

Development Processes Group PLC

Monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency and/or the apprenticeship levy. This follow-up safeguarding monitoring visit has been carried out consequent to the provider being found to be making insufficient progress with respect to safeguarding at their previous monitoring visit. It follows the arrangements outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook'.

The focus of this visit is only on the safeguarding theme below.

Development Processes Group PLC (DPG) currently has 35 apprentices working towards standards-based human resources (HR) apprenticeships in HR support at level 3 and HR consultant/partner at level 5. DPG delivers the professional qualifications contained within the standards. The remaining elements of the apprenticeship programme are delivered by a subcontractor, Interserve.

Theme

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

Leaders and managers have worked assiduously to address the weaknesses identified at the previous monitoring visit. Safeguarding now rightly has the high priority that was lacking at the previous visit.

Safeguarding arrangements are now rigorous and are implemented competently. Leaders and managers have reviewed, updated and implemented safeguarding and safeguarding-related policies and procedures. This, coupled with frequent training and updates for safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty, means that staff now have a good understanding of their own roles and responsibilities in keeping themselves and their apprentices safe.

At the previous monitoring visit, not all staff had suitable checks before they started to work with apprentices. Staff within DPG are now checked thoroughly to ensure that they are suitable for their job role and to work with apprentices. All staff now have Disclosure and Barring Service checks which are recorded accurately in a single central record.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO), deputy DSO and the board member responsible for safeguarding are appropriately trained and experienced in their roles. No safeguarding referrals have been received, which means that safeguarding arrangements have not yet been tested.

Apprentices told us that their understanding of safeguarding and safeguarding related concerns has improved significantly since the previous monitoring visit. The safeguarding handbook, frequent updates and monthly text messages remind apprentices how and to whom they should report safeguarding concerns. Workshop sessions and apprentice reviews of learning incorporate training and updates on safeguarding. Apprentices say they value these activities and can apply them in their workplaces. Leaders and managers have reviewed and updated apprentices' induction to their programmes. Induction now includes certificated training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. However, as DPG has not recruited any new apprentices since the previous monitoring visit, the new induction processes are yet to be implemented.

Leaders and managers have worked closely with external agencies to develop a suitable 'Prevent' duty risk assessment and action plan that covers potential risks in the areas that apprentices work: the north west, the north east, the midlands and London. The apprentices that we spoke to have a good understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. They develop their knowledge further through their individual learning reviews, off-the-job training and the discussion of 'hot topics', such as the London Bridge terror attack, with their training and development officers.

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