

Dianthas Ltd

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	10155061
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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 (ESFA) and/or the apprenticeship levy. This provider received a monitoring visit under these arrangements and was found to be making insufficient progress against one or more themes.

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 additional monitoring visits to new providers that were judged to be making insufficient progress against one or more themes at their previous monitoring visit and would have been due their full inspection up to or during the interim phase but have not received it because of the suspension of routine inspections. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements, as outlined in the [interim phase operational note for further education and skills](#) and with reference to the further education and skills handbook and is focused 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 58 apprentices. Of these, all are working towards standards-based apprenticeships. Twenty-eight apprentices are working towards adult care worker at level 2; 19 towards lead adult care worker at level 3; seven towards children, young people and families practitioner at level 4; and four apprentices are working towards the apprenticeship framework in leadership and management in health and social care at level 5. The apprenticeship levy funds 58 apprentices.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Following the previous monitoring visit, leaders and managers thoroughly reviewed the quality of education and training that apprentices receive. They took appropriate actions to address many of the weaknesses. The effects of COVID-19 on the social care sector has meant that the impact of these actions is not yet fully evident.

Leaders and managers responded quickly to COVID-19 restrictions. They swiftly altered the delivery of off-the-job training from face-to-face sessions to high-quality

online learning and coaching sessions for apprentices. Consequently, apprentices are making progress with their studies during the pandemic.

Leaders and managers work closely with employers to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to local skills needs and those of employers. Employers are committed to ensuring that apprentices receive high-quality, on- and off-the-job training.

Apprentices apply their new knowledge and skills in their care homes, for example when working with clients who have dementia. The recording of off-the-job training is not always precise enough.

Employers carefully complete commitment statements and plan the structure of the curriculum with apprentices and their learning coach. The quality of curriculum planning has improved since the previous monitoring visit. However, not all curriculum plans are personalised enough to meet the individual needs of all apprentices.

Staff now benefit from good quality staff development and updating their vocational skills and experience. Staff have attended courses in infection control, mental health awareness and safeguarding. Leaders and managers carefully record staff development and use this effectively in staff's ongoing performance reviews.

The lack of governance arrangements was highlighted as a weakness at the previous monitoring visit. Leaders and managers have begun to recruit an external scrutiny panel to provide challenge and to hold them to account. Due to the pandemic and COVID-19 restrictions, the panel is yet to meet.

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

Coaches work closely with employers to select relevant optional and additional specialist units to complement apprentices' programmes. The new knowledge and skills that apprentices acquire are applied proficiently in the workplace. Level 4 apprentices feel empowered to challenge work colleagues to improve their practices, for example when using a hoist in an adult care setting. Apprentices develop a better understanding of person-centred care for their clients. For example, they learn how to support and comfort clients with end-of-life care whilst managing their own emotions.

Apprentices skilfully use the skills they develop in mathematics and writing in the workplace. Adult care and lead adult care apprentices help their clients manage a personal budget. They are more effective in how they update clients' reports, for example by including practical and emotional aspects of client observations.

Coaching sessions build effectively on apprentices' prior knowledge and understanding. Coaches identify and address gaps in apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. They consider apprentices' individual personal and work circumstances when planning their assignment work so that new learning can be applied in the workplace. For example, level 4 apprentices gain a deeper understanding of the behaviours of young people in care and adapt how they work with young people as a result of their training. Apprentices act on the clear and detailed feedback they receive from coaches to improve the quality of their work. Apprentices who are falling behind with their studies receive effective support from their coaches to help them catch up.

The new system for monitoring and recording apprentices' progress is not yet fully implemented. Consequently, coaches are not able to monitor easily the progress apprentices make against all aspects of their apprenticeship.

Careers advice and guidance is provided at the start of the programme but is not revisited throughout the apprenticeship to help apprentices identify long-term career plans. This weakness remains from the previous monitoring visit.

Coaches ensure that apprentices and employers understand the requirements of end-point assessment. Apprentices attend useful revision sessions in preparation for their end-of-programme assessment and are given tasks to challenge them to achieve high grades.

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

Leaders and managers have maintained the high priority given to safeguarding apprentices that was identified at the previous monitoring visit. The designated safeguarding lead is highly experienced in the care sector and is appropriately qualified. Leaders and managers deal with safeguarding incidents and welfare support referrals swiftly and efficiently.

Apprentices have a good understanding of how to stay safe online; for example, apprentices understand the importance of password protection when using the internet and social media.

Leaders and managers are working closely with apprentices and their employers to support apprentices' mental health and well-being, and to keep them safe in the workplace.

Thorough health and safety procedures and training for staff and apprentices ensure that apprentices keep themselves and their service users safe. Apprentices have first-hand experience of providing personal care to service users who are COVID-19 positive. Leaders, managers and employers provide effective support for apprentices

who have experienced bereavement as a result of COVID-19.

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