

Inspection of Elmhouse Training

Inspection dates:

7–9 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Adult learning programmes

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Information about this provider

Elmhouse Training is an independent learning provider based in south London. It runs advanced learner loan funded courses to adults who predominantly work, or are seeking to work in early years settings.

At the start of the pandemic leaders moved all learning online. A high proportion of learners experienced disruption to their learning during this time. This was mainly because learners could not complete the work placement part of their course, or the coursework related to work-based activities.

At the time of the inspection there were 12 learners studying the level 3 diploma for the early years workforce, one learner studying the level 3 diploma in supporting teaching and learning, and one learner on the level 3 diploma in health and social care.

The impact of COVID-19 has been taken into account in the findings.

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

Learners enjoy and look forward to their lessons. They particularly like that learning is online and that lessons are at times that fit in with work and family commitments.

Most learners have positive attitudes to their learning. Attendance at lessons is high. However, a minority of learners find the course very challenging. Too many learners fail to submit coursework within the deadlines set by teachers. These learners make slow progress. A small minority of learners report that they would like more classroom teaching.

Learners behave respectfully towards each other and their teacher in lessons. They listen carefully to debates and join in enthusiastically during group discussions. Learners work well as a team to complete the tasks that teachers set in class.

Learners value the frequent contact with their teachers outside of lessons. They receive useful advice from teachers on how to improve their self-esteem. As a result, learners gain confidence in putting their ideas into practice at work.

Learners benefit from staff who are well qualified and have expert knowledge in their subjects. Staff keep their professional expertise up to date by undertaking development days in nursery settings. As a result, learners gain useful insights into current practices such as methods of teaching literacy and numeracy to children.

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

Leaders design a suitable curriculum for learners working in early years settings. They have a clear focus to offer these courses to learners with few qualifications who are returning to learning.

Teachers do not plan sufficiently well to take account of learners' starting points. They do not teach learners who lack experience of studying at higher levels how to write assignments early enough in the course. Learners with low levels of literacy do not receive the amount of teaching they need to bridge their knowledge gaps. As a result, too many learners struggle with writing assignments, and fall behind with their coursework. Teachers have put plans in place to help these learners improve their writing skills. However, teachers do not record in detail how learners will be further supported to achieve the qualification. A high proportion of learners do not complete their qualification on time.

Teachers plan and teach useful sector-specific content, such as knowledge of children's development from birth to five years old, which links well with the requirements of the qualification. As a result, learners develop effectively the knowledge, skills and behaviours employers require in an early years setting. Employers speak highly about learners' positive contribution in classroom activities at their workplace. For example, learners create useful resources that help children develop their language during play time. Learners eagerly take the initiative to

suggest how children's learning activities can improve. Consequently, the majority of learners are well prepared for their next steps in employment.

Teachers teach learners effectively to remember the new knowledge introduced in lessons. For example, teachers continually repeat and recap explanations of complex subjects such as the different ways of observing children's behaviour in classrooms. Learners develop a sound knowledge and recall accurately content learned previously.

Learners receive good careers advice and guidance from teachers throughout their course. Teachers provide useful online information about a wide range of job opportunities and further learning. They support learners effectively to improve their interview skills through one-to-one coaching. As a result, most learners gain employment at the end of the course, and a few gain promotions into management roles.

Teachers develop successfully learners' understanding of concepts such as mutual respect and individual liberty. They encourage learners to plan suitable activities in the classroom to demonstrate these ideas with children. For example, learners create an environment in the classroom where children take it in turn to listen to each other's viewpoints.

Leaders have taken appropriate steps to broaden the membership of the governing body. They now have governors in place with a wider range of backgrounds, including in education and finance. They contribute effectively to helping leaders improve the quality of education. For example, governors with expertise in early years education provide teachers with useful feedback on how to improve the content of their lessons. Consequently, governors support and challenge leaders suitably.

Leaders build close working relationships with employers. They meet regularly to discuss learners' progress and the content of the curriculum. Employers value the helpful training that learners receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders adopt an appropriate approach to managing the safeguarding of learners. The designated safeguarding lead is well trained and very knowledgeable about safeguarding and child protection matters. Staff place a high priority on frequently checking learners' health and well-being. Leaders refer learners to suitable welfare organisations such as food banks when they identify learners who are vulnerable.

Learners feel safe in online learning. They have a reasonable understanding of safeguarding issues such as the prevalence of online grooming of children. Learners know how and who to report these concerns to for themselves and in the childcare settings they work in.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Teachers should assess thoroughly the English skills of learners at the start of the programme. They should use information from these assessments to provide effective support to those who struggle because of low level knowledge and use of English.
- Teachers should ensure that learners are up to date with submitting assignments and help learners make progress towards their learning goals more swiftly to complete their qualification on time.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1236915
Address	Capital Business Centre Suite 119, 22 Carlton Road South Croydon CR2 0BS
Contact number	020 3538 5530
Website	www.elmhousetraining.com
Principal/CEO	Marcia Abrams
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	31 October–2 November 2017

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the chief executive officer, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection 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

Sue Hasty, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Saher Nijabat

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