

Inspection of Dianthas Ltd

Inspection dates:

29 November to 1 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Dianthas Ltd (Dianthas) is an independent learning provider that provides education and training for apprentices who work in the care sector. The head office is in Birkenhead on the Wirral. The provider works mostly in the north west of England, with a few apprentices in London. Dianthas was judged to be making reasonable progress at its monitoring visit in October 2020.

At the time of the inspection, there were 102 apprentices on seven standards-based apprenticeships at levels 2 to 5. Around one third of apprentices study level 2 adult care worker apprenticeship and one third study level 3 lead adult care worker apprenticeship. Most of the remaining apprentices study higher level apprenticeships in health and social care, and children, young people and families. A few follow level 4 apprenticeships in teaching and learning. All apprentices are aged over 19 years.

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

Apprentices appreciate the inclusive and caring culture leaders have created. They enjoy learning at the provider and feel valued. Apprentices welcome the help and support they receive, especially the way in which coaches check on their well-being.

Apprentices make positive contributions in the workplace, which employers value. They develop their confidence because of their apprenticeship. Level 2 adult care worker apprentices support their service users with meals and toileting and provide them with companionship.

Managers and coaches plan the vocational aspects of the curriculum to meet apprentices' needs. Apprentices gain significant new skills and behaviours because of their education and training. The standard of most apprentices' practical work is high. However, they do not produce the same high standard in their written work.

Apprentices do not develop their knowledge beyond their current employer. Coaches do not challenge apprentices to gain a wider understanding of the range of care settings. Only a few apprentices gain additional responsibilities at work or promotion.

Apprentices feel safe. They keep their service users safe. Apprentices administer medication safely, including using 'no-touch' procedures. They accurately check and record times when service users take medication. Apprentices have a basic knowledge of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

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

Leaders have yet to fully realise their ambitious strategy to provide high-quality education and training for apprentices. They are clear about the areas they need to improve. Leaders rightly recognise that they do not always review the impact of the actions they have put in place swiftly enough. Consequently, improvements are sometimes too slow.

Apprentices have faced many challenges due to the impact of the pandemic on their sector. Leaders work closely with employers to support the large majority of apprentices to remain on their programme. They find flexible solutions for apprentices who have fallen behind with their studies to catch up. They have rescheduled coaching sessions, provided laptop computers and extended apprentices' programmes. Employers are positive about how leaders keep them up to date and how effectively they communicate with them.

Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders have recruited new coaches, who are well qualified, have relevant experience and are enthusiastic about their subject. Coaches model the values and behaviours expected in a social care setting. Apprentices develop a deeper understanding of the needs of the individuals they

care for. They are compassionate about the isolation and loneliness felt by some of their elderly service users.

Coaches structure and sequence teaching that builds apprentices' skills gradually. Level 2 adult care worker apprentices learn about roles and responsibilities, including workplace boundaries, before moving on to person-centred care. Coaches skilfully link theory and practice. Apprentices value the opportunity to revisit topics such as policies and procedures, which they then put into practice at work. They create informative risk assessments of care.

Coaches provide useful feedback to apprentices to improve their practical skills and behaviours, such as stoma care and manual handling. They do not routinely provide guidance that enables apprentices to develop their written work further. Level 4 and level 5 apprentices do not undertake research that extends their understanding further.

Apprentices show respect for their tutors and each other during online and in-person learning sessions. They take part in discussions about people's rights, including mandatory vaccinations for those working in the care sector.

Leaders do not gather systematically or use the information they have about what apprentices already know and can do to inform an individualised curriculum. Leaders do not have oversight of the progress apprentices are making from their starting points. This means that apprentices do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

Leaders do not provide a well-planned careers advice and guidance programme. Apprentices do not know the full range of options available to them or how to access more information.

Leaders have very recently established a governance board. Governors are yet to provide scrutiny and challenge to leaders and managers. Consequently, it is too soon to see how effectively members of the board hold leaders to account for the quality of education that apprentices receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have responded swiftly to a rise in mental health concerns during the pandemic. They use a COVID-19 resilience reflection strategy to identify and assess the needs of apprentices who are struggling. This includes working with employers to adjust apprentices' programmes to help them stay on track.

Leaders have in place appropriate checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with apprentices. They have suitable procedures in place for reporting safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty concerns. They follow up concerns raised by staff promptly and put actions in place to support apprentices.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Increase the speed with which improvements are implemented and the frequency they are reviewed, so that all apprentices benefit from high-quality education and training.
- Provide high-quality feedback to apprentices that develops their written work and extends their knowledge and understanding.
- Ensure that apprentices achieve their full potential by planning the curriculum to meet the individual needs of apprentices. Develop apprentices' knowledge beyond their current employer and monitor the progress they make on their programmes from their starting points.
- Provide high-quality careers guidance so that apprentices understand the range of career opportunities available to them.
- Establish robust governance arrangements through which governors provide scrutiny and challenge to leaders and managers and hold them to account for the quality of education.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2539236
Address	Units 62–64 Woodside Business Centre Birkenhead CH41 1EL
Contact number	0151 647 1406
Website	None
Principal/CEO	Mandy Connick
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the development manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous monitoring visit report. 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 learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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