

# Kettering Borough Council

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

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**Unique reference number:** 52843

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Kettering Training Services (KTS), a service area of Kettering Borough Council, was inspected in September 2017. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement for education programmes for young people. In June 2017 KTS started to deliver apprenticeships in its own right.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in addressing the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. At the time of the visit, there were 41 apprentices and 18 learners aged 16 to 18 years on education programmes for young people. Many learners have significant barriers to learning. Most are working towards qualifications in English, mathematics, work skills and enterprise from entry level to level 2. Apprentices follow framework and standards-based apprenticeships at level 2 and level 3. Apprenticeships are in business administration, public services, customer service, fashion and textiles and print and printed packaging. KTS work with two subcontractors to deliver fashion and textiles and print and printed packaging apprenticeships.

### Themes

#### **How much progress have leaders and managers made in improving the quality of provision so that all learners achieve their goals?      Significant progress**

The changes that leaders and managers have put in place since the previous inspection have significantly improved the quality of provision. Shortly after the previous inspection KTS appointed a permanent head of service. They have used this as a catalyst for positive change in the quality of the curriculum. Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum with a focus on continuous improvement. They have developed an ethos where staff, learners and apprentices aspire to be the best they can be. Staff enjoy a culture of openness and honesty about strengths and weaknesses. They identify issues quickly and take actions to bring swift improvements. The quality of provision has increased rapidly since the previous inspection.

Leaders have significantly increased the proportion of learners who stay on their programme and achieve their learning goals. They have rapidly improved the quality of education by placing resources where they are most needed. Leaders have appointed managers and tutors who work closely with the quality manager to improve the effectiveness of teaching. For example, new tutors in English and work skills ensure that learners develop the knowledge and skills they need to get closer to the job market or move to further education and training.

Leaders have changed significantly how they plan and deliver the curriculum. Tutors and trainers work together well to plan the order in which learning takes place across the different subject areas. Learners benefit from police visits to discuss knife crime, gangs, county lines and drug misuse as well as bailiff talks about money management. They complete a range of additional courses including first aid, online safety and dementia awareness. Senior council staff conduct mock interviews which prepare learners for employment. Learners understand how to keep themselves healthy. They feel better equipped for life's challenges.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that tutors and trainers plan and deliver a high-quality curriculum? Significant progress**

Tutors and trainers now plan and deliver a high-quality curriculum. They have revised the curriculum significantly across all subject areas. Tutors teach lessons in a logical order so that learners build on what they already know and can do. They help learners to develop essential life and work skills in readiness for their next steps. For example, tutors in English lessons develop learners' knowledge and skills to write in a formal way. In work skills lessons learners apply what they have learned about writing formally when they write personal statements for job applications. Learners understand why these lessons are important and are enthusiastic about their learning.

Tutors give learners lots of opportunities to practise new skills. This helps learners to build strong foundations. They increasingly learn more and remember more. For example, in mathematics lessons learners apply mathematical concepts when learning about money management and budgeting. They use these budgeting skills to calculate the cost of producing winter hampers to raise money for local charities in their enterprise project.

Apprentices benefit from high-quality training that prepares them thoroughly for work in their chosen career. Trainers plan on- and off-the job training very effectively to ensure that apprentices gain useful and powerful knowledge and skills linked to their workplace. Apprentices successfully practise and apply their learning in their jobs. Trainers teach apprentices how to use industrial machines, piece together patterns and select materials. Apprentices learn measuring and cutting techniques before making up full garments. They practise by working with different materials and patterns to gain a thorough knowledge of what works for which products. Apprentices in 'sewn products' now produce high-quality underwear and swimwear garments from start to finish. Apprentices not only gain sustained employment but take on additional roles and responsibilities and gain promotions.

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