

Harris Federation

Monitoring visit report

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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.

The Harris Federation is a multi-academy trust of fifty-one primary and secondary schools in and around the London area. The federation started teaching apprenticeships as an employer-provider in 2019. They currently teach the level 3 team leader supervisor standard to 13 apprentices who are new to working in middle leadership roles. Apprentices work in either teaching departments or in support functions of the schools within the federation.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders have ensured that there is a sensible rationale for the apprenticeship programme. They use the apprenticeship to develop the leadership skills of staff across the federation. This includes teachers and support staff who are new to middle leadership positions.

Leaders ensure that they recruit apprentices onto the right programme on which they learn new knowledge, skills and behaviours that they put into practice at work. For example, apprentices develop their self-awareness, and this helps them to change their leadership style to suit different situations in the workplace.

Leaders and managers ensure that appropriate apprenticeship commitment statements are in place. They assess what apprentices know and can do at the start of the apprenticeship and adjust the commitment statements accordingly. For example, leaders provide non-teaching apprentices with additional time to develop their presentation skills as they have less experience of presenting than others. Consequently, apprentices benefit from a curriculum that meets their specific needs.

Tutors are well qualified to teach apprentices. They also have extensive leadership and professional development experience. Consequently, tutors have both the teaching and industry experience to undertake their role effectively.

The majority of apprentices receive their entitlement to training away from the workplace. However, leaders do not record this thoroughly enough. As a result, a few apprentices are behind with their training and try to catch up in their own time.

Governors have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. For example, governors question leaders effectively about the reasons for apprentices withdrawing from the programme early. Governors also monitor trends in achievement and assessment results. They use their understanding of the programme to provide effective challenge to leaders to improve the provision.

Tutors benefit from a range of professional development activities which help them in their roles. For example, they attend monthly quality meetings where they share best practice and discuss the technical aspects of the programme so it runs smoothly.

Leaders do not have enough oversight of apprentices' progress. For example, tutors do not put all progress information on the central tracking system. As a result, leaders do not identify which apprentices are falling behind. Leaders are aware of this shortcoming and have plans in place to develop more effective tracking of apprentices' progress with the next cohort of apprentices.

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

Leaders and tutors plan and teach a well-ordered curriculum. For example, tutors teach about the fundamentals of leadership first, before teaching apprentices about improving team performance. As a result, apprentices can apply what they learn to be more effective in their leadership roles.

Leaders arrange highly effective coaching sessions for apprentices, provided by an external organisation. Apprentices state that the sessions give them the opportunity to gain a different perspective. For example, they discuss challenging situations they might not be able to discuss directly with their manager. As a result, apprentices have been able to incorporate the outcomes from coaching into their own line management approach.

Tutors prepare apprentices effectively for their final assessments. Assessors start to prepare apprentices for these assessments early in the training. They set effective practice exercises ahead of the assessments. As a result, the majority of apprentices who get to the end of the apprenticeship pass with distinction grades.

Tutors provide apprentices with helpful and concise feedback on their work and in progress reviews. Tutors have useful conversations with apprentices about how they

can improve. As a result, apprentices understand what they need to do to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

In the first cohort of apprentices, too many did not stay until the end of their apprenticeship. Leaders are aware of the problem and have put in place actions to increase the proportion of apprentices who complete the programme. It is too soon to see the impact of these actions.

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

Leaders ensure that there is a positive safeguarding culture. The knowledgeable designated safeguarding lead makes sure that all staff complete annual safeguarding and Prevent training. Staff have the knowledge they need to keep apprentices safe.

Leaders undertake appropriate checks on staff. These checks include obtaining references for tutors. As a result, they ensure that staff are safe to work with apprentices.

Leaders ensure that apprentices have access to an employee assistance programme. This service provides support for family, relationship, or anxiety issues.

Leaders have not established a safeguarding curriculum for adult apprentices. Apprentices understand safeguarding issues, such as the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism, through their training to protect children in a school setting. However, tutors do not teach apprentices about safeguarding issues they may encounter as apprentices, as adult employees or in their personal lives.

Apprentices feel safe and know who they should report a concern to.

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