

Inspection of Sporting Futures Training (UK) Ltd

Inspection dates: 14–17 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Apprenticeships	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Sporting Futures Training (UK) Ltd (SFT) is a national apprenticeship provider based in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. It has training centres in London, Liverpool, Birmingham and Durham. SFT specialises in apprenticeships for young people in sports coaching, and those who teach physical education in schools.

At the time of the inspection, SFT had 171 apprentices on standards-based programmes. Most apprentices are studying the level 3 teaching assistant apprenticeship. These apprentices support pupils in physical education and in the classroom. One third of apprentices are studying the level 2 community activator coach apprenticeship. The level 3 team leader apprenticeship is the smallest programme. SFT has no apprentices in receipt of high needs funding. SFT has no subcontractors.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Apprentices at SFT strive and achieve the highest professional standards. They show outstanding enthusiasm and commitment in their job roles. They understand superbly their position as role models for the children in their school and their community. They are proud of the contribution they make to raising participation in physical activity by children in their settings. Apprentices seek ways of giving the children greater opportunities to enjoy and benefit from sport. Many set up new activities such as dance, gymnastics and table tennis, as well as lunchtime clubs, football teams and competitions.

Apprentices learn from highly skilled and qualified tutors. Apprentices gain substantial new teaching skills and a good understanding of the different stages of education. They themselves quickly become highly skilled at managing any challenging behaviour by children in sports sessions and in the classroom.

Apprentices receive excellent support from mentors in the workplace. Mentors are well informed about their apprentices' curriculum and progress. They ensure that apprentices can apply their learning comprehensively in the classroom. Employers value their apprentices highly. Apprentices are quick to become full members of the school team and take on significant responsibilities for leading sports sessions.

Apprentices have a keen focus on safe working with regards to the children they work with. They carefully plan the activities, resources and equipment they use to ensure that the activities are safe and involve all children.

Apprentices feel safe and are safe. They clearly understand the difference between how to keep themselves safe and the children they teach safe. They have an excellent understanding of the local risks, such as knife crime and how it applies to their personal and professional lives.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have planned a rich and ambitious curriculum. They mostly target young people who lack the confidence, or opportunity, to follow traditional routes into higher education. They inspire these young people to pursue and achieve career opportunities in sports coaching and teaching. Leaders have introduced higher-level qualifications to extend apprentices' existing skills and knowledge. Teaching assistant apprentices, for example, who have already gained coaching qualifications, are working towards the level 4 diploma in sports coaching.

Tutors have developed an extremely well-planned curriculum. Their curriculum design enables apprentices to rapidly become self-assured, knowledgeable and skilled sports coaches and classroom teaching assistants. Tutors continue to revisit key concepts with apprentices to cement their learning. They ensure that apprentices continually apply their learning to their performance at work. Tutors start by developing apprentices' fundamental skills and behaviours, such as

understanding their role, achieving positive mental health, promoting healthy lifestyles and good communication skills. Apprentices move on to more complex aspects, such as planning and delivering physical education. Finally, they learn how to help children overcome the barriers that stop them participating in and enjoying sport.

Tutors know their apprentices extremely well. They make excellent use of initial meetings with apprentices to identify any prior skills and knowledge they may have. They use their teaching skills expertly to adapt training plans to ensure that each apprentice develops the broadest range of new skills and knowledge. Tutors ensure that apprentices' learning is relevant to their school setting and their job role.

Tutors expertly coach apprentices to become reflective practitioners. They encourage apprentices to reflect on what went well and how to improve. In group activities, tutors guide useful and purposeful discussions to enable apprentices to learn from each other, by sharing their different school-based experiences. They discuss the different age groups they work with and the different communities they live and work in. Consequently, apprentices grow significantly in professional confidence. They are skilfully prepared for their final assessments.

Apprentices benefit from expert workplace mentors. Mentors work very effectively with tutors to plan sporting activities and experiences that helps the apprentices to develop to the highest level of expertise. Apprentices start with observing classes. They progress to working with individual children and helping small groups. Eventually, they lead sports sessions for different year groups.

Leaders ensure that ongoing careers advice and guidance is exceptionally good. It underpins every aspect of the apprentices' training and enables them to be aspirational and successful in their career choices. Tutors have meaningful discussions with their apprentices about their future careers. Leaders bring apprentices together from across the country for central training days. Careers education is a key feature of those training days, such as guidance on applying to university. Also, apprentices gain valuable insights from workshops run by employers and former students. Apprentices gain permanent employment and promotion because of their training. Tutors support apprentices to make informed decisions about their next steps. Many apprentices progress to higher levels of apprenticeships or university to pursue a career in teaching.

Leaders are rigorous and demanding in their drive for improvement. They have implemented highly effective quality monitoring and improvement plans. They share best practice very effectively across the organisation through their central training days and peer shadowing of expert staff. Leaders listen carefully and respond swiftly to feedback from apprentices, employers and governors to bring about positive changes. They use learner feedback to arrange additional training, such as managing challenging behaviour in the classroom. They analyse data to identify trends and inform staff's training and development. Leaders identified trends in mental health concerns from their analysis of safeguarding logs. They responded

swiftly by implementing positive mental health awareness training for staff and apprentices.

Governors have extensive experience of managing apprenticeships. Leaders receive highly effective support and challenge from them. Governors take part in lesson visits and talk to apprentices, tutors and employers. They provide valuable feedback that leaders are quick to act upon to bring about improvement. They have enabled leaders to focus on the strategic management of the organisation by effectively delegating operational tasks.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong culture of safeguarding. They have carefully considered the additional layer of safeguarding that arises from apprentices' working with children in schools and acted appropriately. Leaders, apprentices and staff in each centre across the country have a good understanding of the local risks they need to protect themselves from. The safeguarding lead in each centre has established effective and impactful working partnerships with their own local agencies and support networks.

Apprentices feel confident reporting any concerns they may have to the safeguarding leads. They feel that staff place a high priority on safeguarding. They know that any disclosure would be managed sensitively and appropriately.

Staff feel that leaders take safeguarding very seriously. Leaders provide regular updates to staff on topical issues, such as the recent Ofsted review of sexual abuse in schools.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1278643
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Website	www.sportingfuturestraining.co.uk
Principal/CEO	Jo Pountney and Jill Eaton
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by one of the managing directors, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising apprentices' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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