

N & B Training Company Limited

Progress monitoring report

Unique reference number:	10172697
Name of lead inspector:	Peter Cox, Her Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	3–4 February 2021
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	The Enterprise Centre Coxbridge Business Park Farnham GU10 5EH

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

N & B Training Company Limited was last inspected in August 2019. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

This monitoring visit focused on the extent to which leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances. It was undertaken as outlined in the [operational note on visits carried out from January 2021](#) and with reference to the further education and skills handbook.

These visits are to help learners, parents, employers and government understand how providers are meeting the needs of learners in this period, including those with high needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, inspectors carried out this monitoring activity remotely. As a result, the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would be the case during an on-site inspection. Therefore, this report provides a more limited level of assurance.

The impact of COVID-19 has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgement below. Inspectors did not evaluate leaders' response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer of 2020, when the provider was not open to all learners and there were no national expectations regarding remote education.

Theme

What progress are leaders and those responsible for governance making to ensure that staff teach a curriculum and provide support to meet learners' needs, including the provision of remote/online learning?

Significant progress

Leaders have made significant progress in dealing with the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.

Leaders have strengthened their quality assurance processes greatly. They now have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their provision. For example, leaders have improved how staff assess and monitor learners' progress. As such, leaders have a secure knowledge of learners' progress and intervene swiftly if learners fall behind.

Due to the pandemic, leaders have been unable to review fully the impact of courses on adult learners once they complete their studies. Leaders have sensible plans in place to resolve this issue.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have improved the recruitment and training of staff. Teachers value the high-quality training and support that they receive from leaders to improve their teaching. Prior to the pandemic, teachers completed work experience to remain occupationally competent. This has helped to enhance the quality of teaching and support for learners, particularly within functional skills.

Leaders make sure that courses match the needs of learners and employers. Staff make sure that potential apprentices and employers have a detailed understanding of the requirements of courses. Staff complete meticulous checks on learners' prior knowledge and experience. They use this information to ensure that learners study appropriate courses. Because of this, more learners complete their studies and achieve well in their examinations.

The small number of employers that met with inspectors value the close working relationship they enjoy with the provider's staff. Employers spoke enthusiastically about how learners are becoming increasingly confident, skilled and integral to their organisations as a result of their studies.

A far greater proportion of learners achieve English and mathematics qualifications than did so at the time of the previous full inspection. Staff assess learners' starting points in English and mathematics. All learners have individual targets to improve in these areas, including those who do not need to complete formal qualifications. Because of this, learners develop English and mathematics skills well in all their courses.

Learners have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Staff train learners in knowing how to keep safe, particularly online. The vast majority of learners complete mandatory safeguarding training. They speak positively about the pastoral programme which covers topics such as online safety, fake news and healthy living. A very small number of adult learners had not completed mandatory safeguarding training. Leaders have now acted to address this gap and have plans to monitor the completion of this training.

N & B Training Company Limited moved all teaching online during the pandemic. Leaders trained teachers to teach remotely effectively. Teachers use assessment to adapt teaching to meet learners' individual needs and requirements. They monitor the progress of learners closely and respond quickly to make sure that any gaps in knowledge are filled. Staff ensure that learners understand and consolidate their knowledge before moving onto the next subject. Teachers give useful and motivational feedback so that learners know how to improve rapidly. As a result, learners know more, become increasingly skilled and many gain promotions within their workplace.

Due to restrictions arising from the pandemic, staff sensibly reordered the curriculum as many apprentices did not have the opportunity to develop their skills in the workplace. During this time, staff focused on developing learners' knowledge and understanding. Staff worked closely with examination organisations and employers to adapt early years education and childcare courses to take account of the impact of the pandemic. For example, by introducing new assessment methods.

Staff use their extensive knowledge to support and keep learners well. They check frequently on the welfare of learners, particularly those who are identified as vulnerable. Learners described how the support from staff allowed them to continue to progress in their studies and maintain their mental health. A small number of learners have required to pause learning as a result of the pandemic. In these instances, staff continue to contact learners to support their well-being and prepare them to return to learning.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- make sure that all learners complete mandatory safeguarding training
- review the effectiveness and impact of adult courses on learners' next steps.

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