

Inspection of Trainplus Ltd

Inspection dates:

23 to 26 August 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

TrainPlus Ltd is an independent learning provider based in south Essex. TrainPlus was established in 2009 and began delivering apprenticeships in the care sector in 2017. At the time of the inspection there were 151 apprentices studying standard-based apprenticeships. There were 124 non-levy and 27 levy apprentices.

Most apprentices study level 3 early years educator and level 3 lead adult care worker, with a smaller proportion studying qualifications in care at level 4 and level 5. A very small proportion of apprentices study business administration, customer services, cyber security technologist and digital support technician at levels 4 and 5. Currently there are 12 on a break in learning

There are 29 apprentices with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are no apprentices in receipt of high needs funding. Approximately one third of apprentices were studying English and mathematics functional skills.

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

Apprentices enjoy and value their learning experience at TrainPlus. They feel well supported in their studies and appreciate their assessors' flexible approach to studying, which enables them to balance their studies with full-time jobs more easily. Those apprentices who have not been in learning for some time find their assessors are patient and helpful in enabling them to return to studying. Apprentices gain valuable knowledge and skills on their apprenticeship, which helps them to carry out their job roles more effectively. As a result, apprentices become more confident and highly motivated at work.

Apprentices enjoy learning in professional working environments. They become respectful and responsible citizens. Apprentices benefit from the close working relationship between their assessors and their work manager, so that the work they do on their apprenticeship helps them to understand better the tasks they complete at work. Apprentices enjoy helping each other at work. For example, apprentices who progress onto management qualifications take pride in supporting other apprentices at their workplace.

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

Leaders and managers have established a relevant and ambitious curriculum to meet the skills needs of apprentices and employers in the region. The curriculum provides effective progression routes for employees in the early years, care, digital and management sectors, so that they can gain qualifications and further their careers. Leaders have recently expanded their apprenticeship provision in the digital skills sector to meet the needs of employers.

Leaders have worked collaboratively with employers to plan programmes to suit individual businesses and improve the knowledge and skills of apprentices. Employers highly value the apprenticeship programmes with TrainPlus. They participate well in apprentices' programmes by attending reviews and contributing to apprentices' targets.

Although leaders monitor frequently the hours of off-the-job training that apprentices complete, they do not routinely check that the work is completed in working hours or that all training is recorded accurately. In early years, too many apprentices do not receive sufficient time to complete their assignments because off-the-job time is not planned appropriately. A minority of apprentices in care are not aware of their entitlement to paid off-the-job training. Apprentices in digital receive relevant off-the-job training, which they use confidently to support their learning. Leaders have a good understanding of the components of apprenticeship programmes, which they share with employers and apprentices.

Leaders have not ensured that apprentices have a good understanding of the broad opportunities available to them on completion of their apprenticeship. Most apprentices do understand the promotions that they can achieve within their own

organisation and most have high aspiration to secure higher-level positions. For example, apprentices on higher apprenticeships in care, seek to be senior carers or care managers. However, apprentices do not understand the range of different careers that they could pursue. Leaders ensure that apprentices receive helpful advice and guidance when they are recruited. For example, they discuss with employers apprentices' current job roles and their training needs by carrying out an organisational needs analysis and assessing apprentices' skills accurately. As a result, apprentices are recruited to the most relevant programme to meet their needs and those of their employer. Many apprentices complete additional qualifications or units to personalise their programmes.

Leaders have not established sufficiently rigorous scrutiny and challenge of their performance. They do not ask appropriately probing questions of apprentices to ensure that they have a good understanding of what apprentices know and understand. Leaders carry out frequent assessments of their strengths and areas for development. They identify most weaknesses and take appropriate actions to rectify these. However, they do not monitor their progress against each area of weakness frequently enough and do not include all areas for improvement in their self-assessment. As a result, they do not have a clear overview of whether they are making good progress in securing the improvements or understanding what further actions need to be taken.

Managers plan courses carefully and teach topics in a logical sequence, so that they are meaningful to apprentices and enable them to build carefully on their skills and knowledge. For example, in childcare, apprentices learn about child development and health and safety before progressing on to more complex concepts, such as the impact on a child of moving school or the birth of a new sibling. Employers work collaboratively with assessors to plan the curriculum. As a result, apprentices understand how the work they complete on their apprenticeship applies to their work on the job. Employers value the increased contributions that apprentices make to the workplace because of their apprenticeship. For example, in early years, apprentices planned a refreshment of the nursery's book corner to include comfortable seating and different books. In cyber security, apprentices took apart redundant computers to update existing computers with replacement components.

Assessors are well qualified and experienced in the sectors that they teach. They use their knowledge expertly to provide apprentices with relevant examples from their own experience, so that apprentices develop a broad understanding of the contexts that they work in. All assessors have, or are working towards, teaching qualifications.

Assessors use questioning techniques skilfully, so that apprentices think deeply about the topics that they are studying. In care, assessors explore what apprentices understand about their duty of care as opposed to their duty of candour. As a result, apprentices learn to consider open and transparent practice alongside the fundamental need to safeguard their clients.

Assessors ensure apprentices consolidate their learning by revising concepts often and linking them with new learning. In early years, assessors revise topics such as nutrition, diet and allergies, so that apprentices understand how they link together in practice. Assessors support apprentices conscientiously with their work. They help apprentices with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to use different methods of recording their work, such as videos and voice recordings. Those apprentices who speak English as an additional language benefit from having work broken down into manageable topics, so that they gain in confidence and consolidate their learning.

Apprentices gain valuable new knowledge and skills that they use in the workplace, and which help to develop their confidence. Level 3 care apprentices learn how to move clients safely and with dignity. They help them to make choices about what to eat or what to wear. In level 3 early years, apprentices support children to develop their speech and language using nursery rhymes.

Although assessors provide apprentices with detailed information about fundamental British values, too many apprentices in adult care work and early years are not able to recall how these influence their life. Apprentices in digital skills have a good understanding of how fundamental British values shapes their work and their everyday lives. Apprentices demonstrate highly professional behaviours in the workplace and in their learning. For example, early years apprentices learn how to communicate effectively with children by using an appropriate tone of voice and lowering themselves to meet the children at their level. Apprentices' attendance at taught sessions and at work is high.

Assessors benefit from a broad and useful staff development programme, which is tailored to meet the needs of individual staff. Leaders encourage staff to extend their knowledge and skills effectively, so that they perform their roles confidently. Leaders support employees to take teaching qualifications, so that they can become assessors and progress on to become qualified teachers.

Assessors do not routinely correct apprentices' spelling and grammar errors, as a result, apprentices continue to make the same errors in future pieces of work. Assessors ensure that apprentices improve their English skills in assignments through the accurate use of referencing, analysis and professional debate. Apprentices learn relevant technical language, which they use confidently in the workplace. Apprentices in cyber security gain valuable mathematics skills using spreadsheets at work.

Assessors do not routinely provide apprentices with detailed and helpful feedback on their written work, so they know what they do well and what they need to do to improve. Apprentices' written work is of a good standard and a minority of apprentices produce work that exceeds this. Assessors provide useful verbal feedback to apprentices on their practical work.

Although, leaders monitor apprentices progress frequently, too many apprentices in level 3 adult care worker do not complete assignments to the deadlines set,

consequently they make slow progress. If an apprentice falls behind with their work leaders and assessors agree interventions, so that apprentices catch up swiftly.

Too few apprentices achieve their qualifications within the planned timescales. Too few apprentices pass their level 2 functional skills in mathematics first time. A high proportion of apprentices who take level 2 functional skills English pass first time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They have established detailed and robust policies and procedures, which they use effectively to keep apprentices safe.

Although assessors provide apprentices information about radicalisation and extremism, too few apprentices in care can discuss the risks of radicalisation. Apprentices in digital skills demonstrate a good understanding of extremism and radicalisation.

Leaders ensure that staff understand safeguarding well. They have put in place a thorough and effective induction training programme and staff receive frequent update training to ensure that their knowledge is current. As a result, apprentices feel safe in their working environments. Leaders carry out relevant pre-employment checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with apprentices.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders must ensure that apprentices receive impartial careers advice and guidance during their apprenticeship programme, so that they understand the broad ranges of opportunities available to them when they complete their apprenticeship.
- Leaders and managers must ensure that employers have a thorough understanding of and plan off-the-job training, so that apprentices receive their full entitlement of off-the-job hours and are able to complete their assignment work appropriately.
- Leaders should ensure that they scrutinise and challenge their analysis of data, so that they can swiftly identify strengths and weaknesses in the provision and monitor their progress, so that they secure swift improvements.

Provider details

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| Unique reference number | 1280316 |
| Address | 73a High Street WICKFORD ESSEX SS12 9AQ |
| Contact number | 01268574299 |
| Website | www.trainplus.co.uk |
| Principal/CEO | Lisa Short |
| Provider type | Independent Learning Provider |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Main subcontractors | Not applicable |

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the 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.

Inspection team

Lynda Brown, lead inspector

Rosy Belton

Claire Griffin

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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