

Tarmac Trading Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 2654242

Name of lead inspector: Saul Pope, Her Majesty's Inspector

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Type of provider: Employer

Address: National Skills and Safety Park
Nether Langwith
Mansfield
NG20 9JQ

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.

Tarmac Trading Limited is an apprenticeship provider based in Nether Langwith, Nottinghamshire. Apprentices are all employees of Tarmac. They work at Tarmac building and quarrying sites across the country and study at the company's central training facility in Nether Langwith.

All apprentices study the mineral processing mobile and static plant operator standard at level 2. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 55 apprentices that studied this standard. All apprentices were aged 18 or over.

Themes

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

Significant progress

Leaders focus their curriculum solely on preparing new staff for mineral processing roles. They intend for apprentices to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to become high-performing team members. For example, apprentices learn how to work safely in various on-site situations, but also about why colleagues might work unsafely. Leaders also include a substantial focus on personal skills. They rightly recognise the value of these skills to develop the working culture at their sites, as well as for apprentices' own career progression. In many cases, apprentices that successfully complete their studies quickly gain internal promotion.

Leaders provide apprentices with high-quality training resources. The training park, where all apprentices study, closely replicates real-life working environments. Apprentices hone their skills on modern mobile and static plant equipment at the park before they undertake similar tasks at work.

Leaders ensure that apprentices' trainers have highly relevant skills and knowledge for their roles. Leaders provide them with appropriate additional training when they

need this. Trainers have lengthy industrial experience and hold pertinent professional memberships. On the few occasions when trainers do not have the necessary knowledge, leaders hire specialists to offer bespoke training to apprentices.

Leaders ensure that line managers are very involved in apprentices' courses. Line managers prioritise apprentices' studies over operational needs, and make valuable links between theoretical studies and real-life practice. They also ensure that apprentices gain valuable on-site experience through frequent work shadowing opportunities.

Leaders, and those responsible for governance, have a thorough and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the apprenticeship course. They focus closely on the quality of what they offer, and how to improve it. For example, when leaders take swift and meticulous action when they identify that trainers do not cover topics in enough depth.

Leaders also manage subcontracted provision effectively. They carry out appropriate due diligence and quality assurance activities and work well with subcontractors to make improvements.

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

Before apprentices start their studies, managers and trainers use comprehensive assessments to check that courses are a good match for apprentices' needs. Managers also identify those apprentices that need additional support. As a result of this, trainers make appropriate adjustments that benefit apprentices.

Trainers plan the topics that they teach effectively. When they teach apprentices to use wheel-loaded shovels, for example, they first focus on how to safely drive the vehicles in straight lines, before they teach apprentices complex shunts in a simulated quarry environment.

In lessons, trainers use their subject expertise well to provide apprentices with demonstrations and examples from working environments. Trainers use revision activities to check that apprentices can recall key concepts, as well as to focus on the practical application of apprentices' knowledge.

Managers and trainers develop thoroughly apprentices' English and mathematics knowledge. Workbooks contain resources to help apprentices improve their technical vocabulary, or manage the ordering and delivery of materials. As a result, apprentices gain new English and mathematical skills that link well to their job roles.

Apprentices benefit from constructive and supportive feedback on their work. Trainers use this during practical activities to help apprentices carry out challenging

vehicle manoeuvres more effectively. They also provide apprentices with helpful written feedback on theory-based tasks. However, too many apprentices do not get this feedback swiftly enough.

In the few instances, when apprentices fall behind with their studies, they receive useful support. Trainers and line managers use review activities to identify the help that apprentices need. In a few instances, though, trainers and line managers do not put this support into place swiftly enough.

Those apprentices that are close to their final assessments are well prepared. They are keen to do well and aim for the highest grades possible. However, apprentices in the middle of their courses have only limited knowledge of how they will be assessed.

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

Staff at all levels complete appropriate training to help them keep apprentices safe. There is a particularly strong culture of vigilance around health and safety. Both staff and apprentices adhere to strict safety protocols, such as wearing the correct personal protective equipment. Leaders also ensure that apprentices cover topics such as the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, and the importance of good mental health, during their courses.

Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities. They scrutinise policies effectively and focus on ensuring that apprentices work in an environment where they feel safe to disclose their own concerns, and challenge others' behaviour if they feel it is unsafe.

Apprentices value the support that they get. They feel safe when they work and study, and know whom to contact with safeguarding or well-being concerns that they have. However, they have limited knowledge of some of the safeguarding topics they have studied, such as radicalisation and extremism.

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