

Thames Marine Academy Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Emma Leavey, 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

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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency and/or the apprenticeship levy. This follow-up safeguarding monitoring visit has been carried out consequent to the provider being found to be making insufficient progress with respect to safeguarding at their previous monitoring visit. It follows the arrangements outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook'.

The focus of this visit is only on the safeguarding theme below.

Thames Marine Academy Limited (TMA) is a marine training company based on the banks of the River Medway in Kent. TMA became an approved apprenticeship provider in October 2019 and started training apprentices in January 2020.

TMA offers standards-based apprenticeships in boatmaster and workboat crewmember, both at level 3. Currently, there are 13 apprentices on the boatmaster apprenticeship and five apprentices are studying the workboat crewmember apprenticeship. The majority of apprentices are aged 19 to 34. However, two apprentices are aged 16 to 18 and three are over 35 years old. Apprentices work for three different employers.

At the time of the visit, training is a blend of group lessons and one-to-one tutorials through live videoconferencing software, independent remote study and face-to-face group lessons.

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

Theme

How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that they comply with the relevant safeguarding requirements, and how effectively do they apply safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that all apprentices are kept safe? Insufficient progress

Leaders have not ensured that the main trainer is safe to work with apprentices as they have not received appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

The designated safeguarding lead is appropriately trained in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Training staff have received appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training.

Leaders have recently updated their safeguarding policies and processes. For example, they have created a flowchart to support staff to identify the reporting process to follow for any concerns or issues. Leaders have developed links with regional and local safeguarding coordinators, the police and social services so that their knowledge is kept up to date and they have support when reporting safeguarding concerns. Leaders have updated their safer recruitment policy to make sure that future training staff are suitable to work with young people and vulnerable adults.

Leaders have developed a 'Prevent' duty policy and risk assessment, with associated action plan, to ensure that they are meeting statutory requirements. Leaders have started to identify the risks associated with the apprenticeship standards and apprentices' job roles. Leaders have taken actions to mitigate risks and have developed an appropriate action plan where risks are not yet mitigated.

Apprentices feel very well supported by their trainer, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, and their employers. Apprentices know to report any concerns about themselves or their peers to the designated safeguarding lead.

Apprentices know how to stay safe at work. They know the importance of adhering to health and safety practices relevant to their workplace for example, safe moving around ropes and avoidance of the 'snap back zone' on the barges.

Apprentices are developing their understanding of radicalisation and extremism and, in particular, the risks local to them. Apprentices can describe the newly introduced discussions during their off-the-job training sessions about local, regional and national issues of interest that could pose safeguarding or radicalisation risks. For example, apprentices referred to useful discussions about determining facts from falsehoods on social media, as well as a high-profile local case of radicalisation. Apprentices are less aware of right wing extremism, which is a risk in the location of their training and work.

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