

# Lighthouse Futures Trust

Monitoring visit report

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

From autumn 2019, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to independent specialist colleges newly ESFA-funded from August 2018 onwards. 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.

Lighthouse Futures Trust provides supported internships to young people aged 18 to 25 years in Leeds and the surrounding local authority areas. All interns have an education, health and care plan. Most interns have autism spectrum conditions and/or emotional or mental health needs. A few have a physical disability. At the time of the monitoring visit, eight young people were on supported internships with large national and multinational employers. Leaders have ambitious plans for a significant growth in numbers over the forthcoming year.

### Themes

#### **How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant learning programmes that are clearly defined and tailored to suit the individual needs of learners? Reasonable progress**

Leaders have developed a supported internship programme that is tailored to interns' specific needs and future ambitions. They work relentlessly to ensure that programmes lead to meaningful and sustainable employment for the interns whom they support. The small number of young people who completed an internship last year were all successful in gaining employment, two in a prestigious department store and one in a national hotel chain.

Leaders have established an extensive employer forum that meets regularly. Through meetings of the forum, leaders help employers to overcome their anxieties about employing staff who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Employers contribute extensively to the development of each internship placement. Consequently, placements are real jobs that are matched to interns' needs and abilities and make positive contributions to employers' businesses.

Job coaches amend the order of the curriculum appropriately to help interns complete new tasks at work. For example, they deliver email training so that interns in administrative roles learn the skills that they need to write and send professional emails externally. However, the planned delivery of English and mathematics starts too late in the internship programme. This is a particular concern for those who want to take GCSE qualifications in these subjects.

Staff are skilled in working with interns and employers in the workplace. Job coaches receive specific training to enable them to support interns effectively. Most 'work buddies' receive useful training about understanding young people with autism spectrum condition. However, a few interns do not work with the same work buddy routinely due to shift patterns. This leads to a lack of continuity in their support. Staff development activities are not consistently planned to fit in with the needs of the curriculum; for example, update training on risk assessments is scheduled for December, which is too late.

Leaders use high-needs funding effectively. When they identify additional support requirements, such as one-to-one support, they subsidise the cost from their own funds to ensure that interns succeed.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality learning programmes that develop independence, communication and skills and help them to achieve their personal and/or work-related goals?**

**Reasonable progress**

Interns develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need to succeed at work and as independent adults. For example, they develop their communication skills by discussing their job roles with colleagues and socialising with them during breaks. Interns travel independently to work. This skill helps them to sustain permanent employment and to gain greater independence. For a very small minority of interns, the curriculum is not sufficiently ambitious. For example, these interns are given meaningless tasks to complete when the department store is quiet.

The relationship between job coaches and most workplace buddies is effective. Job coaches know their interns well. They communicate the strengths and areas that interns need to develop effectively to work buddies. Job coaches provide helpful on-the-job support for interns. For example, they learn the job roles themselves so that they can model employers' expectations. Job coaches reduce their support over time so that interns increase their independence.

Interns' job roles become more complex over time. For example, in a finance department, interns recognise the information on an invoice, identify when the payment terms on the invoice do not match the central list and, subsequently, make appropriate amendments, following the company's financial procedures.

Interns understand the importance of attendance. They recognise the impact of absence on their colleagues. They learn to self-regulate any challenging behaviour. Job coaches and workplace buddies identify additional activities that benefit interns, such as gym membership, to develop physical stamina that helps with resilience at work.

Interns are confident, polite, enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the areas in which they work. They take pride in what they do. In departments of a large retail store, interns know which products they can explain confidently and which they need to research more. In a large manufacturer, interns can explain the importance of confidentiality when creating patient files for a clinical trial.

Interns' recording of what they do and achieve is weak. Entries in their daily journals do not demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours that interns learn over time. Staff do not record thoroughly enough the significant progress that interns make in the workplace.

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

Staff ensure that interns are safe in all aspects of their supported internships, including when travelling to their placement independently on public transport.

Leaders follow safe recruitment practices. Administrative errors identified in the single central record were corrected before the end of the visit.

Interns know what they need to do and whom to contact if they are concerned about their safety. Additional and appropriate arrangements are in place for interns who work in the department store. Disclosure and referral arrangements, known as 'causes for concern', are appropriate. These may relate to behavioural or mental health concerns as well as safeguarding.

Interns are always accompanied by job coaches and/or their work buddy. Where interns would have difficulty evacuating their workplace independently, appropriate personal emergency evacuation plans are in place. However, individual workplace risk assessments are too generic. Leaders recognised inspectors' concerns and ensured that risk assessments related specifically to interns' individual needs before the end of the visit.

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