

Inspection of Lynwood Vets Limited

Inspection dates: 16 to 18 March 2022

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

Information about this provider

Lynwood Vets Limited (LVL) was established in 2013 and is part of the VetPartners Group Limited. Since 2017, it has held a contract to deliver apprenticeships. LVL received a new provider monitoring visit in July 2019. At that time, inspectors judged the provider to be making reasonable progress across all three themes.

At the time of the inspection, LVL had 97 apprentices in learning. Of these, 13 were studying the level 2 animal care welfare assistant apprenticeship and 84 were studying the level 3 veterinary nurse apprenticeship. Apprentices are recruited from veterinary practices in Dorset, Devon, Somerset, Wiltshire and Hampshire.

At the time of this inspection, LVL had no subcontracted provision.

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

Apprentices enjoy their learning and are very positive about the support they receive from the provider staff and from their employers. Apprentices make good progress and achieve high grades in their assessments.

Apprentices have diligent attitudes to training. They value the support and guidance they receive from clinical coaches and the provider's skilled trainers. They take pride in their work and are keen to develop new skills. For example, apprentices gain knowledge from other apprentices who work in practices different to their own.

Apprentices are considerate of each other, and this contributes to an exemplary training environment. Apprentices value the well-ordered and positive learning environments that staff establish. As a result, apprentices are able to contribute their experiences and views productively in lessons. Apprentices attend training regularly and are punctual. Many apprentices travel substantial distances to the training and they often car share and arrange to collect their fellow apprentices from the local railway station to enable them to attend.

Apprentices rapidly develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to work safely and empathetically in clinical veterinary practice. Staff ensure that apprentices gain a deep understanding of occupational skills. For example, level 2 animal care and welfare assistant apprentices learn about specific animal anatomies and physiology and how this relates to the clipping of claws. As a result, they are able to describe how to perform this task safely. Staff ensure that apprentices develop deeper understanding of clinical procedures and surgery equipment. For example, level 3 veterinary nurse apprentices learn about the principles of radiography and how it works.

Apprentices speak positively about how the strong links between the training provider staff and how their employer is helping them to better understand difficult subjects. For example, apprentices described how the application of anatomy and physiology in the veterinary practice strengthens their theory knowledge.

Level 3 veterinary nurse apprentices value the opportunity they have to undertake a two-week job swap, which enables them to see other practices and to observe and learn new skills and methods. For example, apprentices who had only used MRI scans and been involved post-operation care are able to watch small animals being spayed. Apprentices also spoke about learning new infection and contamination control methods.

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

The leaders are ambitious for their apprentices. They ensure that the apprenticeships they provide meet the high standards of the employers they work with and, as a result, apprentices are prepared well for sustained employment. Many

former apprentices have progressed successfully into clinical coach roles and are now working with current LVL apprentices.

Staff plan the curriculum so that apprentices progressively learn the breadth of skills they need in the workplace. For example, level 2 apprentices develop the knowledge and skills and behaviours they need to be confident in restraining different types of dogs.

Staff work closely with the employers' clinical coaches to plan and sequence a curriculum that develops apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours, and as a result, they work with confidence and independence in the workplace. Staff plan curriculums to ensure that theory is completed before apprentices are permitted to apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace. Level 2 apprentices' study additional veterinary care assistant qualifications and as a result, they increase their employment prospects and able to take on increased responsibilities in the workplace.

Leaders ensure that staff are well qualified and have substantial experience of the industry. Staff use their vocational backgrounds well to ensure that apprentices build their skills and knowledge sequentially.

Employers and apprentices spoken to by inspectors can explain, and are able to demonstrate, the off-the-job training that has been completed. However, leaders do not always have full oversight of the progress their apprentices are making. Leaders have introduced an online tracking system to improve the monitoring of the progress apprentices are making, however, at the time of this inspection, this is yet to be fully embedded.

Apprentices who require support for their learning are quickly identified by staff. For example, apprentices who struggle with their written work receive the support they need and, as a result, enjoy their learning.

Employers hold the provider in the highest regard. They speak positively about the regular communications they receive from the provider and the high standards of the training provided to the apprentices. Employers attend regular standardisation meetings held by the provider and, as a result, they assess more accurately the progress apprentices are making.

Staff encourage apprentices to take social action and to make positive contributions to their communities. For example, apprentices volunteer to assist vets on a pro-bono basis with the neutering of cats and dogs for animal charities as part of their preparation for rehoming.

Staff are effective in delivering the essential occupational maths and English that apprentices need for their career. However, some level 3 veterinary nurse apprentices did not see the relevance of the English and maths curriculum when they have already met the required qualification levels. As a result, they question

the relevance of this additional work and that the fact that they must complete it in their own time.

Apprentices spoken to report that they find the recently introduced online portfolio hard to use and this results in them having to complete it in their own time. Leaders are taking action to make improvements, however, these changes have not yet had an impact.

Apprentices understand British values in the context of their workplaces. For example, showing respect to clients whose pets are at end of life or have serious illnesses.

Leaders have made significant improvements since the monitoring visit. For example, they have strengthened scrutiny at governance level by adding expertise from other specialist training providers, employer, student and business development representation. Leaders now have subgroups to develop and report on particular topics, for example, the establishment of a curriculum challenge group and standardisation groups which to support and develop the clinical coaches who work with the apprentices within the practices.

Staff do not set sufficiently detailed targets for apprentices and, as a result, it is not clear what apprentices need to do to improve and how.

Leaders do not yet have a clear overview of the quality of the provision. They use a variety of quality assurance documents and processes, which does not enable them to readily identify and therefore focus on the key areas for improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Apprentices feel safe. Leaders and have in place suitable policies and procedures to help keep apprentices safe at work and in training. The designated safeguarding lead is appropriately qualified and experienced. All staff complete online Prevent duty training and, at the time of the inspection, had recently attended face-to-face training. Leaders ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in the appointment of new staff. Staff contextualise safeguarding training well so that it is relevant to the localities where apprentices work. However, staff do not always ensure that students understand radicalisation and extremism beyond a basic level of knowledge.

Apprentices spoke about how they understood that if they are lone working on reception they should not open the door to an unknown person unless the vet is in the clinic.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that they have a clear overview of quality assurance, so that they can understand and can act upon areas for development and improvement.
- Leaders should continue to make improvements to the planning of off-the-job training, so that they have full oversight of the training hours being undertaken by their apprentices.
- Leaders should ensure that staff set more specific targets, so that apprentices are clear about what they need to do to improve.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1278657
Address	Lynwood School of Vet Nursing Hampton Farm Higher Bockhampton Dorchester Dorset DT2 8QH
Contact number	01305 264140
Website	https://www.lsvn.co.uk/home.html
Principal/CEO	Jo Malone
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 Head of School, 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

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