

Together Training Ltd

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2539272
Name of lead inspector:	Linnia Khemdoudi, Her Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	12–13 September 2019
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Watford Campus Hempstead Road Watford WD17 3EZ

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.

West Herts College and Oaklands College co-own Together Training Ltd. It provides apprenticeships for levy-paying employers, receiving a direct contract for providing apprenticeship programmes in May 2017. Together Training Ltd specialises in leadership and management, professional and construction services qualifications. Almost all apprentices are on standards-based qualifications. Together Training Ltd subcontracts construction-based provision to Oaklands College. At the time of the monitoring visit it had 138 apprentices, 15 studying at level 2, 62 at level 3 and 61 at level 4 and above.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Senior leaders have developed an effective curriculum strategy. They work collaboratively with the county council and other local employer-led organisations. Leaders identify and provide additional courses to help meet local skills shortages, such as the new standard for career development professionals.

Senior leaders ensure that they meet all the requirements of the apprenticeship programmes. They work closely with employers to understand the varying needs of their businesses, before enrolling apprentices. As a result, employers and apprentices commit fully to their responsibilities.

Leaders ensure that courses meet apprentices' needs fully. The enrolment process is thorough. Apprentices undertake a detailed assessment to identify their current skills and knowledge against performance criteria and professional behaviours. As a result, apprentices develop relevant new skills and knowledge.

Leaders appropriately sequence the curriculum content of apprenticeships' programmes. Learning coaches share detailed plans with apprentices at induction and through frequent reviews. Consequently, apprentices know what they will be

learning in advance of scheduled face-to-face workshops. This enables them to prepare appropriately.

Managers have employed well-qualified learning coaches. They hold teaching qualifications and high-level relevant vocational qualifications with appropriate work-related experience. Apprentices value the experience and knowledge they gain as a result of their apprenticeship, which help them to understand the wider sector in which they work.

Managers ensure that apprentices understand fully the requirements of the final examinations. Learning coaches discuss the requirements with apprentices frequently throughout their programme. As a result, apprentices clearly understand what the examinations include and when they will be taking them.

Managers frequently review and monitor the progress of apprentices. Learning coaches intervene quickly should an apprentice fall behind their planned schedule. Most apprentices are on track to complete within their set time frame. However, improvement actions for apprentices often do not help them develop strategies to improve identified weaknesses in the longer term. For example, these actions do not help them improve their inability to manage their time effectively, or to meet work-related deadlines.

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

Apprentices develop the vocational skills they need to be successful in their chosen profession. Apprentices have a positive impact on their employers' business. They use their new knowledge and skills to deal with difficult situations more effectively and to behave professionally in meetings. A small number of higher-level apprentices use their new project management skills to write funding bids to expand the scope of their employers' work.

Learning coaches provide well-structured face-to-face workshops. The tasks and activities they set challenge apprentices appropriately. Apprentices rightly find these useful and the work challenging. Apprentices appreciate that they can contact coaches at any time. The feedback they receive from staff is useful and instructive.

Learning coaches closely monitor apprentices' off-the-job activities to ensure timely completion. In the workplace, most apprentices complete activities and training which relate directly to their apprenticeship programme. However, apprentices are unable to articulate in enough detail what they learn from these activities and how they apply them to their own job role.

Learning coaches provide apprentices with good individual tuition to complete functional skills English and mathematics qualifications. Of those who have already taken exams, all have been successful. Learning coaches embed English skills into monthly workshops effectively. As a result, apprentices who do not study towards qualifications continue to develop their skills. However, opportunities for apprentices to improve their mathematical skills are limited.

Learning coaches provide useful feedback on apprentices' work. In most cases, they correctly identify spelling and grammatical errors, celebrate achievement and prompt further research. However, learning coaches fail to identify when apprentices copy the work of others and submit it as their own work.

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

Managers have created a safe environment for apprentices. Managers adhere to safer recruitment practices, including identity checks and disclosure and barring checks of all staff. They keep records securely.

Apprentices complete a range of informative safeguarding training activities during their induction period. They understand the potential threats posed to them by those who hold extremist views. Staff attend appropriate update training annually. Learning coaches ensure that they update apprentices' knowledge through discussions at frequent reviews and in workshops.

Apprentices feel safe and understand how to report any concerns should they arise. They understand how the safeguarding duty applies to them while at work, as well in their personal lives.

A well-trained lead safeguarding officer frequently shares relevant local information regarding personal safety with staff and apprentices. Consequently, staff and apprentices understand the potential local dangers that may affect them, and how to avoid them to stay safe.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019