

Inspection of House of Clive (Hair and Beauty) Ltd

Inspection dates:

2 to 5 August 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Education programmes for young people	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Reflections Training Academy is an independent training provider. It was established in 1985 under the name of 'House of Clive'. It has training academies in Birmingham and Bristol, and it works with 265 employers in the South West and West Midlands. Reflections provide study programmes and traineeships for young people and apprenticeships and adult courses in hairdressing and barbering. Next Level Training commenced in August 2016 and is based in Bristol. It trains apprentices in business administration, customer service, team leading and digital marketing in the South West.

At the time of inspection, 101 learners aged 16 to 18 years old had just completed study programmes and traineeships in Bristol and Birmingham. Most of these learners have few qualifications and face many barriers to learning. These courses aim to prepare the learners for apprenticeships, employment or further study. Twenty-seven learners on adult learner loans learn barbering skills in Bristol and Birmingham. Four hundred and forty-three apprentices, based in the South West and West Midlands, study a range of apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3. The vast majority of these apprenticeships are in hairdressing and barbering, with team leading, business administration, customer services and digital marketing largely based in the South West.

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

Apprentices do not all benefit from a consistently high-quality education. Learners' experience varies too much depending on the programme they are following. Learners aged 16 to 18 years old on study programmes and adults on learner loan programmes do well, whereas apprentices do not all have a consistently good experience.

Learners attend regularly and display positive attitudes toward their learning. They benefit from tutors that are consistently supportive. As a result, they develop confidence, social skills and technical expertise and are ambitious for their future careers in hairdressing, barbering, administration, customer service, team leading and digital marketing.

Learners value the high levels of support for their personal health and well-being. For example, tutors support learners to understand important issues such as healthy relationships and know how to recognise the signs of someone in a controlling relationship. As a result, most learners understand how to keep themselves safe.

Learners aged 16 to 18 years old study a curriculum that prepares them well for their next steps. Those learners who remain on programme achieve qualifications in employability and personal development. Most of these learners progress to traineeships, employment and a few to apprenticeships.

Adult learners are well prepared for careers in barbering. Learners with no prior experience in the sector develop new knowledge and skills and learn to carry out complex cutting, including scissor cuts, high skin fade and full wet shaves using a razor. Those learners who remain on programme achieve their qualifications and obtain work in the barbering sector.

Apprentices who remain on programme do not always know what they need to do to achieve higher grades. Too many repeat final assessments before gaining the skills they need to pass. Apprentices do not receive helpful feedback from their tutors that informs them about what they need to do to improve. As a result, apprentices miss opportunities to practise specific skills in the workplace to achieve aspirational grades.

Apprentices benefit from working with highly experienced tutors that use their knowledge well. They use current techniques and professional standard facilities and resources to contextualise learning to enable apprentices to apply new knowledge to their own job roles. Apprentices benefit from additional workshops with industry specialists as well as skills competitions.

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

Leaders have not moved quickly enough to improve the quality of leadership and education at Reflections and Next Level Training. As a result, the quality of leadership

across the organisation has declined. Managers do not use the information they gather sufficiently well to quickly identify and respond to areas they need to improve. For example, they know the number of learners that withdraw from programmes, but they have not analysed the reasons for these withdrawals sufficiently well to prevent others from withdrawing. As a result, too many learners leave their programmes prior to completing them and do not achieve their qualifications. Where hairdressing apprentices do complete, too many resit their final assessment multiple times and too many do not achieve higher than a pass.

Leaders and managers work well with local stakeholders and employers to develop the curriculum to meet local skills needs. Most of their provision is within hairdressing and barbering and includes study programmes, traineeships, apprenticeships and adult courses. They have recognised the need for training in barbering and increased this provision, along with apprenticeships in team leader, administration, customer care and digital marketing. For example, leaders introduced a study programme, in collaboration with the local authority, to support learners with low levels of attainment and confidence to progress into work and apprenticeships. They have developed effective links with Jobcentre Plus to support adults on learner loan programmes to access the training they need to develop their employability skills and access employment opportunities.

Managers have not planned a logically sequenced curriculum that considers what hairdressing apprentices already know and can do. Tutors do not use the information gained at the start of the course to effectively inform their teaching and do not adjust sessions for those who already have the knowledge and skills. Too many hair apprentices repeat learning and do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable. As a result, not all apprentices value their programme and a significant number drop out or leave the sector. However, learners on study programmes learn essential skills in communication and working together to build confidence before moving on to work experience.

Tutors do not ensure that links are made between what apprentices learn in the training academy and what they do in the salons. For example, too many level 2 hair apprentices are not given sufficient opportunities in the workplace to practise their skills. They do not have sufficient time to master skills in cutting and colouring hair, as these are introduced late in the programme. Apprentices are often used as assistants within salons with practical skills development limited to blow drying instead of regularly practising their new skills, including colouring and cutting to develop fluency. In addition, too many level 3 hair apprentices do not receive demanding sessions within the academy to extend their hairdressing knowledge and skills. Employers allocate appropriate time to apprentices for training in the academy.

Tutors support learners to achieve qualifications in English and mathematics through appropriate learning activities that are made relevant to their sector. However, support for learners who already have an English and mathematics qualification is not consistently good across all programmes. For example, Next Level apprentices who already have English and mathematics qualifications continue to develop their skills through regular online learning. Whereas apprentices in hairdressing and barbering, adult learners and learners on study programmes are not supported so well to continue to develop their

skills in literacy and numeracy to support their wider development.

Leaders and managers do not effectively monitor the quality of teaching and the impact this has on learners securing new knowledge, skills and behaviours. They do not use the information they have gathered on what needs to improve to drive up standards or monitor sufficiently well any actions they put in place to see if they have led to improvements. However, tutors do have relevant teaching and sector experience that they use well to demonstrate professional standards. For example, in digital marketing, the tutor's experience of working with major brands provided opportunities for apprentices to develop appropriate campaigns to meet the needs of their employers.

Tutors do not provide learners with appropriate developmental feedback to support them to improve. Too often, feedback is limited to the completion of tasks and does not provide clarity to the learner on what they need to do to improve the quality of their work or develop their skills to achieve higher grades. Tutors do not use reviews effectively to clearly explain what new skills, knowledge and behaviours apprentices have gained or what specific targets they need to work towards in their workplace and their written work. As a result, too few apprentices are challenged effectively to gain higher grades. However, a high proportion of apprentices in Next Level Training, who remain on programme, do benefit from clear targets and are encouraged and inspired to achieve distinction grades.

Apprentices do not all benefit from impartial careers information, advice and guidance. Leaders have not ensured this is included in the curriculum to allow apprentices to research and discuss wider career options, such as becoming self-employed, working on cruise liners or advancing to management roles. However, adult learners and those learners on study programmes do receive guidance and support about how they can progress within the Reflections course portfolio or to employment.

Leaders and managers rightly recognise that governance requires strengthening. Recent changes include local employers and those with education expertise joining the board. Governors understand many of the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation. They know that learners' attainment and attendance have declined. However, there is an over-reliance on data from leaders, and governors recognise there is a lack of challenge from the board on how leaders will improve retention and attainment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Learners feel safe and well supported by staff. They have a sound understanding of fundamental British values, the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding and know how to report concerns. For example, apprentices learn about tolerance in treating clients who have different faiths and beliefs and relating liberty to freedom of speech.

Leaders have ensured robust systems are in place for recruiting and inducting new staff. However, they recognise the need to improve safeguarding practices for learners in the workplace. They have plans to appoint a lead governor for

safeguarding to hold leaders to account effectively and ensure that action is taken in line with the organisation's policies. For example, where potential risks to the safety of apprentices are identified, apprentices will be withdrawn from their place of work while a full investigation is carried out.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and governors should swiftly improve the quality of education and training so that all learners benefit from high-quality education and training.
- Leaders should ensure the curriculum is planned so that tutors continue to develop all learners' mathematics and English skills so that learning is developed beyond the minimum requirements to help support higher career aspirations.
- Leaders should ensure that learners' initial assessments of skills, knowledge and behaviours are used to plan and implement a curriculum that is ambitious and supports learners in attaining high grades.
- Leaders should support staff to provide apprentices with good-quality reviews that give them specific targets and allow them to practise their new skills in the workplace.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices receive appropriate impartial, careers information, advice and guidance at the start, throughout and at the end of their programmes.
- Leaders should further develop governance arrangements so that they gain high levels of support and challenge to deliver rapid quality improvements, including arrangements for monitoring safeguarding.

Provider details

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Contact number	01216432147
Website	www.reflectionstraining.co.uk www.nextleveltraining.uk.com
Principal/CEO	Clare Barrett
Provider type	Independent training provider
Date of previous inspection	3 February 2012
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the divisional director, 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.

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