

Knights Training Academy Limited

Progress monitoring report

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Knights Training Academy Limited received a new provider monitoring visit in August 2018. At that time, inspectors made progress judgements under three themes.

This monitoring visit focused on the extent to which leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education and training 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

Leaders and governors have taken actions to improve the quality of education since the previous monitoring visit. However, some actions are very recent and so require further work to have an impact. For example, leaders' judgements on the quality of education still focus too much on what the tutor is doing rather than what apprentices are learning.

Leaders monitor the actions in their quality improvement plan and review their progress monthly. They report on progress to governors quarterly. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of the provision for apprentices. They challenge

leaders so that the changes made are sustainable and beneficial to apprentices. For example, governors influenced the decision to employ more 'industry experts' as they recognised the importance of having specialist staff to teach an aspirational curriculum.

Leaders responded quickly to make sure tutors and apprentices were ready to teach and learn remotely in response to the pandemic. Tutors have developed interactive online learning packages that complement their virtual lessons. This approach enables apprentices to access detailed information and gives them opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills. Apprentices benefit from testing their learning by undertaking the knowledge check at the end.

Apprentices, tutors and employers have a good understanding of final assessments and the grades that apprentices are working towards. Apprentices enjoy their apprenticeship and understand how it will help them to move on in their careers. Apprentices benefit from a curriculum based on the outcomes of comprehensive assessments of their skills at the start of their training, as well as their aspirations. For example, the new estate agency apprenticeships often include additional content to cater for the different starting points of each apprentice. Some have ambitions to undertake further professional qualifications once they have achieved their apprenticeship, for example mortgage adviser qualifications.

Apprentices are able to describe the new knowledge, skills and behaviours they have developed since the start of their apprenticeship. For example, business administration apprentices working in the finance sector talk confidently about the Financial Conduct Authority guidelines that they have to follow when speaking to clients over the phone.

Apprentices receive appropriate time to undertake their off-the-job training and do a range of activities that help support their progress. For example, developing step-by-step guides on how to use particular processes needed for jobs in the finance sector, such as anti-money laundering.

Apprentices receive oral and written feedback from tutors about their work. A few apprentices receive specific and precise feedback that identifies clearly what they need to do to improve the quality of their written work, to develop specific skills or behaviours, or to achieve the higher grades. However, for most apprentices the feedback is more basic and tends to confirm the successful completion of the work rather than suggesting any improvements or developments to an apprentice's knowledge, skills or behaviours.

Although tutors set targets with each apprentice at their review meetings, these are often simple task-based targets rather than challenging developmental targets. As a result, they do not sufficiently detail the knowledge, skills or behaviours which the apprentice needs to develop to help them make the progress of which they are capable. Where apprentices are set precise targets, they can more easily see the incremental steps of progress that they are making.

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to meet the requirements of the 'Prevent' duty. They have effective links with local and regional agencies. All staff and governors benefit from training and forums to discuss their learning. They use this learning to ensure that apprentices deepen their awareness of their local communities and possible threats from extremism and radicalisation.

Apprentices feel safe at work and know who to speak to if they have any concerns. Most apprentices were able to talk with confidence about different aspects of safeguarding. For example, they understand about how to protect themselves online and the dangers of grooming.

Staff describe a culture of collaboration that senior leaders encourage so that they can discuss and share opinions on quality improvements. They appreciate this approach and enjoy sharing good practice alongside other training opportunities. Staff are very aware of the challenges for apprentices who are learning remotely and may be more anxious and isolated. They have introduced more frequent contact with apprentices as a response to the change to remote learning. Apprentices feel very well supported by their tutors.

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

- ensure that all tutors benefit from training so that they give feedback and targets to apprentices that are of a high quality and that will help them to make improvements to their work
- monitor and review closely the impact of the recently introduced actions to improve the quality of education, so that leaders have a clear understanding of what apprentices are learning as a result of their training.

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