

The Constellation Trust

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector:	Steve Hunsley, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	The Constellation Trust 296 Anlaby Park Road South Kingston upon Hull HU4 7JB

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.

The Constellation Trust provides teaching assistant apprenticeships for its partner schools in Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. It began to deliver its own apprenticeships in 2018. At the time of the visit, the trust had nine apprentices, of whom five were on programmes at level 3 and the remainder on programmes at level 2. All apprentices are over 18 years of age and employed at primary schools within the trust.

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

Leaders work effectively with their partner schools to provide programmes that meet the principles of an apprenticeship and to ensure that all parties have a good understanding of the on- and off-the-job training requirements of an apprenticeship. Their apprenticeships help school leaders to develop effective teaching assistants who gain the substantial skills, knowledge and behaviours that they need to support children in their studies.

Leaders work well with school leaders to ensure that apprentices have appropriate job roles in which they are able to develop their new knowledge and skills. They recruit apprentices with integrity through a rigorous recruitment process. Managers provide school leaders with prospective apprentices for interview and ensure that apprentices receive useful careers advice and guidance.

Leaders have a good oversight of the progress that apprentices make. They review apprentices' progress frequently. All apprentices are on target to complete their programmes by their planned end date.

Leaders ensure that the trainers who guide apprentices are appropriately qualified and have the necessary subject knowledge, qualifications and experience to help apprentices improve their classroom management skills and the pastoral support that they provide for children. School leaders value the support and help that trainers provide for their apprentices.

Leaders have a good understanding of the quality of their provision. They recognise the few areas that they need to improve, which include the planning of standards-based apprenticeships. Leaders see the recent transition to standards-based apprenticeships as an opportunity to provide bespoke training programmes for their apprentices. For example, training that relates to working with vulnerable children can be brought forward to earlier in the programme for apprentices who work predominantly with this group.

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

Leaders ensure that school leaders provide job roles in which apprentices are able to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they require to work with children in schools. Apprentices become valued members of the teaching team in schools and contribute well to the day-to-day delivery of subjects by teachers. For example, apprentices swiftly improve their confidence and communication skills when having discussions with children, colleagues, and parents and carers.

Trainers determine apprentices' prior knowledge, skills and starting points effectively. They make good use of this information and put in place programmes that enable apprentices to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours that they specifically need in their job roles. For example, apprentices working with children with hearing impairments swiftly develop their understanding of sign language and their skills in signing.

Trainers use assessment and information from mentors and school leaders well to inform future learning and to support apprentices to make the progress expected of them. Apprentices receive supportive feedback that helps them to improve the standard of their work. For example, apprentices use the feedback from their trainer to improve the standard of their writing skills, which they are then able to use with the children whom they are supporting.

Trainers and mentors help apprentices to improve their knowledge through useful and frequent one-to-one discussions and through ensuring that apprentices attend additional, school-based training sessions. Apprentices participate in useful on-the-job training that complements their apprenticeship. For example, they complete additional training in paediatric first aid and non-verbal communication skills.

Apprentices benefit from effective and helpful support in developing their English, mathematical and digital skills. Trainers work with apprentices to guide them in developing the communication skills that they need when having confidential conversations with parents or when helping children develop their communication and writing skills.

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

Leaders have put in place appropriate safeguarding arrangements. Together with their partner school leaders, they provide training for all staff in implementing these arrangements effectively to keep apprentices safe. The trust safeguarding lead, the school designated leads and all staff benefit from annual safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training.

Apprentices feel safe in their school. They are aware of their responsibility to keep themselves and the children in their care safe and of the possible risks associated with extremist groups.

Apprentices know how to access relevant information in their schools about reporting any concerns that they may have about children in their care and know to whom they should report them. Trainers continually reinforce the importance of safeguarding and the need to keep people safe.

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