

# Inspection of Harriet Ellis Training Solutions Limited

Inspection dates:

8 to 11 November 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

Harriet Ellis Training Solutions Limited is a training provider based in Romford, Essex. It has been delivering training and development to the dental and healthcare sector for around 20 years. In October 2017, the provider secured funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency to offer apprenticeships.

At the time of the inspection, there were 657 apprentices on the dental nurse level 3 standard and 38 apprentices on the practice manager level 4 standard. Approximately 150 apprentices were passed their planned end date and 22 were on a break in learning. Apprentices work with dental practices throughout the country.

The provider had a new provider monitoring visit in September 2019, where they received reasonable progress for all three themes.

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

Too many apprentices on the level 3 dental nurse standard, particularly those recruited before September 2022, have experienced significant disruption to their learning. This is partly due to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the dental sector. However, frequent staff changes have also had a negative impact on apprentices' training. Apprentices have not received enough communication about the changes. They have often waited too long to have their work marked and returned. This has left many apprentices, and their employers, frustrated and unhappy about their apprenticeship experience.

Apprentices who need to complete qualifications in English and mathematics do not get the individualised support they need. Too many apprentices have not gained their apprenticeship within the expected time.

The small number of apprentices on the level 4 practice manager standard benefit from good support. Tutors add extra support sessions to help these apprentices develop their academic writing. The more recently recruited level 3 apprentices have a more positive view on their apprenticeship programme. This is due to the recent effective changes in how tutors and dental educationalists (DEs) teach, assess and support them.

Apprentices enjoy working and learning in environments that are positive and supportive. This helps them gain the professional behaviours they need to be successful. In progress reviews, DEs encourage apprentices to reflect on how they apply their behaviours at work. For example, apprentices develop a calm and supportive 'chairside' manner when dealing with anxious patients. Apprentices have the confidence to answer patients' questions about root canal treatment and the different types of pulp capping in the absence of the dentist.

Apprentices have a good understanding of how to apply respect, tolerance and ethics when dealing with a range of patients from diverse backgrounds. Apprentices feel safe. They know how to spot potential signs of abuse on their patients. They know how and to whom to report these concerns.

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

Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders have substantially increased the number of apprentices on programme. However, they have not supported this growth sufficiently with the right structure, resources and effective recruitment processes. As a result, too many apprentices have left the programme early. The quality of education is not good enough for all apprentices. Too many employers are unhappy with the service they receive.

Leaders and managers have very recently made effective changes to the sequencing and implementation of the curriculum. They have also made significant changes to

the recruitment process and levels of staff supporting apprentices. Early signs are that this is having a more positive impact for the newer cohorts of apprentices.

The curriculum for both programmes is challenging and logically put together. In the level 3 programme, dental nurse apprentices learn key foundation knowledge at the start of the programme, such as how to chart teeth accurately. They revisit this frequently within the curriculum, along with appropriate assessment points to check their understanding. Apprentices are confident to apply this knowledge when they assist dentists with tooth charting activities. The curriculum for level 4 dental practice manager apprentices is well structured. What they learn in their sessions matches closely with the work they do at their dental surgeries. As a result, apprentices make a valuable contribution to their workplace.

Leaders have not placed enough focus on the curriculum for English and mathematics. All apprentices cover the same content regardless of their strengths and weaknesses in these subjects. Some apprentices repeat topics they understand, while others do not get sufficient individualised help on areas where they struggle. As a result, apprentices lose motivation, and their attendance at these sessions is not high enough. The proportion of apprentices who pass their examinations on the first attempt is too low.

Leaders do not ensure that tutors have the information about apprentices' prior knowledge and experience early enough. This includes for apprentices with additional learning needs. As a result, tutors do not know who among the apprentices require extra support or more challenging work at the start of each course. Once tutors get to know their apprentices, they are adept at adjusting their teaching and assessment methods to identify gaps in apprentices' knowledge.

Tutors and DEs have expert knowledge and skills in dental practice. They use this effectively to support apprentices and teach interesting sessions. They explain complex procedures and specialist dental terms clearly and succinctly. They encourage apprentices to use the correct specialist technical language in their discussions and written work. Tutors use assessment effectively and frequently to help apprentices remember challenging content, such as the different bones in the skull. DEs support apprentices well during progress reviews. They set clear actions with apprentices who are behind with their work to help get them back on track.

The quality of feedback on apprentices' work varies too much and overall is not good enough. Apprentices on the level 4 programme benefit from detailed, helpful and frequent feedback on their marked work. However, many apprentices on the level 3 programme have to wait too long to receive their feedback. As a result, they do not know how to make the necessary improvements to their work quickly enough.

Most apprentices know what to expect in their final assessments. However, leaders do not ensure that tutors and DEs have high enough expectations of apprentices to achieve a high grade. Apprentices do not know how to gain the extra marks they

need for this. Almost all apprentices who take their final assessments pass them. However, only a very small proportion gain the highest grade.

Leaders have very recently set up an appropriate governing board. This includes the engagement of experienced external support to scrutinise and challenge the senior management team. This activity has been effective in identifying key areas for improvements within the apprenticeship programme. The board focuses sufficiently on issues that impact apprentices. The board ensures that staff supporting the programme have access to a good range of professional development. They have recently strengthened the quality team, who have sensible plans in place to check on the quality of the programme moving forward.

Leaders do not ensure that apprentices enjoy a curriculum that develops them beyond the apprenticeship standard. Apprentices do not have structured and ongoing careers advice and guidance. Leaders rightly recognise the need to inform apprentices on how to live a healthy lifestyle, understand healthy relationships and how to develop their talents and interests.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, managers and staff have placed sufficient focus on developing a positive safeguarding culture. They use their policies and procedures effectively to identify potential safeguarding concerns. When issues are raised, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) responds quickly and escalates to the appropriate external agencies. This includes the General Dental Council.

Leaders ensure they carry out the appropriate checks on staff working with apprentices. They meet the requirements in accordance with the 'Prevent' duty guidelines. The DSL and staff who support apprentices complete appropriate training and frequent updates. At progress reviews, DEs are confident to discuss issues about safety with their apprentices.

Apprentices receive information about a range of safeguarding topics at the start of their training. DEs mostly reinforce this at progress reviews. However, leaders recognise they need to do more to ensure apprentices have a good understanding about how to keep safe online, particularly from those who may have extremist views.

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

- Leaders must ensure that tutors and DEs mark and return dental nurse apprentices' submitted work in a timely manner. They must make sure that the feedback apprentices receive helps them to make improvements to their work.

- Leaders must ensure tutors receive the information about apprentices' prior knowledge and experience at the beginning of each course so that tutors can adjust their teaching and activities to meet apprentices' needs. This includes for apprentices with additional learning needs.
- Tutors and DEs need to have high expectations of apprentices. They should inform apprentices on how to achieve a high grade in their final assessments and support them early enough to prepare for this.
- Leaders must ensure that apprentices who need to gain qualifications in English and mathematics get the appropriate support they need to complete these.
- Leaders must ensure that apprentices benefit from a curriculum that helps them to understand how to progress to their next steps and develop them beyond the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for their apprenticeship standard.
- Tutors and DEs should ensure apprentices receive sufficient information about how to stay safe online and from those with extreme views.

## **Provider details**

<b>Unique reference number</b>	1280328
<b>Address</b>	103 North Street Romford RM1 1EU
<b>Contact number</b>	01708 776050
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.harrietellis.com">www.harrietellis.com</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Hadley Silver
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	N/A

## Information about this inspection

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

Jane Hughes, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Maureen Gilmartin	Ofsted Inspector
Angus Forsyth	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Griffin	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Manning	His Majesty's Inspector
Claudia Harrison	His Majesty's Inspector

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