

# Inspection of Plymouth Argyle Football in the Community Trust

Inspection dates:

30 January to 1 February 2023

## Overall effectiveness

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Apprenticeships

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

## Information about this provider

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Plymouth Argyle Football in the Community Trust (PAFCT) is the charitable partner of Plymouth Argyle Football Club. Since registering as an independent learning provider in 2020, PAFCT has provided training to apprentices working within primary and secondary education settings.

PAFCT received a new provider monitoring visit in January 2021, where reasonable progress was recorded against each of the three themes.

At the time of the inspection, PAFCT had 63 apprentices studying sports coaching and teaching assistant standards. Eighteen apprentices were on the level 2 community activator coach standard, 37 on the level 3 teaching assistant standard and eight on the level 4 sports coach standard.

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

Apprentices are enthusiastic about their learning and demonstrate positive attitudes. They talk positively about their learning experiences and value the culture of respect and passion for education through sport that leaders and staff promote. Apprentices develop their confidence significantly, such as in communication and leading activities. As a result, they rapidly become valuable members of staff at their workplace.

The vast majority of apprentices gain significant new vocational knowledge and skills. However, those apprentices who are studying functional skills mathematics do not receive specialist teaching from staff that is sufficiently tailored to help them quickly improve.

Apprentices are proud of their contributions to the community and workplace, and they contribute to additional activities, which builds their resilience and additional skills. For example, apprentices engage in volunteering programmes that support the most socio-economically disadvantaged in the city. As a result, apprentices develop their social awareness and their sense of value within the communities they work.

Apprentices feel safe. They know how to report any concerns and who they can talk to. Apprentices complete comprehensive training in safeguarding and apply their new knowledge effectively in the workplace. For example, level 3 teaching assistant apprentices ensure that they follow the individual safeguarding policies and procedures of the schools where they work, safeguarding the children in their care.

The vast majority of apprentices secure employment or go on to further learning when they complete their apprenticeship. However, too many apprentices are not aware of the wider career opportunities available to them beyond their employers' businesses.

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

Leaders and managers have a clear vision: to support education through sport as a vehicle for social mobility and raising aspiration. Consequently, leaders have carefully selected a curriculum that meets this vision effectively.

Leaders and managers work closely with employers and take time to understand the needs of employers well. As a result, apprentices help to address the key staffing and resource challenges of their employers. For example, they support the well-being agendas in primary and secondary schools.

Tutors create an effective learning environment. They model professionalism in their teaching practice and create a culture where expectations of apprentices are

high. Apprentices value the subject expertise of their tutors, who teach them up-to-date knowledge and behaviours. As a result, apprentices reflect this professionalism and demonstrate highly professional attitudes and behaviours in their learning and work.

Apprentices' attendance and punctuality are exceptional. They are usually early to work and often stay longer than expected to ensure they complete their roles to the highest possible standard.

In the vast majority of instances, tutors have sequenced curriculums that build effectively over time to ensure learners develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours they require to be successful. For example, level 3 teaching assistant apprentices develop their understanding of roles, responsibilities and safeguarding first. Level 4 sports coach apprentices can apply the knowledge they have learned to support students with mental health issues and those who are in danger of exclusion.

Leaders and tutors provide valuable additional qualifications to help learners realise their ambitions. For example, apprentices complete additional courses in paediatric first aid and specific sport coaching qualifications. As a result, learners are well placed to move into full-time employment or further education at the end of their apprenticeship.

Tutors create an inclusive environment for their apprentices in which difference is celebrated and appropriate adaptations are made. For example, apprentices supporting students with learning needs are introduced to ideas and techniques that could make coaching more accessible. As a result, apprentices understand the difficulties others may have in accessing physical activity and are empowered to celebrate difference.

Tutors use assessment well to measure apprentices' progress and adjust the curriculum to fill any gaps highlighted. They revisit topics well at the start of each session and use this to check that learners have retained important information.

Too often, tutors do not include employers in the formal review process of checking apprentices' progress and setting their targets. As a result, not all employers are able to coordinate support for their apprentice's development towards specific new knowledge, skills or areas for improvement. Consequently, some of these apprentices make slower progress.

Tutors and employers support apprentices well to overcome personal and well-being barriers, such as mental health and family illness. Individual support, such as counselling, is offered to apprentices where required. As a result, apprentices remain focused on achieving, developing their confidence and becoming more resilient.

Leaders have not put in place a curriculum for mathematics that is structured well enough to ensure apprentices develop the necessary mathematics skills they need. For example, the level 3 teaching assistant apprentices, who have not yet achieved

the relevant mathematics qualification, have not received any teaching to help them achieve their functional skills qualification. Leaders have made recent changes to the teaching of mathematics in one-to-one teaching. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of these changes.

Leaders and managers ensure tutors are appropriately trained and well qualified, with relevant vocational and teaching experience. Tutors use their specialisms well to plan vocational training that meets the needs of learners and employers. A positive culture of development supports tutors to further develop their professional expertise and teaching skills. Many staff take the Football Association safeguarding qualification to better understand and support safeguarding developments within the context of football, and some new staff take the level 5 diploma in education.

Leaders have not ensured that all apprentices benefit from well-planned, independent careers advice. As a result, not all apprentices have an effective understanding of what they can do once they have completed their apprenticeship.

Leaders have established a culture of safeguarding, and apprentices feel safe. Leaders ensure that apprentices are well versed on safeguarding themes and that they know how to keep themselves safe, both in a personal and professional context. However, in a minority of instances, apprentices were not clear on elements of county lines and the specifics of local threats relating to extremism.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is suitably trained and experienced. Staff are appropriately trained to identify and refer safeguarding concerns. They keep detailed records of concerns and monitor these closely. The safeguarding team identifies, monitors and intervenes effectively when a safeguarding concern occurs.

The DSL uses established partnerships with external safeguarding groups to stay informed of local and regional risks, which they share with staff and apprentices. The link trustee for safeguarding has a high level of safeguarding experience and meets regularly with the DSL to support the provider's robust approach and understanding.

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

- Ensure that tutors' formal reviews of apprentices' progress include meaningful involvement by the employer to set targets that support apprentices to develop new skills and knowledge.

- Ensure apprentices benefit from planned, structured mathematics provision, to support their learning.
- Ensure that all apprentices receive high-quality planned, independent careers information, advice and guidance.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2654201
<b>Address</b>	Home Park Plymouth PL2 3DQ
<b>Contact number</b>	01752 562561
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://argylrcommunitytrust.co.uk">https://argylrcommunitytrust.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Mark Lovell
<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 apprenticeship manager, 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

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