

# Springfield Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 2510881

**Name of lead inspector:** Andrea Shepherd, Her Majesty's Inspector

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** 5 Victoria Court  
Bank Square  
Morley  
Leeds  
LS27 9SE



## 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 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Springfield Training Limited is a private training provider that delivers apprenticeships to a small group of employers, mainly in Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire. Since 2015, it has delivered apprenticeships as a subcontractor. Since 2018, it has delivered under its own direct contract. There are 78 apprentices on directly funded provision, of whom just over a quarter study the level 3 team leader standard. Two fifths of apprentices study either the level 2 food and drink process operator or the level 3 lead adult care standard. The remaining apprentices study a range of engineering and business-related standards between level 2 and level 5. The provider offers one framework, at level 2 in sign making.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable progress**

Leaders have a clear vision for the provider. They focus well on the needs of apprentices, employers and the community. Leaders use their relationships with selected employers well to design a curriculum to fill skills gaps. Employers benefit from the training that their apprentices receive. For example, they gain from increases in productivity and more efficient administration.

Leaders recruit vocational teachers with relevant qualifications and experience. They provide a well-structured development programme for vocational teachers, which includes teacher training and industrial updating. For example, a vocational teacher has recently gained knowledge and skills in slinging and directing the movement of cranes in a port. Vocational teachers use their expertise well to deliver high-quality teaching, training and assessment.

Leaders have thorough oversight of the progress that apprentices make. They act quickly when apprentices fall behind and make effective plans to re-engage apprentices who experience difficulties. Almost all apprentices remain on their programme and develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Leaders understand the strengths and weaknesses of the provider. They implement appropriate strategies for rapid improvement when problems arise. For example, they have made changes to the delivery of functional skills English and mathematics courses, so that all apprentices can achieve qualifications in these subjects before they reach the end of their apprenticeships.

Leaders work well with employers to plan programmes that meet business needs and apprenticeship requirements. They carry out a range of appropriate checks as part of the recruitment process to ensure that apprentices can develop relevant new knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, business administrator apprentices access other departments so that they can be tested in an unfamiliar environment.

Leaders do not monitor employers' involvement in apprentices' reviews. All apprentices receive effective supervision and support in the workplace. However, supervisors do not routinely attend meetings with apprentices and their vocational teacher. Therefore, a small minority of apprentices do not hear first-hand reports on their progress in the workplace.

**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**

Vocational teachers work well with employers to plan programmes, so that the vast majority of apprentices develop relevant new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Apprentices benefit from on- and off-the-job training that is specific to their job roles. Apprentices on the lead adult care programme develop knowledge and skills in dispensing medicines. Business administrator apprentices implement new communication systems in their factory setting.

Vocational teachers monitor progress and step in quickly when apprentices need extra support. For example, they bring in specialist help for apprentices for whom English is not their first language.

Leaders take reasonable steps to provide vocational teachers with the information that they need to support apprentices to prepare for their end-point assessment. They cascade information from awarding organisations and create development time for vocational teachers to review materials for the standards that they deliver. Vocational teachers use mock tests and interviews to simulate the final tests. As a result, the majority of apprentices know what to expect.

Vocational teachers use assessment strategies well to test what apprentices can do, and to fill gaps in knowledge. As a result, apprentices produce work of a high standard. For example, food production process operator apprentices suggest improvements to processes in their factory setting, as a result of their increased knowledge. Engineering operative apprentices develop actuator testing kits for hospital beds, which is beyond the requirements of the apprenticeship standard.

Vocational teachers do not make full use of the information that they collect about what an apprentice knows and can do at the start of their apprenticeship. They test apprentices' skills in English and mathematics and use the outcomes of this well to plan support. However, in a few cases, vocational teachers do not consider the previous experience of the apprentice. As a result, too many apprentices follow the same programme, regardless of their prior knowledge and skills.

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

Leaders have a clear commitment to safeguarding. They work well with a specialist governor to implement a wide range of appropriate policies and procedures that they update on a frequent basis.

All staff undertake suitable training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Leaders provide additional updates in monthly development sessions. Vocational teachers cascade this information well to apprentices in induction and delivery sessions. They use examples from the media to add context. For example, they refer to knife crime incidents in Leeds. Apprentices have a thorough understanding of safeguarding. They are aware of signs to look out for and how to report any concerns.

Leaders recruit staff safely. They carry out detailed checks during recruitment and induction.

Leaders take reasonable steps to comply with the requirements of the 'Prevent' duty. They carry out risk assessments of internal practices against a range of relevant criteria. However, the coverage, in the risk assessment, of emerging risks that are specific to local areas is insufficient.

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