

# Dianthas Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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**Name of lead inspector:** Ken Fisher, Ofsted Inspector

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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 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.

Dianthas Ltd started to deliver health and social care training courses in 2009. The company delivered apprenticeship programmes on behalf of other training providers before receiving an ESFA contract in September 2018. Currently, the company has 60 apprentices. Of these, 59 are working towards standards-based apprenticeships. Twenty-four apprentices are working towards adult care worker at level 2, 26 towards lead adult care worker at level 3, six towards children, young people and families practitioner at level 4, and three towards children, young people and families manager at level 5. One apprentice is working towards the apprenticeship framework in leadership and management in health and social care at level 5. The apprenticeship levy funds 48 apprentices.

### Themes

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

#### Insufficient progress

Leaders and managers do not plan a challenging curriculum that enables apprentices to develop substantial new vocational knowledge, skills and behaviours. Too few apprentices are making the rapid progress of which they are capable.

Leaders and managers do not fulfil all the apprenticeship principles and requirements. For example, they do not ensure that apprentices receive their full entitlement to planned high-quality off-the-job learning. Too many apprentices do not have protected time during working hours for off-the-job learning. Consequently, they do this at home.

Leaders and managers do not provide sufficient staff training and development. Staff do not receive adequate preparation to deliver the apprenticeship provision. Trainer assessors lack recent and relevant vocational updating as part of their ongoing professional development.

Leaders do not have governance arrangements in place. There is no external scrutiny of the quality of the apprenticeship curriculum. Leaders do not receive appropriate support and challenge.

Leaders and managers work closely with employers to assess applicants' suitability for apprenticeship training. They recruit apprentices with integrity. Leaders and managers have recently implemented a revised system for monitoring apprentices' progress. However, it is too soon to judge its impact.

Leaders and managers involve employers at the beginning of the programme to select appropriate optional units, for example dementia care or end-of-life care. This helps apprentices to provide specific support to their service users. However, leaders and managers do not involve employers sufficiently in the detailed planning and delivery of the apprenticeship curriculum.

Leaders and managers offer a curriculum that is especially suited to roles within the caring profession. Through the curriculum offer, they meet the needs of local, regional and national employers very effectively. Apprentices have good progression routes from level 2 to level 5.

**What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices?      Insufficient progress**

Arrangements to identify apprentices' existing knowledge, skills and behaviours are weak. Neither an occupationally qualified trainer assessor nor an employer assesses apprentices' paper-based self-evaluation. Trainer assessors do not use information about each apprentice's existing knowledge, skills and behaviours to plan individual curriculum goals.

Managers do not involve employers in the planning and coordination of on- and off-the-job training. Trainer assessors do not check that apprentices retain and can recall what they have learned. They do not use assessment results to plan or organise apprentices' learning.

Trainer assessors do not identify specific milestones against which they can monitor apprentices' progress throughout their programme. Progress reviews focus too much on the knowledge requirements of the diploma qualification and not on apprentices' broader development.

Apprentices receive effective coaching and support in mathematics. However, although most apprentices pass their functional skills English and mathematics examinations, they do not develop their knowledge and skills further.

Apprentices do not receive sufficient careers information, advice and guidance to help them identify their long-term career plans and to support them in their next steps.

Apprentices demonstrate clearly their knowledge and application of the topics they study through their written work and reflective practice. Standards of work are appropriate for the level of programme. Feedback on apprentices' written work is helpful. Trainer assessors identify how apprentices can improve the quality of their answers. However, apprentices and employers have insufficient information about end-point assessment (EPA) early in the programme. Apprentices do not receive sufficient challenge to achieve high grades in their EPA.

Apprentices place a high value on the support they receive from trainer assessors. This helps them to improve their confidence and care-work practices.

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

Leaders and managers give a high priority to safeguarding apprentices and to their well-being. They ensure that each apprentice has a Disclosure and Barring Service check in place before enrolment.

Managers follow up apprentices' absences systematically to ascertain the reasons for the absence and to check their safety. They record and track potential safeguarding incidents diligently. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has appropriate experience and training.

Leaders check applicants' suitability for employment very carefully. Staff receive safeguarding training annually and through frequent updates.

Apprentices receive safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training relevant to their caring role. Although they are aware of the importance of safeguarding in their work, many have difficulty in recalling what they have learned.

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