

Inspection of The Training & Learning Company

Inspection dates: 28 to 31 March 2023

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

Information about this provider

The Training and Learning Company is an independent learning provider based in Swansea, Wales, and holds a contract to deliver apprenticeships in England. At the time of the visit, there were 309 apprentices, all over the age of 19. One hundred and twenty-one apprentices were on the level 3 lead adult care worker, 118 on the level 2 adult care worker, 14 on the level 4 lead practitioner in adult care, and 34 on the level 5 leader in adult care. Of the remaining apprentices, 13 were on the level 3 team leader or supervisor, three were on the level 5 operations or departmental manager, and six were on the level 3 business administrator apprenticeship. The provider does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Apprentices enjoy their learning. They are motivated to do their best and understand how their apprenticeship will help them to develop their career. They value the support and encouragement they receive from their learning coaches, who ensure that learning environments are calm, inclusive and respectful. As a result, apprentices develop the confidence to offer their opinions in lessons and share their experiences with others in a respectful and supportive environment.

Employers speak highly of the training that apprentices receive. They are routinely involved in apprentices' reviews and contribute directly to the planning of their learning. This supports apprentices to develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours and rapidly have a positive impact in the workplace.

Leaders have developed a personal development curriculum which supports apprentices to develop their knowledge of several key topics such as online safety, life in modern Britain, and the risks associated with radicalisation and extremist behaviour. However, while apprentices demonstrate a broad awareness of these topics, they are less well informed about the potential risks in the areas in which they live and work.

Most apprentices benefit from a detailed careers programme that offers specialist advice and guidance to support apprentices to make appropriate choices on their next steps, identify transferable skills that they have developed, and motivate them to set high aspirations. However, in a few cases, apprentices do not always engage with this offer and consequently do not benefit from the advice this programme offers.

Apprentices feel safe and they know what to do if they have any concerns. They feel confident that any instance of bullying and harassment would not be tolerated, and swift and effective action would be taken to rectify it if needed.

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

Leaders and managers demonstrate a clear rationale for the apprenticeships they have chosen to offer. Since the previous inspection, the provider has significantly changed the focus of their apprenticeship offer and now provides apprenticeships predominantly in health and social care in response to a nationally identified need for skilled workers in this area.

Managers and learning coaches have ordered the curriculums logically. For example, apprentices studying level 2 adult care worker first study fundamental concepts such as manual handling, infection control, and personal safety early in their apprenticeship in order to ensure their safety in the workplace, before moving on to more complex skills such as medication control. As a result, apprentices build on their new knowledge, skills and behaviours over time and make an effective contribution at work.

Leaders work well with employers and apprentices to tailor apprentices' individual learning to meet their needs from their vocational starting points. For example, some apprentices' curriculum is adapted to meet workplace-specific needs, such as moving autism training earlier in an apprentices' learning where the employer requires apprentices to complete this work as part of their day-to-day activities. As a result, apprentices are supported to quickly develop the skills they need to have a positive impact in the workplace.

Leaders have put in place suitable arrangements for external scrutiny of their apprenticeships. The board of governors are qualified and experienced education professionals who demonstrate a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provider. They offer useful guidance and support to leaders while effectively holding them to account for the quality of education that they provide.

Leaders have appropriate measures in place to monitor both the quality of their apprenticeships, and the progress that apprentices make. They have recently started to implement new quality improvement strategies to strengthen these arrangements further. However, while the impact of some of these changes can already be seen, some of these strategies are still in their infancy, and as a result, it is too soon to judge their impact.

Learning coaches have a wealth of vocational experience. They use their expertise to contextualise learning to support apprentices to understand the links between what they learn, and how they can apply this in practice. As a result, employers speak highly of the positive impact that their apprentices have in their workplace.

Leaders support staff with the development of both their vocational knowledge and teaching skills. For example, staff complete industry days in the summer months to maintain their vocational knowledge. They also undertake internal development programmes to further develop their teaching skills. As a result, apprentices benefit from effective teaching which supports them to make rapid progress in their learning.

Most apprentices receive their entitlement to time away from the workplace to complete their studies. In most cases, off-the-job training is effectively planned and coordinated with activities that apprentices undertake in the workplace. For example, level 3 team leader or supervisor apprentices benefit from masterclasses in team leading which are linked to their current work activities. However, in a small minority of cases for apprentices on level 2 and 3 health and social care apprenticeships, this time is less well planned, and consequently, apprentices do not develop their skills as quickly as they could.

In some cases, on health and social care apprenticeships, target setting is too focused on the achievement of units and elements of the qualification and does not always focus closely enough on the required knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices need to be successful. Consequently, apprentices do not always

understand how the work they are completing is helping them to progress towards their final assessment.

Learning coaches support apprentices to retain their new knowledge, skills and behaviours and embed them in their long-term memory. For example, learning coaches on level 2 adult care worker revisit key topics such as the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. As a result, apprentices deepen their understanding of signs to look for and how to keep themselves, their service users, and their families safe.

Employers routinely attend apprentices' reviews. They have a clear understanding of the progress their apprentices are making and actively contribute to the planning of their learning. However, in a few cases, reviews do not fully explore what the apprentices have learned on-the-job following their off-the-job training, and, consequently, opportunities to deepen this learning and fill gaps in knowledge are sometimes missed.

Leaders have developed detailed sector-specific strategies for ensuring that all apprentices receive contextualised support to develop their English and mathematics skills throughout their apprenticeship. In the majority of cases, apprentices are able to clearly articulate how the skills they are developing contribute to their apprenticeship and their wider lives. However, for a small number of apprentices in health and social care, this is not as well implemented, and consequently, these apprentices do not benefit from this development.

The very large majority of apprentices achieve their apprenticeship, and a high proportion achieve high grades. As a result, a considerable number go on to achieve additional responsibility or promotion with their employer and progress to a higher-level apprenticeship or further learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have an appropriately qualified and experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy who have developed appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard apprentices, including for the safer recruitment of staff.

The DSL has procedures in place to effectively manage, monitor and refer safeguarding cases. While they have not yet been needed, leaders use them to support apprentices with any other concerns they ask for support with, such as mental health issues.

Apprentices develop a detailed understanding of sector-specific safe working practices, including a detailed understanding of safeguarding those in their care. However, the provider has yet to implement teaching on topics such as healthy relationships into the apprenticeship curriculum.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that the links between on- and off-the-job learning are developed for all apprentices to ensure that they have the opportunity to practise and embed what they have learned in the workplace.
- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices develop their English and mathematics skills throughout their apprenticeship to help prepare them for their next steps.
- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices' reviews consider what apprentices have learned on-the-job when setting targets and planning further learning, to ensure that they identify and fill any gaps in their knowledge which may exist.
- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices receive the appropriate careers advice and guidance they need to make appropriate decisions on their next steps.

Provider details

Unique reference number	55051
Address	Axis 19 Axis Court Mallard Way Riverside Business Park Swansea Vale SA7 0AJ
Contact number	01792 700 611
Website	www.tlc-uk.org
Principal, CEO or equivalent	John Allison
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	8 July 2013
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the Managing Director, 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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