

# Inspection of Training Works (NW) Ltd

Inspection dates:

27 to 30 September 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

Training Works (NW) Limited (Training Works) received its first publicly funded contract for apprenticeship training provision in October 2017. Training Works is an independent learning provider based in Blackpool that delivers apprenticeships in the health care, early years and business sectors. The provider's aim is to develop the skills, attitudes and ability of the workforce to meet the changing needs of employers.

Currently, there are 332 apprentices on standards-based apprenticeship programmes. Of these, 228 apprentices are on adult care apprenticeships at levels 2 to 5. There are 86 apprentices on early years at levels 2 and 3 and 18 apprentices on business apprenticeships at level 3. Most apprentices are aged 19 or over, with a small number who are 16 to 18 years old.

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

Most apprentices value the opportunity to study and progress in their chosen careers. Apprentices appreciate the support they receive from their trainer and work colleagues.

A minority of apprentices have been adversely affected by a shortage of trainers. Apprentices told us that they have long periods of time between visits and have become demotivated. As a result, around half have fallen behind in their studies.

The continuing staff shortages in adult care and early years and the need to maintain safe levels of staffing in their workplace means that, on occasion, apprentices are not able to attend learning sessions and progress reviews. This results in them making slow progress.

Apprentices become more confident, resilient and independent because of the on-the-job training that they receive from their employers. For example, care apprentices are able to challenge aggressive and abusive behaviours displayed by residents who have dementia.

Most apprentices develop the professional behaviours that they need to be successful at work. They become more empathetic and learn how to support their clients' needs. For example, adult care apprentices can apply what they have learned about how their clients' communication skills can affect their ability to access a level of care appreciated by others.

Most apprentices demonstrate a good understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and how it applies while at work. For example, early years apprentices use dolls of different ethnicities and gender which children can relate to when discussing their emotions.

Apprentices feel safe and have a very good understanding of how to keep the adults and children in their care safe.

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

The quality of education that apprentices receive is inconsistent. Leaders and managers have not ensured that they have sufficient staff to provide a high quality of education. The shortage of staff has resulted in apprentices' learning being disrupted.

Leaders and managers have a clear rationale for the curriculum they offer. It meets the needs of employers both regionally and nationally in responding to the severe staff shortages in the adult care and early years sectors. For example, leaders and managers have devised a curriculum for level 2 care worker that is flexible and provides opportunities to personalise learning in the workplace.

Leaders and managers have recruited staff who have the appropriate expertise and experience in their subject area. Trainers benefit from professional development to

ensure they keep up to date in their sector area.

Most trainers plan an individualised learning programme that builds on apprentices' existing skills and meets their needs. Trainers use questioning effectively in order to assess apprentices' knowledge and understanding, and to help apprentices to develop and consolidate their learning.

Trainers use their vocational knowledge, skills and experience effectively to train apprentices. They use case studies from their work practice to enhance and contextualise learning for apprentices. For example, early years educator apprentices learn about attachment theory and the strategies they would use to support children and their families. Level 2 adult care worker apprentices learn how to care for clients experiencing seizures.

Trainers ensure that the curriculum becomes incrementally more challenging as the apprenticeship progresses, consolidating and building on apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. For instance, adult care apprentices start their apprenticeship by learning about health, safety and safeguarding. They learn how to apply these practices while working with adults in care settings, such as lifting residents safely. They then move on to communication skills and the importance of these when dealing with adults.

Apprentices benefit from additional courses to complement their apprenticeship and to make them more employable. For example, apprentices in care and early years gain additional qualifications such as basic life support and food safety. They complete online learning courses in areas such as autism spectrum disorder, disability and mental health awareness.

A few trainers have low expectations of what apprentices can achieve. As a result, the quality of apprentices' work varies significantly. Where trainers have high expectations, apprentices work is of a good standard. For example, apprentices use technical terminology and references accurately in their work. Conversely, trainers with low expectations accept work that is untidy, littered with errors and below the level of the apprenticeship. A few apprentices produce work that is of a poor standard.

The feedback to apprentices from a few trainers following assessment is not sufficient to enable apprentices to understand what they need to do to improve or to achieve distinction or merit grades. Where it is effective, feedback helps the apprentice to improve the quality of their work.

Trainers do not introduce English or mathematics early enough in the apprenticeship programme for level 5 care leader and level 3 early years educator apprentices. For example, early years educator apprentices who are halfway through their programmes are not prepared for their examinations and do not develop English and mathematical skills in their workplace. Consequently, they are unable to help the children in their care develop literacy and numeracy skills.

Too many apprentices leave their apprenticeship early, mostly because they leave the

care sector. A high proportion of apprentices do not complete their apprenticeship on time. The majority of apprentices who stay on their course and complete their final assessment achieve a merit or distinction grade. A minority of apprentices progress to higher level apprenticeships, further training or gain promotion or additional responsibilities.

Careers guidance is not routinely planned throughout the apprenticeship in order to help apprentices prepare for their next steps in employment and training. Informal advice and guidance are given throughout the programme but not all apprentices are aware of the wider career opportunities or further training available to them.

Leaders monitor the quality of education and the progress that apprentices make. They have put in place a number of actions to improve apprentices' learning experiences. However, leaders do not ensure that these actions are consistently applied or have a positive impact on all apprentices. For example, despite a focus on improving the quality of feedback that apprentices receive, too many apprentices receive inconsistent feedback from their trainers, which impedes them from making the progress of which they are capable.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that all apprentices have regular reviews of progress. Trainers do not effectively support apprentices to catch up if they fall behind. Their action plans are inconsistently applied or lack detail. As a result, too many apprentices are unclear of what they need to do to improve.

Governors provide appropriate challenge to leaders and managers regarding the quality of education. Governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the apprenticeship provision. However, they have not ensured that leaders have fully rectified the areas for improvement from the previous monitoring visit.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard apprentices. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and safeguarding officers are appropriately trained and understand the local risks. They manage and resolve disclosures diligently. The DSL uses links to external agencies to help apprentices access additional help, such as for mental health issues.

Apprentices feel safe and are safe. They have a thorough understanding of safeguarding and know how to report any concerns they may have. For example, they report any concerns they may have about the children in their care, such as changes in behaviour.

Managers ensure that staff are recruited safely. Staff receive regular training and updates on safeguarding.

## **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Leaders and governors should ensure that rigorous quality improvement strategies are implemented and closely monitored so that the inconsistency in the quality of education between the different apprenticeships is swiftly eradicated.
- Leaders should ensure that trainers plan and implement the teaching of English and mathematics from the start of the apprenticeship so that apprentices develop the English and mathematical skills they need in the workplace and to pass their examinations.
- Trainers should ensure that they set high expectations for all apprentices. They should provide helpful feedback to help apprentices improve the quality of their work.
- Trainers should routinely involve apprentices' line managers in the review and planning of apprentices' progress towards developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours at work.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices learn about the wider options available to them regarding further study or job opportunities.

## Provider details

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<b>Managing Director</b>	Sharon Bonell
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous monitoring visit 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

Andrea Machell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Andrew Ross	Ofsted Inspector
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