' experiences as well as making improvements. They regularly visit lessons and talk to learners and then discuss these findings at weekly team meetings where teachers share ideas and good practice. CALs understand the strengths and developmental needs of each member of their teaching team. They provide personalised and effective professional support which has resulted in a more confident and skilled teaching team.

Staff who are new to the organisation and those who are new to teaching benefit from a range of training opportunities as well as more immediate and effective individual support. For example, new tutors peer observe more experienced tutors and identify teaching strategies to try in subsequent lessons. The more experienced colleague then observes the newer tutor and provides detailed oral feedback to encourage further improvements.

Leaders have put in place many appropriate actions to bring about improvements but too many are not formally recorded and therefore progress cannot be fully measured.

Ensure that tutors use information about students' starting points effectively to challenge all learners appropriately. Reasonable progress

Tutors are establishing accurate starting points of learners across all vocational programme areas. Alongside assessments of learners' English, mathematical and information technology skills, tutors have also established learners' prior knowledge and skills in vocational areas. They identify which of their learners need extra support to succeed and which will benefit from more challenging activities.

Consequently, learners are already benefiting from appropriate support at this early stage of their studies.

Vocational tutors support learners to participate in a good range of practical activities. During the monitoring visit, learners were working on interesting projects that were supporting the development of their skills. For example, learners studying media were enjoying their first project, 'Portrait of a Street'. Tutors were using this to identify learners' starting points across a range of skills including analytical and research skills as well as practical photography, audio and editing. Learners also completed written homework, which allowed tutors to assess and develop their reading, writing and comprehension skills.

Tutors demonstrate high expectations about the standards of work that learners should aim for. Tutors ensure that activities meet learners' different needs. This includes helping learners who already have a good level of practical ability to improve their skills significantly.

Ensure that tutors set high expectations for learners' attendance, punctuality, work-related and independent learning skills, progress and standards of work.

Reasonable progress

Managers have introduced a new approach to monitoring absence and lateness. As a result, attendance rates have improved significantly since the last inspection but are still too low on a small minority of courses, including English and mathematics.

Staff promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality. They have reinforced this message during induction and the start of term. Tutors contact absent learners daily and have ensured that parents and carers have access to an online portal, so they can also monitor attendance and punctuality. Formal progress reviews scheduled over the start of this new term will contain targets for improved attendance.

Learners demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and work well with other learners. Learners develop a good range of work-related skills. For example, they listen to each other respectfully and contribute their ideas with increasing confidence.

Learners benefit from a more structured approach to their learning and assessment requirements. As a result, learners now have a good understanding about assessment deadlines over the year and the quality of work required for different graded outcomes. Learners are completing work of a good standard for the start of the year, but it is too early to judge whether they will remain on track.

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