

Inspection of Norton Webb Limited

Inspection dates:

7 to 10 June 2022

Overall effectiveness**Good**

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Apprenticeships

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Norton Webb Limited has offered training in health and social care, hospitality and business since 2003. It began delivering levy-funded apprenticeships in October 2017, predominantly specialising in apprenticeships for the adult care and children's care home sector. Apprentices are mainly located in the north of England, with a small number located in other parts of the country. The provider works closely with several larger care home chains which have premises across the country.

At the time of this inspection, all apprentices were studying standards-based apprenticeships, with 104 following adult care worker standards at level 2, 132 on the lead adult care worker standards at level 3, and 50 studying the lead adult care standard at level 5. There were 27 apprentices studying level 4 children, young people and families practitioner standards. Almost all apprentices are aged 19 and over.

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

Apprentices have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy their time on their programmes. They successfully develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours that they need for their current and future employment.

Apprentices attend well. They appreciate how tutors re-arrange taught sessions to fit their work commitments when short-notice changes to shift patterns and staff illness disrupt planned learning. Tutors move face-to-face sessions either by providing sessions online or agreeing alternative dates for training so that apprentices do not fall behind.

Apprentices develop their confidence and resilience well. They readily take on additional responsibility and many are promoted as a result of what they learn. For example, level 3 adult care apprentices lead on safeguarding issues at work and produce reports for regulatory agencies to illustrate how service users are protected.

Apprentices feel safe and know who to report their concerns to, including at work. They complete online courses relating to personal safety and 'Prevent' duty training. However, too many cannot explain what the local threats are in their community.

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

Tutors plan and sequence learning well. They work closely with workplace supervisors and employers to develop customised programmes that meet the needs of their settings and their service users. For example, employers working with level 3 lead adult care tutors request additional units relating to nutrition, hydration, personal care and dementia to be included in training plans due to the high proportion of their clients who need this care.

Staff are well qualified and experienced practitioners in care and children's homes. Many tutors work part time in a care setting in addition to their role as a tutor. They use their up-to-date knowledge of the sector to teach level 3 lead adult care apprentices effectively. Staff ensure that apprentices know the dangers associated with dispensing medication. Apprentices understand the need to follow strict guidance when issuing potentially lethal doses of tablets.

Most apprentices benefit from high-quality off-the-job training and are provided with sufficient time to do this during their contracted hours. They complete a range of relevant learning activities using the online e-portfolio, submit highly contextualised assignments online, and have useful discussions with their tutors about professional practice. Consequently, the standard of apprentices' work is high and apprentices develop their academic skills well. For example, they learn how to use Harvard referencing in their assignments. However, in a few instances apprentices complete training in their own time due to the busy demands at work.

Tutors work closely with employers to review apprentices' progress. Where employers are not directly involved in progress reviews due to essential patient care, they share and provide useful information about how well apprentices are performing at work. They provide additional guidance on how apprentices can be more effective at work. For example, a level 3 lead adult care apprentice working in a care home was supported by her employer to work in a neighbouring nursing home. As a result, her knowledge of the adult care sector has increased significantly and her skills have broadened.

Most tutors prepare apprentices well for their examinations. Tutors play the role of examiners and use mock assessments under controlled conditions to prepare apprentices effectively for the professional discussion part of their final assessment. Consequently, most apprentices pass first time, many with high grades. However, tutors on level 4 childcare apprenticeships do not consistently prepare apprentices well enough for their examinations, and a few apprentices believe that they only need to hand in assignments in order to complete their apprenticeship.

Apprentices develop a secure understanding of discrimination and other topics related to equality and diversity. They are taught how to recognise protected characteristics such as disability and to be aware that discrimination has often been a reality for their clients. Level 2 adult care apprentices understand that poverty, poor diet, lack of mobility and addictive habits such as smoking are contributory factors that often lead to elderly patients entering care unwell or with poor mobility.

Leaders use rigorous quality systems to check the effectiveness of education, and they have a secure oversight of the main strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They regularly audit planning documents and the quality of apprentices' work, such as their assignments. In addition, leaders talk to apprentices and their employers to check the quality and consistency of the education that they receive. They collate information from these audits to inform future staff development activity. For example, leaders identified that tutors needed specialist training to improve the quality of apprentices' training in English and mathematics. As a result, the development of apprentices' English and mathematics skills is now good. The few apprentices who need to achieve functional skills qualifications do so, with most passing at the first attempt.

Governors understand their role and have the requisite experience, both in education and the care sector, to support, challenge and hold leaders to account. They challenge leaders through the detailed reports that they receive on the performance of the provider, including the quality of education and other business-related matters. Leaders have recently increased the number of governors to provide more expertise from the care sector and add greater challenge.

Tutors do not provide apprentices with consistently effective careers advice and guidance. While those apprentices who request information about further training and promotion receive good careers advice from their tutors, such advice is not a planned part of apprenticeship programmes. Therefore, too many apprentices are

not aware of what they need to do to secure promotion or the further training they may need to make them more employable.

Until recently, too many apprentices left their programme early. Many apprentices have struggled working in care homes throughout the pandemic due to the high mortality rates of their clients and staff shortages or they have re-evaluated their career and chosen to leave the profession. Leaders have taken decisive action to improve retention, including working more closely with employers to ensure that they and their apprentices are aware of the demands of the apprenticeship as well as the sector. Consequently, most apprentices enrolled in the last 12 months are still on programme and progressing well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders understand clearly the risks associated with working in care and children's homes. Staff teach apprentices about the dangers of working alone at night, driving between client homes in higher-risk localities and the importance of keeping personal safety alarms switched on.

Leaders deal with any safeguarding incidents swiftly. In the few instances where safeguarding concerns are reported, leaders respond appropriately and support apprentices to contact expert agencies as necessary. Apprentices at risk of being exploited, such as by sharing explicit pictures online, are guided sensitively to access the support they need in such situations.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that the recent improvement in the retention of apprentices is sustained so that a high proportion of apprentices successfully complete their apprenticeship.
- Ensure that all apprentices are consistently well prepared for their final examinations so they understand clearly what they need to do to complete their apprenticeship.
- Ensure that all apprentices receive high-quality, impartial careers advice and guidance so they understand what they need to do to reach their career ambitions.
- Ensure that all apprentices understand local risks to their safety and how to keep themselves safe from these risks.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2495246
Address	Kingswood House 80 Richardshaw Lane Stanningley Pudsey West Yorkshire LS28 6BN
Contact number	0113 2396540
Website	www.nortonwebb.com
Principal/CEO	Alison Walsh
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of finance, HR and 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

Ian Frear, lead inspector

Glenise Burrell

Mary Ramsden

Her Majesty's Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022