

Inspection of Heart of England Training Limited

Inspection dates:

21 to 24 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Education programmes for young people	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Heart of England Training is a private training provider. Established in 1971, the head office is in Rugby. The company has eight training academies. Four offer hairdressing and beauty therapy training, and four offer sport education programmes. They are based in the Midlands.

At the time of the inspection, 200 learners were on programmes for young people. There were 70 young people on hair and beauty courses, and 130 on sport-related courses. Sixteen were on level 1 courses, 66 on level 2 and 118 on level 3 courses. Most of the young learners studied English and/or mathematics qualifications in addition to their vocational studies.

There were 909 apprentices studying courses from level 2 to level 5. There were 300 level 2 apprentices, 461 level 3 apprentices, and 148 at levels 4 and 5. There were 277 apprentices on hair and beauty courses, and 497 on business and education-based courses. While most apprentices worked in the Midlands, an increasing proportion were employed nationwide.

The provider worked with one subcontractor. There were 11 apprentices at Brown's Hairdressing.

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

Learners enjoy their education and training. They value the knowledge and current vocational experience of their educators. This motivates them to achieve their best. They value the new technical, theoretical and wider vocational skills and knowledge that they learn.

Learners study in high-quality teaching facilities in the hair, beauty and sporting academies. Learners are inspired to work to a high level in environments that meet industry standards.

Most young learners participate in well-planned work experience placements. Hair and beauty learners promptly start their work experience in commercial salons. Sports learners, at the Birmingham sports academy, coach at local schools and host school visits and tournaments. However, a small number of learners in sport have not yet started their placement. This slows down the development of their practical skills.

Staff support learners effectively. They deal swiftly and confidently with any concerns that learners have. Young learners explore their understanding of consent and healthy relationships in a mature and age-appropriate way. Learners find staff approachable and appreciate how they are available to listen to them.

Learners enjoy the strong culture of mutual respect and understanding that leaders and managers have created. Learners have a deep understanding of equality and diversity, and many show this in their work. Hair and beauty learners understand the treatments that are appropriate for different skin types.

Educators support learners who have additional learning needs through well-designed individualised support. Learners develop their confidence and become more independent as they progress through their course. They attend activities and access online resources that promote well-being and healthy lifestyles.

Apprentices gain the skills they need to become competent in their job roles. They receive good off- and on-the-job training. Most of them achieve their qualifications. An increasing proportion achieve the highest grade. In most courses, apprentices gain additional qualifications that improve their employability. For example, teaching assistants achieve the level 3 certificate in supporting the delivery of physical education.

Young people and most apprentices receive clear careers advice. Some level 5 apprentices are not aware of the range of opportunities that are available on completion of the apprenticeship.

Learners and apprentices are safe in the academies and in the working environment. For example, learners on hair and beauty courses use chemicals appropriately and protect their skin by using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Learners know how to stay safe when using social media.

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

Senior leaders provide strong and inclusive leadership. They are highly visible and committed to providing good-quality education and training for young people and apprentices. They communicate this vision with passion. They provide good support for staff and learners.

Leaders offer courses which match both the local and national skills need of employers. They work tirelessly to ensure that learners develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to thrive in the hair, beauty, business, education and sporting sectors. They provide excellent job and career opportunities for young learners and apprentices.

Leaders and managers have a clear vision for the curriculum they offer. They provide a broad study programme for all young people. They provide more than just the high-quality vocational experience. They ensure that young people are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their personal and social skills, as well as their mathematical and English skills. Leaders carefully select additional qualifications to improve apprentices' understanding and to make them more deployable in their employers' businesses.

Leaders and managers work effectively with employers and subcontractors to develop the curriculum. They meet regularly to discuss courses and how to develop them to meet the needs of the sector. Senior managers are dynamic and have expanded the size of their business wisely. For example, they have successfully established a new sporting academy. They have expanded their successful model of training teaching assistants for local authorities. They now train teaching assistants nationally.

With the support of governors, leaders have invested in additional educators, managers and technologies. Leaders and managers have planned for growth well. They have maintained the quality of education through the effective use of management information, careful recruitment of staff, and high-quality professional development and training.

Leaders and managers have a highly effective, long-standing relationship with their subcontractor. The subcontractor participates fully in quality improvement and staff development activities. Apprentices at the subcontractor achieve well.

Governance is highly effective. Skilled and experienced governors challenge and support leaders to develop strategy and to improve performance. They know the provider well and accurately understand the most important strengths and areas for improvement.

Leaders monitor learners' enrolments, withdrawals, progress, attendance, and destinations by course and by academy. In 2021/22, too many learners did not complete their courses in hair and beauty. Too many apprentices did not complete the team leader level 3 apprenticeship. A small number of learners at the Daventry sports academy did not attend well enough. Managers acknowledged that initial advice and guidance was not sufficiently detailed for these learners and apprentices. Some learners were not clear enough about the demands of these courses.

Leaders have subsequently improved their guidance and established consistently clear expectations across programmes. In all cases, their actions have brought about significant improvements. In most cases, young learners and apprentices achieve well.

On completion of the apprenticeship, a very high proportion of apprentices remain in employment, and most of these move into promoted posts or gain additional responsibilities. On the level 2 hair professional apprenticeship, a very small minority of apprentices were unemployed at the end of the apprenticeship.

While managers make qualitative judgements on the performance of individual educators and the quality of learners' work, they do not collate this to produce a detailed picture of the quality of education. As a result, their self-assessment report does not say enough about the quality of course design and teaching. Leaders concentrate on improving achievement rates rather than actions to further improve the quality of education.

Leaders and managers design the professional development programme skilfully. They ensure that educators maintain and refresh their vocational knowledge and skills. New or unqualified educators swiftly undertake appropriate qualifications. Leaders establish frequent opportunities for educators to understand and share good practice. Most educators' subject expertise and teaching knowledge develop well.

Leaders rightly aspire to improve learners' mathematical skills through the vocational curriculum. They require all educators to complete a level 2 mathematics functional skills qualification. However, this qualification is not sufficient to ensure that educators can teach mathematics well enough. Some educators do not act swiftly enough to correct learners' misunderstandings in mathematics.

Educators are experienced practitioners in their relevant sectors. They have expert knowledge of the subjects and courses they teach. They impart this knowledge well and, as a result, learners produce work which is of a good standard.

Educators use learners' starting points well to adapt the curriculum, so that learners can make swift progress. For example, in English and mathematics, educators concentrate on learners' gaps in learning. As a result, they achieve their qualifications swiftly. Within the beauty course, where learners have not worked with customers, educators teach customer care first.

Educators sequence the teaching of topics well. For example, in the associate project manager apprenticeship, educators teach the theories of managing projects before apprentices start the work-based project. Educators ensure that learners have plenty of opportunities, to develop mastery. Within the teaching assistant apprenticeship, educators teach about child development before asking apprentices to observe children at play. Apprentices then go on to manage children's behaviour.

Leaders work closely with employers to make sure that the off-the-job training is linked closely to application within the business. For example, apprentices on the

departmental manager apprenticeship learn about the theory of change management and then can apply this knowledge swiftly at work.

Educators check learners' understanding through effective questioning and well-designed learning resources. Educators use the individual reviews well to provide helpful developmental feedback.

Most educators ensure that learners repeat and recall what they have been taught. This enables learners to retain information in their long-term memory and to apply it within their studies. For example, beauty therapy learners develop their anatomical knowledge and practical skills through completing a wide range of short exercises, before practising these skills on other learners. Learners learn to correctly perform the processes for a facial massage. However, educators at the Quorn sports academy did not provide enough opportunities for learners to practise their coaching skills.

Leaders work hard to establish the importance of high attendance and punctuality. Most learners understand the importance of attendance in preparing them for employment. Educators support learners to catch up with their work if they miss teaching sessions.

Leaders provide young learners with a well-designed personal development programme that includes a comprehensive range of workshops and guest speakers. In the best cases, topics such as online gambling, mental health and online safety are made relevant to the subjects that the learners are studying. Young learners can talk with maturity about these important topics.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have developed a strong safeguarding culture that extends to all academies.

Leaders ensure that staff responsible for safeguarding are appropriately trained, including those in subcontracted provision. They have established strong links with external agencies that they use to support learners with safeguarding concerns. They understand and are alert to local issues such as county lines and forced marriage. They take issues around sexual harassment and peer-on-peer abuse seriously.

Safeguarding staff have effective processes for recording incidents, and they take appropriate action, involving external agencies when appropriate.

Leaders ensure that staff are recruited safely and follow safer recruitment procedures. All new staff receive appropriate training, and existing staff have refresher training to ensure that their knowledge is current.

Leaders provide appropriate physical controls on each site and risk assessments for each academy. They ensure safe working practices at work, including the appropriate use of PPE, and exercising safely in sport.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should maintain improvements in retention and achievement in hair and beauty apprenticeships and attendance at the Daventry sports academy.
- Leaders should provide all apprentices with access to independent careers advice so that they know all the career opportunities that are open to them on completion of the apprenticeship.
- Leaders should collate their qualitative judgements about the curriculum and use this information to identify the key areas for improvement and ensure that the quality improvement plan includes actions to improve the quality of education as well as the quantitative outcomes.
- Leaders must ensure that educators provide more opportunities for learners to practise their coaching skills, and correct learners' mathematical misconceptions.

Provider details

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Address	Suite One, Eleven Arches House 125 Yates Avenue Rugby CV21 1FD
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Website	www.hoet.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Jill Gibson
Provider type	Independent Learning Provider
Date of previous inspection	27 to 30 June 2017
Main subcontractors	Brown's White House Buckingham Ltd (Brown's Hairdressing)

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of marketing and recruitment, 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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