

Inspection of England and Wales Cricket Board Limited

Inspection dates: 24 to 26 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

The England and Wales Cricket Board Limited (ECB) is the national governing body for first-class cricket clubs in England and Wales. ECB supports the game at every level, from grassroots to elite level. In May 2021, the ECB started offering the level 5 coaching professional apprenticeship to staff within the ECB and those in county cricket clubs.

At the time of this inspection, 20 apprentices were on the level 5 apprenticeship. All apprentices are aged 19 and over.

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

Apprentices enjoy and value the opportunity to complete the apprenticeship programme. They learn new coaching strategies, including a range of questioning and solution-focused techniques that they can quickly use in their jobs.

In too many instances, leaders and managers do not make clear the expectations of the apprenticeship to apprentices and their managers. Apprentices are not provided with sufficient time and support from their line managers to ensure that they complete their apprenticeship outside of the professional cricket season.

Apprentices do not always have frequent reviews to help pace them through the apprenticeship. Staff do not set sufficiently detailed targets with clear steps on how to catch up. Too many apprentices are behind in their studies.

Senior leaders are keen to support apprentices, as they see it as an effective way of changing the culture of the ECB and supporting a broader coaching culture in the wider game. Apprentices develop the attitudes and behaviours they need to use their coaching techniques to become more effective leaders.

Apprentices value the expertise of their tutors. They benefit from their tutors' substantial experience in order to learn about different approaches to coaching. In lessons, tutors create a safe space for apprentices to practise the skills that they have learned. Apprentices are supported and encouraged to learn, apply and reflect on their practice. Staff and apprentices have a high level of respect for one another.

Apprentices' workplace mentors provide detailed feedback on apprentices' coaching sessions. They identify areas of good practice and what they need to do to further develop their practical coaching skills. However, their feedback on the apprentices' written work is not sufficient, and at times work is unmarked, leaving apprentices unsure of how to improve.

Apprentices feel safe, as they trust staff to take any concerns they have seriously. Staff know about safeguarding in the context of their jobs, including maintaining professional boundaries.

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

Leaders and managers offer an apprenticeship course that meets the needs of apprentices, particularly those who leave the professional cricket game, and their employers. The ECB and county cricket clubs benefit from an apprenticeship that equips apprentices with valuable new tools and techniques in organisational coaching.

Staff structure training logically. For example, courses start with apprentices

developing their skills in active listening and effective questioning and reflecting, before moving on to techniques such as understanding the social and emotional impact of coaching. Apprentices gain new knowledge and skills and are quickly able to apply their coaching skills within the workplace.

Tutors do not consider sufficiently the information they have about what apprentices already know and can do at the start of their programme. For example, when apprentices have substantial experience in coaching-related roles, tutors do not amend the training to reflect this. As a result, a minority of apprentices do not find the course demanding enough.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that apprentices receive frequent enough progress reviews. Where these do take place, the apprentices' line managers are often not involved. As a result, line managers do not have the information they need to provide effective enough support to apprentices in the workplace.

Staff promote professional behaviours well through high expectations in lessons. Tutors and workplace mentors help apprentices gain confidence when they face new coaching scenarios in the workplace. Apprentices value their apprenticeship, and attendance at training sessions is high.

Staff do not ensure that all apprentices receive their full entitlement of time to complete activities outside of their training sessions. Apprentices are required to prioritise their work, but their line managers do not ensure they have enough training time. As a result, too many apprentices have to complete their studies in their own time.

Staff give apprentices a reasonable understanding of what to expect in their final assessments. However, they do not plan sufficient opportunities for apprentices to practise individual elements of their assessment early enough in their course. They also do not inform apprentices enough about the requirements for different grade outcomes. As a result, a few apprentices nearing completion are not fully prepared for their final assessments.

Leaders have not managed effectively enough the support required for a small number of apprentices who need to achieve qualifications in English and mathematics. Staff do not give apprentices sufficient support early enough in the programme. As a result, apprentices' progress in achieving their apprenticeship is delayed.

Leaders' oversight of the quality of teaching is sufficient, and they understand the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. However, issues raised by apprenticeship staff are not actioned in a timely way. Leaders are too slow to put in place actions to improve the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have put in place appropriate safeguarding policies to work with adult apprentices. Leaders check that staff are safe to work with adult learners.

Leaders adequately promote a culture of safeguarding. Staff working directly with apprentices know how to recognise any concerns and follow suitable procedures. For those apprentices who are based at county clubs, leaders ensure that apprentices receive details of ECB's safeguarding information and the club's information too.

Staff are part of suitable networks, including the London 'Prevent' network, and, as a result, are aware of the key risks their apprentices may face in day-to-day life. However, safeguarding and the risks of extremism and radicalisation are not explored in depth and on a frequent enough basis with apprentices to ensure that they understand the range of issues that they may face in their roles or in different geographical locations.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should ensure that all apprentices receive frequent progress reviews that involve the apprentices' managers. They should ensure that apprentices' managers know what support they need to give apprentices in the workplace.
- Mentors should provide helpful and timely feedback on apprentices' written assignments. They should ensure that apprentices are given timely opportunities to practise for their end-point assessments and that they know the requirements to achieve beyond a pass grade.
- Staff need to use the information they have on apprentices' knowledge at the start of the course to plan their training and ensure that the programme is suitably demanding for all apprentices.
- Leaders and managers should ensure those apprentices who need to achieve qualifications in English and mathematics are taught these subjects early in their programmes so that their completion of the apprenticeship is not delayed.
- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices receive and take their entitlement to off-the-job training.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58178
Address	Lords Cricket Ground St Johns Wood Road NW8 8QZ
Contact number	0207 432 1200
Website	www.ecb.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Clare Conner
Provider type	Employer
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the curriculum lead, 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

Steve Lambert, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Gibson	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Heath	Ofsted Inspector

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