

Corndel Ltd

Progress monitoring report

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Corndel Ltd received a new provider monitoring visit in July 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 changed the structure of the curriculum effectively when learning moved entirely online during the period of national restrictions. As a result of feedback from learners and employers, leaders altered the timings of workshop sessions. Staff now run workshops in the morning and repeat them in the afternoon. This gives learners the flexibility to learn at a time that suits them. A small minority of apprentices whom inspectors spoke with find it difficult to do all their off-the-job training in work time due to the pressures of their jobs.

Staff work closely with employers to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of learners, which helps them to be more effective when at work. On level 4 data analyst apprenticeships, for instance, professional development experts (PDEs) incorporate new programming languages and coding skills to help learners with work tasks. On leadership and management apprenticeships, PDEs brought the project management unit forward in the order of the course. By doing this, learners have the skills and knowledge needed to work on current projects.

PDEs identify clearly the gaps in learners' knowledge and skills. They question learners carefully to check their professional knowledge, and plan learning to close these gaps. For example, when learners did not have the opportunity to develop their skills in carrying out appraisals in the workplace, PDEs ran additional workshops to cover this topic.

Learners value the skills they gain during the apprenticeship. On leadership and management courses, learners gain confidence in giving constructive feedback to members of their team. PDEs skilfully help learners to refine their presentation skills by pointing out common verbal mistakes. Learners understand that to improve, they need to continually practise, record and review their presentations.

Employers speak positively about the benefits learners bring to their business as a result of the apprenticeship. Learners on leadership and management courses develop good project management skills. This includes writing project initiation documents, and managing and communicating with stakeholders. Consequently, employers report an increase in projects delivered on time.

In a few cases, PDEs do not check how well apprentices understand how to improve their English skills. Although PDEs identify learners' errors, they do not check whether learners understand the reason behind the mistakes they make, or how to avoid making the same mistakes again.

Learners struggle to remember the information they receive about safeguarding topics beyond the first session on their apprenticeship. Leaders have developed resources for PDEs to use when teaching learners about online safety and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. PDEs, however, are not clear about when to teach these subjects on their courses. Consequently, apprentices are slow to develop their knowledge of wider safeguarding topics.

Leaders make effective use of management information to help them monitor learners' progression through their apprenticeship. They share the information with staff and send monthly reports to employers. Employers and staff use these reports to identify when learners fall behind. They work together to agree plans for learners to catch up. At monthly review meetings, PDEs helpfully check with learners whether plans are achievable and support them to make changes when needed.

Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders have revised the governance arrangements. A recently established 'excellence committee', chaired by an education specialist who is independent of Corndel Ltd, met for the first time earlier

in the year. Committee members do not have the range of management information available to them to be able to challenge robustly and support leaders on what they need to do better. However, they identify accurately that the proportion of learners who stay on their course needs to increase.

PDEs value the training they have had to help them improve their teaching and professional skills. Where PDEs do not have a teaching qualification, leaders provide them with this training.

Learners appreciate the coaching and guidance they receive from PDEs to help them with the next steps in their careers. As a result, a few learners successfully progress into new roles and gain promotion.

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

- ensure that learners at all employers are given the opportunity to complete their training in work hours
- strengthen governance arrangements so that leaders are further challenged and helped to assess what they need to do better, and to make the improvements.

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