

# Waterton Academy Trust

Monitoring visit report

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<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Philippa Firth, His Majesty's Inspector
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<b>Type of provider:</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Address:</b>	Walton Primary Academy The Grove Wakefield WF2 6LD

# Monitoring visit: main findings

## Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Waterton Academy Trust is an independent learning provider based in Wakefield. At the time of the monitoring visit, 31 apprentices were studying towards a level 3 teaching assistant apprenticeship. All apprentices are over the age of 18.

## Themes

### How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

### Reasonable progress

Leaders have a clear rationale for delivering the level 3 teaching assistant apprenticeship standard. They recognise that there is a lack of training in the local and regional area for teaching assistants to improve their practice. Their vision is to train new and existing teaching assistants so that pupils in primary schools receive better support with their academic and personal development. Leaders carefully listen to headteachers and managers in schools and adapt the curriculum appropriately to meet their needs.

Leaders recruit qualified, well-trained tutors who have extensive experience of teaching and supporting children in schools. Tutors keep their teaching practice up to date through relevant professional development, including teaching in a primary school at least once a term. Apprentices learn useful techniques, such as how to understand and manage challenging behaviour, and say that their tutors are inspirational role models.

Leaders have suitable processes in place to monitor the quality of the apprenticeship that they provide. They have a thorough understanding of what they do well and what they need to do to improve. They act on feedback, which they frequently collect from consultants, apprentices and headteachers, to improve the training that apprentices receive.

Leaders communicate well with headteachers and mentors to ensure that they fully understand their roles and responsibilities, including how they support apprentices' on- and off-the-job training. As a result, apprentices receive current and relevant high-quality training that improves the effectiveness of the support that they provide for their pupils in the classroom.

Leaders have established a governing body with members who have a wide range of experience in education and training, and who understand what is needed to improve teaching assistants' performance. Governors fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, and they challenge leaders and hold them to account for the quality of education that apprentices receive.

**What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Reasonable progress**

Although most apprentices have been teaching assistants for several years, they learn substantial new knowledge and skills on this apprenticeship. These include useful strategies to support and build on pupils' learning, drawing on perspectives such as cognitive load theory and Rosenshine's principles of instruction. Headteachers recognise that teaching assistant apprentices add value to their schools and are now able to meet individual pupils' needs more successfully.

Tutors carefully sequence learning to ensure that they teach key concepts in a logical order. Apprentices swiftly and confidently apply their new knowledge and skills in the workplace. Following a lesson on behaviour and respect, apprentices helped pupils to listen without interrupting, through the use of 'fingers on lips' and asking pupils to face the teacher.

Leaders and tutors frequently monitor the progress that apprentices make. If apprentices fall behind with their work, tutors put appropriate interventions in place to help them to catch up, such as more frequent one-to-one meetings. As a result, most apprentices are making at least expected progress.

Apprentices receive useful feedback from tutors on their written work and on how they support pupils in the classroom. They know what they have done well and what they need to improve. Consequently, they make improvements to their written work and refine the support that they provide to pupils in schools.

Tutors prepare apprentices appropriately for functional skills English and mathematics examinations. However, they do not ensure that apprentices develop their English and mathematical skills beyond the minimum level required for the apprenticeship.

Apprentices feel well prepared for their end-point assessment. They value the practice sessions that tutors provide, which help them to develop their confidence for

the professional discussion with an external assessor. However, a few apprentices do not know if they are aiming for pass or distinction, and are not clear about what they need to do to achieve a distinction.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress**

Leaders place a strong focus on safeguarding. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is suitably qualified and has recent and relevant training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. The DSL has established useful links with relevant external agencies to keep well informed about local and regional safeguarding risks, and makes effective use of the West Yorkshire Police partnership portal. Apprentices know about local risks in the area, such as the rise of far-right extremism.

Leaders have in place safeguarding policies and procedures, which they use well to determine risks and which help to keep apprentices safe. Apprentices know how to report any concerns that they have.

Apprentices work in primary schools and have a sound understanding of how to keep pupils safe. Leaders rightly recognise that they need to focus more on how safeguarding affects apprentices personally. They have very recently introduced a newsletter with pertinent information that apprentices can use if they need help and advice outside of class hours, including information about the Samaritans, Rethink Mental Illness and GamCare, for support with gambling.

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