

Short inspection of GK Training Services Limited

Inspection dates:

26–27 February 2020

Outcome

GK Training Services Limited continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

GK Training Services (GKTS) Limited is a privately-owned company that was established in 2005. It is located in Leigh town centre and offers study and traineeship programmes to learners across the borough of Wigan. GKTS provides training to 22 young people on the 16 to 19 study programme and five trainees on the traineeship programme. It provides specialist training for four learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The large majority of GKTS' learners have a range of significant difficulties which slow down their learning. They have a history of academic underachievement, especially in English and mathematics.

GKTS offers a 23-week, level 1 study/traineeship programme to around 70 learners a year. During the inspection, 31 learners were on these programmes. SEND learners attend a 46-week training programme. This programme is aimed at developing learners' independent living, English, mathematical and information and communication (ICT) knowledge and skills.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Learners feel safe at GKTS. They feel that teachers take care of them, both in the classroom and in their personal lives. For example, leaders have provided free sanitary products for a number of years in an attempt to eradicate 'period poverty' for their learners.

Many learners are grateful for a second opportunity to learn in a friendly environment. They appreciate that teachers listen to their worries and struggles. Teachers provide them with effective support so that they can learn new knowledge and skills and can achieve their personal goals.

Learners gain confidence throughout their programme and develop their resilience in overcoming situations that they have previously thought was not possible. Following

successful work placements and the completion of their course, many learners gain employment.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, managers and staff have developed a meaningful curriculum that meets the specific requirements of learners and trainees. Learners enjoy their learning, make strong progress in their studies and, through the very effective support from caring teachers, overcome their significant barriers to learning.

Teachers order learning in a logical order and build on learners' pre-existing knowledge and skills very effectively. They ensure that the curriculum is easily adaptable to meet the differing needs of learners on the course. For example, a healthy eating module was brought forward to the start of the course. Staff and teachers had observed unhealthy eating habits at breaktimes and lunchtimes that was having a negative impact on learners' concentration.

Learners benefit from a broad curriculum that considers many of the barriers to learning and wider social constraints that learners experience. For example, staff have received training about the 'C-Card' scheme that provides free condoms for learners up to the age of 24 and promotes positive sexual health for learners.

Learners are rightly proud of the work that they produce. They are effusive of the new skills that they develop and feel liberated in being able to express their feelings in writing. SEND learners are appreciative of the new skills they develop in their writing class and feel empowered at being able to express their feelings in writing. They could confidently explain the importance of Shrove Tuesday to the Christian faith through the composition of complex sentences; skills that they have learned previously in their course.

Leaders and staff provide effective impartial careers advice and guidance for learners. They work closely with the local council's career advice hub and other training providers to support learners to progress to their next steps, whether that be further training, apprenticeships or employment.

Teachers provide learners with effective training to give them the best opportunity to achieve their intended aspirations. Learners receive useful training on how to construct a curriculum vitae (CV), career pathway research and how to complete job applications. They practise interview skills through simulated interviews with staff, which better prepares learners to progress to employment. This has resulted in a number of learners gaining permanent employment following a successful work placement.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They have made, and continue to make, improvements to improve the quality of education that learners receive.

While there is supervisory oversight from external professionals, they place too much focus on financial probity and funding compliance. The supervisory body places too little emphasis on having oversight of the quality of education that learners receive and, consequently, could not act swiftly if any improvements were required.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have put in place appropriate policies and procedures which staff use to safeguard learners. They complete checks on current and existing employees to check their suitability for working with learners.

While learners have a broad understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, leaders have not provided training for learners to broaden their understanding of the risks in their immediate locality. This means that they do not understand the immediate risks in their communities.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that they identify the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism in the locality and make sure that learners are aware of these risks.
- The supervisory body should hold leaders and managers to account for the quality of education that learners receive and not just focus on compliance and financial aspects of the provider.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58551
Address	89–91 Railway Road Leigh WN7 4AD
Contact number	01942 208007
Website	www.gktrainingservices.com
Managing director	Hayley Johnson-Tonks
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	17 November 2015
Main subcontractors	Not applicable

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since GK Training Services Limited was judged to be good in November 2015.

The inspection team was assisted by the Quality Manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Paul Cocker, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Keenan

Ofsted Inspector

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