

GP Strategies Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	51954
Name of lead inspector:	Anita Pyrkotsch-Jones Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This monitoring visit focused on safeguarding arrangements and 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.

This was an announced safeguarding monitoring visit, following concerns that had been reported to Ofsted and which remain under investigation by another agency. The purpose of the visit was to assess whether the safeguarding arrangements at the provider are effective.

The safeguarding monitoring visit focussed on early years apprenticeships.

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

Themes

How do leaders and managers ensure that apprentices on early years programmes comply with relevant safeguarding requirements?

Insufficient progress

Leaders and managers do not manage safeguarding effectively. During the monitoring visit, they were unable to supply evidence that provided assurance to inspectors that apprentices comply with safeguarding requirements. For example, leaders and managers do not know if all apprentices requiring Disclosure and Barring Service checks have had the checks completed before commencing workplace training. Leaders and managers do not routinely carry out eligibility checks to ensure apprentices' suitability for employment.

Leaders' and managers' workplace risk assessments lack detail. They are generic, are not relevant to each apprentices' workplace, and do not focus on risk. Workplace risk assessments are often completed over the telephone by provider's staff. During visits to apprentices in the workplace, skills coaches ask employers if they have documentation, such as insurance and relevant policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding. They do not, however, routinely ask to see copies of the relevant documentation to check whether they are appropriate and up to date. Leaders do not know how many places apprentices are employed in, nor do they know what the reasons are for the red, amber and green risk ratings attributed to employers.

Safeguarding training for apprentices is not reflective of local and national issues and does not improve apprentices' understanding of safeguarding or how to report

safeguarding concerns. Skills coaches provide apprentices with individual support, such as discussing safeguarding assignments. However, opportunities for apprentices to learn about safeguarding in a way that develops their understanding and tests their knowledge of safeguarding in the workplace, for example through taught sessions, are too rare. As a result, many apprentices' knowledge of safeguarding requirements is superficial.

Are arrangements for safeguarding apprentices on early years programmes appropriate and effective? **Insufficient progress**

Leaders and managers do not adapt and personalise safeguarding training to reflect the needs of apprentices or the apprentices' workplaces. For example, all apprentices follow the same training plan, irrespective of the type of setting they are employed in or the ages of the children they work with.

Safeguarding training for apprentices has little structure and lacks coordination between what skills coaches teach as part of the apprenticeship and what employers teach as part of their staff training programme. As a result, apprentices' understanding of safeguarding is confused.

Leaders and managers do not follow their own safeguarding policies and processes. They do not review policies and processes for safeguarding following safeguarding incidents. Leaders' reporting on safeguarding to the governing body is minimal and infrequent.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has a limited understanding of how to maintain sufficient safeguarding records. The provider's safeguarding incident central register records information received and the proposed and/or completed actions taken by the designated safeguarding lead. However, on several entries, the necessary detail is not recorded to show how the issues were resolved, whether proposed actions were completed or when the case was closed.

How well do staff respond to safeguarding concerns? **Insufficient progress**

The provider's process to raise formal concerns about the quality of practice observed by skills coaches or experienced by apprentices lacks clarity. Skills coaches do not understand the importance of sharing information with the DSL when they have concerns.

Leaders and managers do not prioritise the training of staff and apprentices following safeguarding incidents, nor do they adapt or improve training materials.

Leaders and managers are not adequately learning from and implementing improvements following safeguarding incidents. When a significant safeguarding incident occurs, the DSL does not formally review the case or how it has been handled. The DSL and senior leaders do not identify key learning points for improvement or implement actions to ensure that they learn from the incident in order to mitigate safeguarding risks in the future.

Leaders and managers provide too little training for skills coaches about safeguarding and, particularly, about the learning from local and national safeguarding cases and reviews.

Managers responsible for apprentices on early years programmes work within regions. They do not communicate routinely or effectively with managers from other regions. Regional early years managers have not met to share good practice or their experiences and learning from safeguarding incidents for over two years.

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