

Catch22 Charity Limited

Interim visit report

Unique reference number: 54215

Name of lead inspector: Gayle Saundry, HMI

Visit date(s): 30 September – 1 October 2020

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: 27 Pear Tree Street
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Interim visit

Context and focus of visit

On 17 March 2020, all routine inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. As part of our phased return to routine inspections, we are carrying out [interim visits](#) to further education and skills providers. Interim visits are to help learners, parents, employers and government understand how providers are meeting the needs of learners and apprentices in this period, including learners with high needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We intend to return to routine inspection in January 2021 but will keep the exact timing under review.

The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below and the findings are based on discussions with leaders, managers, staff and learners.

Information about the provider

Catch22 Charity Limited (Catch22) is a registered charity located in Islington, London. They offer apprenticeships and education programmes for young people at centres across the country. Catch22 offers vocational programmes in construction, land-based studies, health and social care, and childcare. They offer apprenticeships in customer service, management, business administration, housing and property management, and recruitment.

At the time of the visit, Catch22 had 183 apprentices completing standards from levels 2 to 5, the vast majority of whom are over 18. Catch22 teach study programmes to 251 students across seven centres, and have two subcontractors who offer study programmes in construction and in creative arts.

What actions are leaders taking to ensure that they provide an appropriate curriculum that responds to the reasonable needs of students and stakeholders and adapts to changed circumstances?

Leaders continue to offer to students broadly the same range of subjects as they did prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. They have recently introduced courses in using computers at three of their colleges.

Leaders identified an urgent need to develop the availability and use of digital tools at the outset of the pandemic. They took steps such as providing the software needed for staff and students to continue teaching and learning online.

On study programmes, leaders focus on students doing project work where their usual vocational studies were not available. For example, mathematics teachers continue to develop students' application of weights and measures through baking challenges that they can complete at home.

College leaders have restarted face-to-face learning as they feel this provides best for the needs of their students. Leaders explained that while centres are now open, some students continue with a mixture of online and face-to-face learning. They do this to maintain social distancing in their often-small premises. Leaders offered provision for students with education, health and care (EHC) plans throughout the period when most providers were closed, although not all students took up this opportunity.

Apprenticeship leaders recognise that the continued uncertainty around employers' operations poses a challenge in delivering off-the-job training, due to changing responsibilities and shift patterns. Leaders initiated a break in learning for some level 3 students who were unable to complete relevant work due to business needs. Leaders are now working with the employer to re-engage those students, following their break in learning.

College leaders and subcontractors speak positively about the increase in collaborative working this year such as sharing resources, curriculum planning and quality assuring students' work. Employers report that apprenticeship leaders have maintained their existing relationships through online meetings, and have moved to online progress reviews, which they say have worked well.

What steps are leaders, managers and staff taking to ensure that the approaches used for building knowledge and skills are appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of students?

Staff praise the support they have received from leaders to meet the challenges they currently face, through professional development and training. They have embraced the increased use of technology to improve communication across their disparate sites and for teaching. Teachers and trainers now use some aspect of technology on all programmes and feel that in overcoming the challenges they faced they have become more creative.

Students report that they appreciate their studies more, having had an experience of not being able to attend college. They are very complimentary about the support that teachers give, describing it as 'over and above'.

Apprentices' progress has been largely dependent on their employment circumstances. For example, housing and property management apprentices are very busy at work and struggle to find time for their learning. Trainers have adapted their training, delivering shorter, more-frequent sessions, so that apprentices can accommodate these more easily into their jobs.

Staff acknowledge that assessing apprentices at work continues to be a challenge. By necessity, apprentices are taking examinations in English and mathematics late in their programme, while also preparing for their final assessments. As many workplaces remain closed to visitors, trainers use managers' testimonies of

apprentices' workplace behaviours as they are often unable to observe these themselves.

Staff are positive about their communication with local authorities over students who have EHC plans. They are satisfied that students have the support they need.

Staff find planning work experience placements for students on study programmes to be a challenge in the current climate. They make use of a virtual work experience arrangement provided by an employment agency, where students complete work-related tasks that they can do from home. Staff continue to provide careers advice and guidance to students and apprentices.

How are leaders ensuring that students are safe and well informed about potential risks, including from online sources?

Leaders report that their safeguarding system serves all of their students, including those who are highly vulnerable, for instance young people who are looked after, and those subject to a child protection order. Students and apprentices say they receive frequent welfare telephone calls and, where necessary, visits from staff in person.

Staff are positive about the culture of safeguarding at Catch22. They have received updated safeguarding policies and training that reflect the changing circumstances this year.

Students and apprentices receive guidance on how to stay safe online, including how to participate in online lessons safely. Leaders have found organisations, including Social Switch, useful in training teachers, trainers and students how to share text and images safely when learning through digital media.

College leaders have made changes to how they welcome new students to their site, for instance making sure students know where to find hand sanitation points. Students and apprentices know who to contact if they experience difficulties.

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