

North of England Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 2526600

Name of lead inspector: Anita Pyrkotsch-Jones, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection dates: 18-19 March 2021

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: Astley Lodge
2 Queen's Rd
Chorley
PR7 1JU

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by ESFA and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the *Further education and skills inspection handbook*, especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

North of England Training Limited (NoET) is a training provider based in Chorley, Lancashire. NoET began training under its own directly funded contract in January 2020. Prior to this, it provided apprenticeship training on behalf of other organisations. NoET specialises in apprenticeships in childcare and education. NoET currently has 32 standards-based apprentices, four apprentices are on the early years practitioner apprenticeship at level 2, 16 are on the early years educator apprenticeship at level 3, six are on the children, young people and families residential care apprenticeship at level 4 and three are on the children, young people and families apprenticeship at level 5.

The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgements below.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

Apprentices and their employers collaborate productively with the provider's staff to ensure that the apprenticeships meet the skills and training needs of the employer and the apprentice. Leaders understand fully the specific local needs in which they operate. For example, they structure the training to help apprentices understand the diverse backgrounds of the children they care for.

Leaders and managers keenly act upon feedback from apprentices and employers. For example, employers reported that they did not know enough about apprentices' final assessments. Leaders and managers strengthened their communication with employers to make sure that employers and apprentices fully understand the process for, and content of, final assessments.

Leaders and managers know the progress that apprentices make, including those who need extra help. Swift intervention from tutors ensures that apprentices who are falling behind receive the support they need to help them catch up.

Leaders frequently check that apprentices receive high quality off-the-job training. However, a few apprentices' off-the-job training logs do not provide enough information about what they have completed during their off-the-job training or how they will apply this new knowledge in the workplace.

As a small team, leaders and managers constantly discuss the quality of the education and training they provide. They use the outcomes from standardisation meetings to inform the teaching of the curriculum. Leaders and managers recognise rightly the need for a more formal approach to quality assurance and improvement. They appreciate that they need to make sure, particularly when apprentice numbers increase, that they identify accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the education and training and, can measure improvement.

Those responsible for governance ensure that leaders and managers are challenged effectively and held to account for their actions. Board members have identified the need to strengthen governance by recruiting independent external board members.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Reasonable progress

The logical sequencing of the curriculum meets employers' and apprentices' needs and helps apprentices to incrementally develop their knowledge and skills. Additional training and qualifications, such as in British Sign Language, complement the apprenticeship and provide apprentices with specialist skills for the workplace.

Employers are highly supportive of their apprentices. They ensure that apprentices have a breadth of experience. For example, early years apprentices work across all age groups in the workplace. Employers work closely with the provider's tutors. They receive up-to-date information about the progress of their apprentices. Effective and timely careers guidance before and throughout apprentices' training are linked to apprentices' future plans. For example, apprentices are supported well in fulfilling their ambitions to become primary school teachers or to gain promotion in the workplace.

Throughout their apprenticeship, apprentices grow in confidence. For example, they begin to suggest their own ideas for activities in their workplace, such as bringing tadpoles into the setting to introduce spring. This also helps the children learn about the lifecycle of a frog.

Tutors' records of apprentices' starting points demonstrate that apprentices gain substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours throughout their apprenticeship. Most apprentices produce work that is of a high quality. However, tutors are not sufficiently ambitious for all apprentices. For example, a few apprentices give basic answers to written questions or do not use routinely their workplace practices to provide examples in their assessments.

Tutors do not set clear targets for apprentices that help them to focus on what they need to do specifically to develop the knowledge and skills to complete their apprenticeship. The quality of tutors' feedback on apprentices' work is inconsistent. It does not routinely help apprentices to understand what they have achieved and how they can improve their work further.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) effectively implements the provider's policies and processes to keep apprentices and staff safe. The DSO has received appropriate safeguarding training, which enables them to conduct their role efficiently. Referrals made by the DSO to external agencies are swift. The recording of safeguarding incidents are detailed and managed diligently.

Staff receive frequent safeguarding update training, which includes topics such as forced marriage, grooming, online safety and the 'Prevent' duty. Staff incorporate this well into apprentices' training.

Leaders and managers have promoted a culture of keeping staff and apprentices safe. They have placed a greater focus on supporting the mental health and well-being of staff and apprentices during the COVID-19 pandemic and periods of lockdown.

Safeguarding, including radicalisation and extremism, are mandatory components of apprentices' training. Apprentices explain concisely and knowledgeably how they keep themselves and the children in their care safe.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021