

# WS Training Ltd

Progress monitoring report

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<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Michael Worgs, Her Majesty's Inspector
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<b>Type of provider:</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Address:</b>	Manor Barn Church Road Great Barton Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 2QR

## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

WS Training Ltd was last inspected in June 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?**

**Reasonable progress**

Leaders have made reasonable progress to improve the quality of the provision. They have taken steps to action most of the recommendations identified at the previous inspection. For example, they have improved their initial assessment processes to ensure that learners are recruited to the most appropriate programme. As a result, attendance and retention have improved on study programmes, high needs provision and traineeships. However, the proportion of hairdressing and barbering apprentices who complete their apprenticeship successfully remains low.

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum offer and no longer use subcontractors. They regularly monitor programmes where they have concerns through their strengthened quality improvement activities. Leaders take action quickly to remedy any shortcomings in provision so that learners and apprentices benefit from a well-planned curriculum that meets their needs and interests.

Governance arrangements have been strengthened. Leaders have recruited a new board adviser, responsible for improving teaching and education. Board advisers use their good experience and knowledge to challenge leaders. In response to this greater level of challenge, senior managers have developed new reporting systems that clearly identify to the board the improvements they are making to the quality of learning.

Leaders have made training of staff a key priority for improving the quality of learning. They have recruited qualified tutors and instigated a comprehensive staff training and mentoring programme. Staff have received extensive software training to provide online teaching. As a result, staff are able to help learners and apprentices adapt to and benefit from learning online.

Staff demonstrate competence and confidence in teaching online lessons. For example, they adapt their practice to enable business apprentices to apply their learning of purchase ledgers in the workplace to the tasks and activities staff set online. As a result, apprentices enjoy online lessons. They value the resources provided by staff to continue learning at their own pace.

Employers have an effective understanding of the progress their apprentices are making and are actively involved in planning their learning. They regularly meet with tutors and attend progress review meetings. Workplace mentors amend work schedules to support the collection of evidence. As a result, apprentices and employers have an accurate understanding of the requirements of their final assessment.

A few apprentices are developing new knowledge and skills beyond the boundaries of their qualification. As a result, they have a broader understanding of different job roles in the workplace. For example, IT apprentices are developing additional skills in customer service and using stock control systems. They have also learned about hydraulics to better understand the pump trucks that are used in the work environment.

Most learners on study programmes have not yet had work experience or enough opportunities to develop valuable employment-related skills. Leaders have had more success in securing work experience for learners with high needs and those on traineeship programmes.

Most learners have not yet received sufficient impartial careers advice to be able to plan their next steps. Leaders have recently recruited a careers adviser. The careers adviser has started to introduce learners to external agencies and employers to give

them a clear understanding of their potential opportunities. However, it is too soon to judge any impact.

Staff now set challenging skills and learning targets that drive swift progress for many apprentices. However, hairdressing and barbering apprentices are making slow progress in developing their practical skills. Leaders are taking action to deal with this issue, but it is too early to see any impact.

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

- enable learners on study programmes to access work experience and develop valuable employment-related skills
- ensure that learners benefit from impartial careers advice and guidance
- ensure that hairdressing and barbering apprentices develop high-quality practical skills and make good progress towards completing their apprenticeship.

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