

Inspection of SBC Training Limited

Inspection dates:

31 January to 3 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Education programmes for young people

Good

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Information about this provider

SBC Training Limited (SBCT) is an independent training provider based in Shrewsbury, Shropshire. At the time of the inspection, there were 211 apprentices. Of these, 208 were studying apprenticeship standards and three apprentices were studying frameworks. Of the 136 apprenticeships funded directly, apprentices were studying one of 30 apprenticeship standards across the care and business sectors delivered by SBCT. Most enrolments were on apprenticeships that include the level 3 business administrator, level 3 digital marketer and the level 3 lead adult care worker apprenticeship. SBCT also has a small cohort of 16- to 18-year-olds who were on a construction traineeship.

SBCT works with three subcontractors. Harper Adams University had 18 apprentices on the level 6 chartered surveyor (degree) and the level 6 food industry technical professional (integrated degree) apprenticeship. Shrewsbury Colleges Group had 40 apprentices on a range of engineering apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3, and Severn Financial Training had 17 apprentices across a range of accountancy apprenticeships at levels 2, 3 and 4.

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

Leaders and trainer-assessors are ambitious for learners studying traineeships. They set exacting standards for the quality of brickwork they expect trainees to produce. Trainer-assessors help learners to understand the importance of precise and accurate work, for example in ensuring that learners understand the principles of loadbearing, the distribution of weight and safe construction.

Most apprentices and trainees develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Apprentices on the level 3 business administrator start by learning about communication and then move on to more complex topics, including project management. These apprentices gradually develop and build new knowledge and skills over time.

Trainees receive impartial advice and guidance when planning their next steps in education, training and employment. Leaders collaborate well with local construction employers to create viable careers and training opportunities for trainees. Most apprentices are prepared for the next steps in their career with their current employers. However, leaders do not ensure that apprentices benefit from sufficient impartial advice and guidance to allow them to make an informed choice about wider career opportunities in the sectors in which they work.

Most apprentices and trainees do not have a sufficient understanding of radicalisation and extremism and how these impact on them in the workplace and their personal lives. They recall taking online modules at induction but do not revisit these in any detail throughout their programme to secure and contextualise their understanding.

Apprentices and trainees feel safe. Trainer-assessors create a safe and calm environment in which formal teaching and review sessions and tutorials take place.

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

Leaders have made the strategic decision to create a curriculum that is strongly linked to local and regional needs. They respond to the majority of the local enterprise partnership's skills priorities and focus on areas where they have the teaching skills and facilities to provide training. Their overriding priority is to support local people to enter training and employment.

Leaders ensure that young trainees benefit from well-equipped, modern and clean carpentry and brick workshops. Trainees have access to new tools and appropriate materials to practise hand- and machine skills. The workshop environment reinforces the exacting standards and expectations set by the trainer-assessors.

Leaders do not have sufficient oversight of the quality of education. Although they have put in place quality assurance processes to monitor the progress of apprentices, the implementation of these processes does not provide a secure

picture of the progress that apprentices make or allow leaders to make swift interventions and improvements. As a result, too many apprentices are not supported to progress and achieve to the best of their ability. For example, too many apprentices in adult care do not benefit from useful progress reviews and regular off-the-job training. As a result, they do not complete their apprenticeship on time.

Leaders have put in place suitable processes for the monitoring and quality assurance of subcontractors. In addition to the completion of initial due diligence, they conduct regular contract and progress reviews with these providers. As a result, most apprentices who study with subcontractors make the expected progress and achieve their apprenticeship.

Leaders have in place an experienced board of governance that has experience in apprenticeship training. Governors have an appropriate understanding of the strengths and areas for development and the challenges that face the sectors in which they provide training. Governors provide challenge to the leadership team to bring about improvements. However, recommendations are not always implemented effectively to make an impactful improvement on apprentices' learning experience.

Trainer-assessors sequence the apprenticeship curriculum appropriately. This allows apprentices to build on prior learning and develop the skills they need to succeed in the workplace. For example, apprentices on the level 3 business administrator apprenticeship learn essential communication skills at the start of their apprenticeship before progressing to complex project management activities that help them to prepare for their final assessment.

Trainer-assessors ensure that young people on traineeships follow logically planned, practical skills courses in carpentry and bricklaying, which are underpinned by employability and job-search training. Trainees benefit from well-planned, relevant work experience. They develop the skills and confidence they need in order to progress either to work or to an apprenticeship.

Trainer-assessors have relevant vocational training and experience of working in the industries for which they teach. Leaders support trainer-assessors to maintain their subject and occupational knowledge. As a result, apprentices and trainees learn skills that reflect current industry practice.

Too many trainer-assessors rely too heavily on printed information about topics to teach apprentices. They do not deploy effective strategies to assess what apprentices know or explore how they apply techniques, tools and approaches in the workplace. Consequently, trainer-assessors do not always support apprentices to make clear links between the theory they learn and its practical application at work.

Trainer-assessors complete an assessment of the vocational starting points of apprentices at the beginning of the apprenticeship. However, they do not use these to plan learning, and as a result, some apprentices are taught topics that they already know and they do not progress as quickly as they are able.

Too many trainer-assessors do not set meaningful or ambitious targets for apprentices to complete. In too many cases, targets are descriptive, such as a unit or a booklet title to complete, and do not reflect the knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices have developed or need to improve.

Trainer-assessors of apprentices and trainees with high needs or with learning difficulties use what they know about the learners to apply well-considered classroom and workshop strategies to ensure that learners work positively and productively. For example, in functional skills English and mathematics lessons, they provide to apprentices with dyslexia examples of how more complex questions and concepts are worked out. As a result, apprentices increase their knowledge and confidence in the subject.

Trainees develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Trainer-assessors set high standards and create an environment that allows trainees studying traineeships to develop useful practical skills for work. For example, if learners' brickwork does not meet precise industry standards, they are required to rebuild their work so that it does. As a result, trainees quickly acquire new skills, such as trowel skills and how to measure and scale jobs accurately.

The majority of apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours while on their apprenticeship. For example, apprentices who work for an electrical pump manufacturer benefit from working on site to assess, install and maintain pumps for customers in a wide variety of settings. As a result, apprentices improve their communication skills and learn how to consult with customers and explain to them the solutions and the specifications and costs of work.

Apprentices benefit from occupationally relevant and useful courses and qualifications provided by their employer, such as courses in manual handling, first aid, construction skills certification card and forklift operations licence training. However, apprentices do not benefit from additional training or development provided by SBCT.

The majority of apprentices achieve their apprenticeship. Some apprentices achieve high grades for their apprenticeship, and the proportion of those who do is increasing.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have in place safeguarding policies that are up to date and appropriate for the range of learners with whom they work. Managers who undertake recruitment follow an appropriate safer recruitment process to check on the background of applicants. Teaching and training staff receive annual updates on training, safeguarding and fundamental British values.

The deputy safeguarding lead is appropriately qualified and has a developed understanding of the safeguarding processes and the local risks to learners and apprentices in the area. They escalate and monitor effectively referrals to the appropriate authorities as needed.

The safeguarding training provided to the few apprentices and trainees under the age of 18 does not yet focus sufficiently on peer-on-peer abuse or harmful sexual behaviours.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that trainer-assessors use the starting points of apprentices and their existing knowledge and skills effectively to plan, consolidate and apply to their learning in order to improve apprentices' work to meet their full potential.
- Trainer-assessors should ensure that apprentices' progress reviews are completed consistently, so that apprentices' next steps are identified accurately, and apprentices' progress is carefully monitored.
- Leaders and trainers-assessors should ensure that all apprentices have access to impartial careers advice, so that apprentices are aware of the full range of progression opportunities available to them.
- Trainer-assessors should ensure that apprentices' understanding of life in modern Britain and the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism is improved throughout their apprenticeship, so that apprentices can apply this to their daily lives.
- Trainer-assessors should ensure that apprentices and trainees are supported to gain an understanding of healthy sexual relationships, so that they can protect themselves from harmful sexual behaviours.

Provider details

Unique reference number	54277
Address	19G Vanguard Way Battlefield Enterprise Park Shrewsbury SY1 3TG
Contact number	01743 454810
Website	www.sbc-training.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Colin Thaw
Provider type	Independent training provider
Date of previous inspection	26 to 29 July 2016
Main subcontractors	Harper Adams University Shrewsbury College Group Severn Financial Training

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of training, 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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