

Peterborough Skills Ltd

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2539297
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
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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.

Peterborough Skills Ltd is an independent learning provider working with motor vehicle repair workshops and their administrative teams. It has worked as a subcontractor since it began operating in 2015. Leaders gained direct funding to provide apprenticeships in January 2019. Peterborough Skills Ltd offers standards-based apprenticeships at level 3 in vehicle damage paint technician, mechanical, electrical and trim technician, business administration, and customer services. At the time of the visit, 21 apprentices were on programme, five of whom were under the age of 19.

The national pandemic has had limited impact on the provider. Most apprentices work in an essential industry and have been able to continue working throughout the period. While leaders took the decision to furlough a small number of their own staff, teaching and learning have continued through virtual one-to-one sessions and on-site practical assessment visits.

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 ensure that training programmes meet the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship. Leaders ensure that employers and apprentices understand their responsibilities, including the requirements for off-the-job training. However, they have not ensured that employers and apprentices understand the requirements of apprentices' final assessments.

Leaders and staff work effectively with employers to design the curriculum. Together, they ensure that on- and off-the-job training is well coordinated.

Consequently, apprentices can quickly apply their theoretical learning to the practical tasks and activities that they undertake in the workplace.

Staff are vocational specialists, with excellent knowledge of the motor vehicle industry. Leaders ensure that they complete higher-level vocational training, such as industry-standard level 4 qualifications. Teaching staff have recently used training to improve their remote interaction with apprentices, and to raise their participation in online lessons. Leaders work effectively with an external consultant to provide targeted support for staff to improve their practice in training and assessment techniques.

Governors do not hold leaders to account effectively for the quality of the apprenticeship programmes, or the safeguarding of apprentices. The board has insufficient oversight of safeguarding, and it has not ensured that staff responsible for safeguarding have sufficient knowledge to deal with disclosures appropriately. Board members have an appropriate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in relation to learning resources. For example, they have excellent oversight of the development of the practical workshop at their new premises. They are knowledgeable about the motor vehicle and related industries. They use their insights and knowledge to directly influence the content of training programmes.

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

Staff do not carry out reviews of apprentices' progress effectively. Staff do not capture the extent of the progress apprentices make in developing their skills and completing their qualification. They have not ensured that employers and apprentices understand the requirements of apprentices' final assessments. Staff do not help apprentices make informed decisions about their future careers.

Leaders do not ensure that apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly. No member of staff is trained in working with apprentices with a learning disability or difficulty, or with an education, health and care plan. Consequently, these apprentices do not receive the help they require to make good progress in relation to their personal development needs.

Apprentices quickly develop skills that they apply independently at work. For example, they competently complete preparation work and panel painting on complex vehicles, such as trailers, without the need for supervision. Apprentices on business administration apprenticeships quickly gain proficiency in using the computer software required for their roles.

Teaching staff use a range of methods effectively to establish what new apprentices know and can do. They use this information to inform their plans for each

apprentice's learning programme. For example, apprentices with existing experience of paintwork learn more complex skills, such as blowing and merging paint.

Employers and staff work in close partnership to ensure that apprentices have access to the practical environments required for all aspects of their training. For example, apprentices attend different employers' sites to apply their learning in the workplace in cases where their own employer does not have the facilities or equipment required.

Teaching staff ensure that apprentices develop their English and mathematical skills quickly. Functional skills tutors work effectively with the few apprentices who require these qualifications. Consequently, apprentices pass their examinations first time. Apprentices apply their numeracy skills appropriately at work. For example, they accurately apply their knowledge of ratios and percentages when mixing and calculating the volume of paint required to avoid waste.

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

Staff responsible for safeguarding do not have sufficient knowledge to deal with disclosures appropriately or to see them through to a reasonable resolution. Staff fail to identify important information in relation to concerns about apprentices. They are not aware of, or do not know how to make use of, local agencies, local authority contacts and charities for referral.

Leaders and the board have insufficient oversight of safeguarding. They have not established a culture of safeguarding apprentices. Staff responsible for safeguarding have not received adequate support. In addition, procedures for dealing with issues relating to safeguarding are weak.

Apprentices feel safe at work. They know whom to contact if they have any concerns about their welfare or their workplace. Apprentices understand how to work safely in motor vehicle workshops.

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