

Elmhouse Training

Progress monitoring report

Unique reference number:	1236915
Name of lead inspector:	Jane Hughes, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	56A Cherry Close Tulse Hill London SW2 2EZ

Monitoring visit:

Context and focus of visit

Elmhouse Training was last inspected in October 2017. 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? **Reasonable Progress**

Main Findings:

Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken positive steps to improve the majority of the weaknesses identified. They have appointed appropriate governors to oversee the training programme and support and challenge staff. They have introduced staff appraisals and a performance management programme. Leaders have implemented an effective range of quality assurance activities, such as observations of learning sessions. Leaders have a clear focus on evaluating teachers' practice. However, they do not consider sufficiently the full impact of this on the development of learners' knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Teachers have successfully moved their teaching and support sessions online. They think carefully about how they put the curriculum together so that learners develop their knowledge and skills in a logical order. Teachers make good use of their assessment of learners' prior understanding at the start of the training programme to decide what they teach early in the course. Teachers make suitable adjustments to what they teach based on learners' experience at work. For example, in adult care, where learners did not have the expected knowledge of how to safeguard their clients, this element of the course was brought forward so that learners gained this foundation knowledge.

Teachers use questioning techniques skilfully to assess learners' knowledge and recall of prior learning. They use probing questions very effectively to delve deeper into learners' answers during online teaching. In business administration, learners recall in detail, using appropriate business vocabulary, how to plan and prepare for online meetings. In early years sessions, learners state confidently the names of the seven areas of child development.

Learners receive detailed helpful feedback on their work. Teachers assess work frequently and give learners specific actions on how to improve. For example, in business administration, teachers ask learners to explain further how they use the processes they mention in their work, such as how to zip files. Learners respond positively and resubmit work of a higher standard.

Teachers ensure that learners who do not have a work placement develop their vocational skills. They plan work-based tasks creatively so that learners can complete these tasks outside of the classroom. For example, in early years, learners complete a health and safety risk assessment in a local park and rearrange a room in their house to create a safe space in which to study.

Learners benefit from frequent one-to-one support sessions. These sessions help learners catch up if they have missed any learning or are struggling. Learners appreciate that staff check on their well-being and that they have access to counselling services should they need it. Staff also support learners well to access their remote learning. Learners are confident in using the online teaching platform and the facilities within it.

Learners who want to move on to the next level of learning do not receive enough information about how to do this and what is available to them. Staff are aware of learners' aspirations but do not give them information early enough in their programme about how to achieve them. As a result, learners are unsure how they can access higher-level courses.

Most employers feel well supported by staff at Elmhouse training. They can identify how their learners on early years programmes have improved their workplace practice. For example, learners have more confidence in engaging with children at the nursery. They carry out activities which help extend children's learning. A small number of employers are not sufficiently involved in their learners' programmes. They do not receive enough information about learners' progress.

Too many learners have not achieved their qualification and have passed their planned end date. This is because learners need to complete the final practical element of their programme in a work placement. This has not been possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff keep in close contact with learners to check that they are retaining their knowledge and readiness for assessment. They have plans in place to enable assessment as soon as it is practical and safe to do so.

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

- further develop their quality assurance activities to assess how well teachers implement the whole curriculum and how this impacts on the development of learners' knowledge, skills and behaviours
- ensure that learners have a good understanding of how to access higher-level courses available to them on completion of their programme
- ensure that employers are kept informed about the progress their learners make.

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