

# Inspection of RWP Training Limited

Inspection dates:

6 to 8 April 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Information about this provider

RWP Training Limited (RWP) is based in Carlisle, Cumbria. RWP was established in 1992. There are currently 154 apprentices, most of whom are aged 19 years and older. One hundred and fifty-one apprentices are on standards-based apprenticeships and three apprentices are on apprenticeship frameworks. Almost half of apprentices are on early years apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3. Nine apprentices are on the level 3 teaching assistant, 30 are on the level 3 business administrator, 12 are on level 2 customer service practitioner and 34 are on the level 2 hair professional. Since the previous inspection, RWP has ceased to offer health and social care and level 3 hairdressing apprenticeships.

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

Apprentices have positive attitudes to their learning. They demonstrate high levels of professionalism and integrity in their roles and develop effective communication skills. For example, level 3 early years educator apprentices communicate clearly and effectively with parents and carers when they meet formally to discuss children's progress.

Apprentices benefit from well-planned and coordinated on- and off-the-job training. They develop their understanding of specific topics while improving the skills they need for their job roles. Apprentices contribute effectively to their employers' businesses. For example, business administrator apprentices use their knowledge and understanding of change management to refine their employer's customer databases to increase efficiency in the management, and processing, of information. As a result, many apprentices take on additional responsibility or are promoted to more senior roles.

Apprentices benefit from tutors who are knowledgeable and experienced in their respective subjects. Most use their knowledge and experience effectively to develop, reinforce and consolidate apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours, enabling apprentices to apply these in the workplace. Consequently, apprentices carry out their job roles with increasing levels of competence and confidence.

Apprentices feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe. They know whom to contact if they have any concerns. For example, early years apprentices understand the specific protocols relating to the use of media, including mobile phones, to safeguard young children. They explain the importance of a 'no phones' policy within early years settings, which prohibits staff from using their mobile phones to ensure that no unauthorised images of children are taken.

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

Leaders and managers have a clear rationale for providing apprenticeships in most subjects. For example, early years apprenticeships meet the Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) priorities of tackling an ageing workforce. This is due to a high proportion of staff working in education in Cumbria who are age 55 and over. Leaders and managers work with Cumbria County Council, which has developed the 'apprenticeship framework for workforce continuity' for business administrator and early years apprenticeships.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have stopped offering health and social care apprenticeships because of poor-quality training that resulted in too few apprentices achieving their qualification. The same level of rigour has not been applied quickly enough to hairdressing apprenticeships. Leaders and managers identified that too many level 3 hairdressing apprentices left their training early but have only recently stopped offering the level 3 hairdressing apprenticeship. The quality of training for level 2 hairdressing apprentices is improving. For example, the proportion of level 2

apprentices leaving their training early has reduced and the number of apprentices achieving their qualification in the planned time frame has increased. However, no hairdressing apprentices have achieved distinction grades in their final assessments.

Governance arrangements are new. The board of governors has met once, for its inaugural meeting. The one external governor has significant experience of apprenticeships and the education sector. They use their specialist knowledge to provide challenge to leaders and managers, particularly for the hairdressing apprenticeship. An additional governor has recently been appointed to the board. They are yet to take up their role.

Tutors work collaboratively with employers, including apprentices' mentors, to plan and coordinate on- and off-the-job training. Tutors work closely with apprentices' mentors to ensure that the skills apprentices learn in off-the-job training can be practised and developed in the workplace. For example, hairdressing apprentices perm, colour and blow dry hair and perform different cutting techniques, such as long hair, layered hair and graduated bobs. Business administrator apprentices employed by Cumbria County Council participate in the apprentice ambassador scheme, where they develop skills such as teamworking, communication and project management.

Tutors use questioning skilfully to check apprentices' understanding of previous learning and to consolidate further apprentices' knowledge. For example, early years apprentices can explain precisely the nutritional value of the main food groups, including strategies that can be used to support children's healthy eating. They consolidate this as they articulate, in detail, the long- and short-term effects of a poor diet on children's health and development.

Tutors provide apprentices with frequent and accurate feedback following practical assessments. The feedback that apprentices receive enables them to develop further their knowledge and understanding and enhance their skills. For example, hairdressing apprentices use feedback from their tutors to improve their curling and blow-drying techniques. As a result, they become more competent and pass their practical assessments.

Constructive and timely feedback from tutors on apprentices' written assessments enables apprentices to strengthen and extend their understanding of key theoretical terminology. Those with less well-developed English skills consistently act on tutors' feedback to correct spelling, punctuation and grammar errors and improve their writing skills as a result.

Tutors do not develop, reinforce or consolidate learning well enough for the few apprentices who need to take English and mathematics examinations. Tutors focus too much on simply passing the examinations. These apprentices are under-prepared for examinations and a high proportion are unsuccessful, even after multiple attempts.

More than half of business administrator apprentices, and almost all early years apprentices, achieve distinction grades in their final assessments.

Apprentices on business administrator and early years programmes receive informal careers advice and guidance from tutors that enables them to make informed choices about their next steps. They can explain their potential progression routes, such as promotion in the workplace, additional responsibilities, progression to higher-level apprenticeships or to university. Hairdressing apprentices do not receive careers information, advice and guidance from their tutors. They speak to their employers about future job vacancies at their salons. As a result, they are not aware of all the opportunities available to them in the hairdressing industry.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have appropriate safeguarding policies and processes in place that are used to keep apprentices safe. The designated safeguarding lead takes prompt action when concerns are raised. They liaise closely with the local authority safeguarding hub to resolve safeguarding concerns. Staff provide effective help to maintain apprentices' mental health and well-being, for example supporting apprentices who have experienced bereavement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Early years apprentices have a heightened understanding of safeguarding and the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. Business administrator and hairdressing apprentices complete training about the 'Prevent' duty during their induction. This is not revisited during the apprenticeship. As a result, these apprentices have limited knowledge of the risks posed by those with extremist views and are unable to articulate how this may affect them in the workplace. For example, they do not know which products available in hairdressing salons could be used in acts of terrorism.

## **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Leaders and managers need to continue to improve the quality of level 2 hairdressing apprenticeships to ensure that apprentices remain in training and receive high-quality teaching that enables them to achieve distinction grades in their final assessments.
- Tutors should ensure that apprentices receive impartial careers advice and guidance so that they are aware of the wider opportunities available to them.
- Leaders and managers need to ensure that they improve the teaching of English and mathematics so that apprentices quickly develop the skills they need to learn and are confident to sit their examinations.

## **Provider details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	54232
<b>Address</b>	Chertsey House London Road CA1 2QX
<b>Contact number</b>	01228 593446 ext. 203
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rwp.co.uk">www.rwp.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Karen Polyblank
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 and 28 April 2016
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of operations, 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

Anita Pyrkotsch-Jones, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Robert Marshall-Slater	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Clark	Ofsted Inspector
Suzanne Horner	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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