

Inspection of Performance Through People

Inspection dates:

14 to 17 February 2023

Overall effectiveness**Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Performance Through People (PTP) is a medium-sized training provider. Their head office is in Walsall in the West Midlands. They have additional sites in Cannock and Birmingham, with access to group sites in the Black Country and North Staffordshire. In May 2020, they became part of the BCTG Group. At the time of the inspection, they had 757 apprentices enrolled on a wide range of apprenticeship standards from levels 2 to 7. Their largest provision is the level 3 dental nurse (integrated) apprenticeship, where they teach 241 apprentices. The next is the level 3 business administrator with 70 apprentices and the level 3 team leading or supervisor apprenticeship with 45 apprentices enrolled.

PTP work with one subcontractor, Smart Dental. They teach the level 3 dental nurse standard to 121 apprentices.

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

Apprentices' attitudes to learning and employment are excellent. Attendance, motivation and engagement in sessions are high. They have an especially positive relationship with tutors. Apprentices are proud of their achievements and motivated to learn. As a result, many apprentices are successful in their apprenticeships.

Apprentices feel safe in their workplace and in classroom settings. They learn the importance of personal protective equipment to keep themselves safe. Tutors ensure an inclusive learning and working environment that is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Apprentices demonstrate a commitment beyond their apprenticeship. They act as apprentice ambassadors within the local council and promote apprenticeships at careers events. They take part in charity football matches and a few have won high-profile local and regional apprentice awards.

Apprentices understand the importance of healthy relationships. They learn how to value people's different skills and talents at work. They understand how to promote respectful and positive interactions with colleagues. They learn to appreciate people's differences and the value that diversity can bring to the workplace.

A few apprentices do not benefit from impartial careers advice and guidance. Many apprentices recognise the careers and education opportunities available to them within their current employer. However, a few have an underdeveloped awareness of the wider prospects open to them because of their apprenticeship.

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

Leaders have identified and developed an appropriate curriculum that responds to the local and regional skills shortages. They work productively with partners such as the West Midlands Combined Authority and the local Chamber of Commerce to identify skills shortages and develop curriculums to meet these needs. For example, they identified that the specialised skills of a saddlery maker were in decline. As a result, they worked with specialists to introduce the level 2 leather craftsman apprenticeship to meet the needs of this sector.

Leaders take their time to understand employers' needs effectively when designing the curriculum. They hold informative discussions with employers at the start of the apprenticeship to identify their requirements. For example, when planning the level 3 dental nurse apprenticeship, tutors brought forward the teaching of tooth extraction nursing to meet the needs of the employer. In the level 5 operations departmental managers apprenticeship, apprentices receive additional teaching in 'critical path analysis' and 'issue logs'. This results in apprentices quickly developing the knowledge and skills they need to be effective in the workplace.

Leaders and managers successfully order the curriculum to gradually build apprentices' knowledge and skills over time. They start by teaching foundational concepts that incrementally build to become more complex. For example, in the level 3 team leading or supervisor, apprentices initially develop their communication skills in a range of settings. Tutors then teach more difficult topics such as project management, finance and decision-making towards the end of the programme. As a result, apprentices develop their substantial knowledge and skills over time and make an effective contribution to their employer's businesses.

Tutors sequence on- and off-the-job learning effectively. They use their knowledge of the sector and close working relationships with employers to organise apprentices' learning. For example, tutors of level 3 dental nursing teach the theory of sterilising instruments and decontamination, in the classroom. Apprentices then swiftly apply the theory to practice when at work. This results in apprentices rapidly developing the knowledge and skills required for the workplace.

Tutors do not routinely support apprentices to continually develop their English and mathematics skills. They use one-to-one sessions effectively, to help apprentices to pass their English and mathematics examinations. However, many apprentices are not supported to continue to develop the English and mathematics skills they need for their next steps in education or at work.

Tutors use apprentices' starting points effectively in order to plan the curriculum. They establish individual apprentice's initial knowledge and experience through a variety of methods. They carefully use this information to identify apprentices' primary gaps in learning. Tutors then use regular one-to-one sessions successfully, to tailor learning that fulfils these gaps. As a result, apprentices quickly develop the new knowledge and skills they need to become valued employees.

Most tutors are subject experts and have high levels of current occupational knowledge. Tutors use their experience to provide relevant examples of current practice in their teaching. For example, tutors in early years use their knowledge of the industry to successfully relate classroom learning to the apprentices' workplace. Apprentices use this knowledge to help them understand the link between lessons and work. This results in apprentices gaining a deeper understanding of the required topics.

Tutors use assessment strategies effectively to check apprentices' understanding and challenge misconceptions. They successfully use quizzes, competitions, mock examinations and discuss potential examination questions in groups. When needed, tutors pose appropriate questions linked to the workplace to extend apprentices' knowledge. Many tutors provide valuable developmental feedback on how apprentices can improve their work and achieve higher grades. As a result, most apprentices make good progress.

Tutors have not made sure that employers have a sufficient understanding of apprentices' end-point assessment. Tutors teach useful workshop sessions around the end-point assessment. They use regular one-to-one sessions to set targets and

support apprentices to complete post-workshop tasks. However, a few employers do not understand what the assessment consists of, or the target grades available. As a result, these employers are not able to fully support their apprentices to achieve their potential.

Tutors support apprentices with additional needs effectively. They provide appropriate support for apprentices who lack confidence and struggle with anxiety. As a result, apprentices develop strategies that can help them in work and life.

Leaders have developed a coherent structure for governance. The board of governors contain experienced practitioners who effectively scrutinise the provider's performance. They receive relevant reports that provide them with an appropriate overview of the quality of the provision. Governors use these reports to provide a robust challenge to leaders. As a result, governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provider.

Leaders and managers have put in place an appropriate system to monitor subcontracting activity. They have, in recent times, acted to reduce the number of subcontractors they work with. Levels of apprentice performance on the subcontracted provision are in line with that of other apprentices the provider trains directly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead and assistant are suitably qualified. They use an appropriate system to diligently track and monitor referrals through to resolution.

Leaders have appropriate recruitment processes in place. They conduct applicable checks on staff prior to employment. Staff complete training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. They take issues around sexual harassment seriously.

Leaders and managers have not made sure that apprentices have a good enough understanding of local risks. Many apprentices can talk confidently about key aspects of fundamental British values and the 'Prevent' duty. However, they struggle to identify the local risks that they may face, such as county lines. As a result, a few apprentices do not have a good enough understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should make sure that apprentices continue to develop their English and mathematics skills. This is to ensure that they are ready for their next steps in work and education.

- Leaders should make sure that apprentices know and understand what appropriate career and educational opportunities are available to them. This is to make sure that they are aware of the different career routes that they can access.
- Leaders should make sure to provide employers with the knowledge of their individual apprentice's end-point assessment. This is so that employers can provide apprentices with the right opportunities at work that enable them to reach their potential.
- Leaders should make sure that apprentices are aware of the risks they may face locally. This is to ensure they have the knowledge and skills they need to stay safe.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58262
Address	Essex Terrace Intown Walsall WS1 1SQ
Contact number	01922 651100
Website	https://ptp-training.co.uk/
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Rob Colbourne
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	21 June 2016
Main subcontractors	Smart Dental Academy

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the Curriculum 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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