

Salutem Limited

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Bev Ramsell, Her Majesty's Inspector

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: Catherine Street
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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.

Salutem Limited is a small private training provider created in 2013 by the owners of McDermott to teach construction training. Initially, Salutem operated as a subcontractor to other main providers. In March 2019 they started their own contract with five apprentices. At the time of the inspection, 30 apprentices were on the standards-based apprenticeships for ground workers level 2, bricklayers level 2, and interior systems installers level 2.

In March 2020, the provider felt the impact of the national restrictions from COVID-19 (coronavirus). This resulted in the redundancy of one staff member and all others being placed on furlough. The five apprentices were also furloughed. In August 2020 the provider's staff returned to work on a part-time basis to continue training apprentices. At that point only three of the apprentices returned to their studies.

The impact of COVID-19 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 identified the need for a younger skilled work force within the construction industry. They also recognised the need locally for more training in construction trades at level 2. They used their knowledge and experience of the sector to develop a curriculum that covers more than the requirements of the standard. Additional qualifications in areas such as abrasive wheels allow apprentices to learn wider aspects of their job role. Leaders take into account employers' feedback. As a result, they made changes to the order of the curriculum, which now allows apprentices to work on site earlier into their apprenticeship.

Leaders investigate the employers they work with thoroughly. They review employers sensibly, in areas such as health and safety, safeguarding, and the in-company support available for apprentices. Employers are clear on their commitments to the apprenticeship and support apprentices well. As a result, apprentices receive the time they need to study and often make better than expected progress in their job roles.

Leaders know which apprentices require additional support or who are at risk of falling behind. They discuss individual apprentices in monthly team meetings and on an impromptu basis, when required. During these discussions, they identify apprentices' support needs and put in place the most appropriate arrangements. As a result, most apprentices feel well supported and make reasonable progress.

Leaders' recording of quality processes is not thorough enough. Due to the size of the team – three in total – leaders rely too heavily on informal quality assurance procedures. They are clear on the intentions for the provision and what they need to do to support apprentices to do well. However, they do not articulate or evaluate the provision clearly. As a result, leaders are unsure of their strengths and weaknesses and how to maintain quality assurance as they grow.

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

Tutors are well qualified and experienced. They use their expertise to teach apprentices the skills they need for their job role. Apprentices spend time in a well-equipped workshop learning and practising their new skills. For example, an apprentice who struggled with pointing had additional time in the workshop to practise, with the help of the tutor. As a result, the apprentice is now able to complete pointing in the workplace without supervision.

Tutors take their time to identify precisely the starting points of apprentices. They use the first three to four weeks of the programme to review apprentices' knowledge and skills and observe their behaviours. However, they do not always use this information effectively to create a learning plan that takes into account the individual needs of the apprentice. As a result, apprentices often follow a generic curriculum that does not allow them to make progress at the speed of which they are capable.

Tutors set appropriately high expectations for apprentices. They encourage apprentices to do their best at all times. Apprentices benefit from well-written and oral feedback that is developmental and supports them to improve. Tutors focus on the improvements which apprentices have made when completing reviews of learning. They involve employers in these meetings and ensure that they take their feedback on board. However, not all apprentices understand the end-point

assessment grading structure. As a result, they do not know what they need to do to meet their potential.

Tutors work together well to support apprentices in the development of English and mathematics skills and knowledge. For example, in a workshop session the tutor identified the need to develop apprentices' knowledge in the use of fractions to aid their skills development when cutting bricks. As a result, apprentices attended a focused session on using fractions in the workplace and can now cut bricks more accurately.

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

Leaders develop apprentices' knowledge of health and safety and safeguarding well. Apprentices clearly articulate health and safety risks when working on site or in the workshop. For example, they know to ensure to make eye contact and get the 'thumbs up' from drivers of large plant trucks before walking in their path; they understand the need for personal protective equipment and the importance of attending all on-site health and safety inductions.

Apprentices demonstrate a mature and considerate attitude when discussing mental-health topics. They know who they would speak to, should the need arise. They benefit from training sessions from the West Midlands constabulary, and the local 'Prevent' duty action team. As a result, apprentices understand local risks and know how to keep themselves safe. However, not all apprentices are clear on the steps they need to take to protect themselves when working online.

The designated safeguarding lead has undergone the relevant training needed for the role. All staff are suitably trained in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Safer recruitment procedures are appropriate, and leaders carry out suitable checks when recruiting staff.

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