

Plymouth Argyle Football in the Community Trust

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2654201
Name of lead inspector:	Peter Cox, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Home Park Plymouth PL23DQ

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 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.

Plymouth Argyle Football in the Community Trust (PAFCT) is the charitable partner of Plymouth Argyle Football Club. Since registering as an independent learning provider in 2020, PAFCT has provided training to apprentices working within primary, secondary and further education settings.

At the time of the monitoring visit, PAFCT had 57 apprentices. Of these, 22 apprentices study the level 2 community activator coach standards-based apprenticeships, three apprentices study the level 3 community sport and health officer standards, 26 apprentices study the level 3 teaching assistant standards and the remaining six apprentices study the level 4 sports coach standards.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have designed the curriculum carefully to address regional issues of social mobility, inclusion and health. For example, leaders work closely with the local enterprise partnerships to introduce programmes that allow apprentices to progress to higher levels of education.

Leaders have planned and evaluated the curriculum carefully. They work closely with employers to ensure that programmes meet their specific business needs. For example, following feedback from employers, apprentices now complete workshops in braille reading so as to better support learners with visual impairments. They have introduced additional qualifications, such as in paediatric first aid, so that apprentices can keep their learners safe.

Staff communicate effectively with employers so that they have a good understanding of apprentices' progress and development. Staff ensure most employers are well informed about apprentices' final assessment.

Leaders ensure their programmes meet the requirements of apprenticeships. Staff recruit apprentices with integrity. Staff make sure that apprentices receive their entitlement to off-the-job training which supports them to make good progress and achieve well.

Leaders and managers ensure staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. They support staff to remain informed about latest industry practice and research. For example, staff learn about advanced coaching techniques to help motivate apprentices. Apprentices value the expertise of training staff, which helps them to make rapid progress and become better at their jobs.

Leaders, including members of the board of trustees, have a reasonable understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. They check that apprentices receive good-quality training. Trustees receive sufficient information about the quality of apprenticeships to hold leaders to account. However, trustees acknowledge the need to recruit members with greater experience in education to provide more robust support and challenge to leaders.

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

Apprentices value the positive impact their training has on their job roles. They develop the knowledge and skills they need to become better coaches and teaching assistants quickly. Apprentices learn to use coaching and behaviour management techniques to teach children successfully. They become increasingly skilled at planning and teaching high-quality activities. For example, level 3 teaching assistant apprentices know how to use physical activities to help children learn phonics.

Staff identify apprentices' prior learning and experience effectively. They communicate frequently with employers to check apprentices' progress and to tailor learning. Consequently, the vast majority of apprentices develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for their roles.

Experienced teaching staff model coaching techniques to apprentices successfully. They use examples from apprentices' job roles to explain key concepts and theories. Staff embed sports activities into training sessions which apprentices then apply in their job roles. For example, football club staff coach level 2 community activator apprentices to plan effective training sessions. Staff monitor apprentices' progress closely. They intervene quickly and successfully when an apprentice may fall behind. Staff give clear and constructive feedback so that apprentices know how to improve their work, which many do.

Staff provide apprentices with information about their next steps. For example, staff invite guest speakers to discuss career pathways within sports coaching. Consequently, most apprentices understand their future career opportunities well.

Staff provide reasonable support to apprentices who need English and mathematics as part of their programmes. However, staff do not support all apprentices to develop wider numeracy skills to help them in their job roles. Consequently, apprentices make slow progress in the development of this key skill. Leaders are taking sensible actions to improve this area, but it is too early to see the impact of these steps.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

The experienced and appropriately qualified designated safeguarding officer (DSO) uses comprehensive policies and processes to help keep apprentices safe. The DSO works closely with external agencies, such as the English Football League safeguarding group, to better understand regional risk. The DSO uses this information effectively to keep apprentices safe. For example, all apprentices now complete critical incident training in response to recent terrorist activity.

The DSO ensures staff are safe to work with apprentices. Staff complete appropriate safeguarding training. They understand how to identify and disclose safeguarding concerns.

Apprentices feel safe in a culture of safeguarding. Staff teach apprentices a range of useful safeguarding topics, including online safety and consent. Apprentices use their knowledge of safeguarding within their job roles to identify signs of abuse and neglect in children. Too few apprentices know how to keep safe from radicalisation and extremism.

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