

# Inspection of Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Inspection dates: 25 to 27 April 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this provider

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust) is an employer provider based in Worthing, West Sussex. The Trust provides local healthcare for people with mental health problems and learning disabilities in Brighton and Hove, East and West Sussex, and Hampshire. The Trust has been a direct provider of apprenticeships since December 2019. At the time of the inspection, 16 apprentices were enrolled on the level 3 business administrator apprenticeship and eight apprentices were enrolled on the level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprenticeship. All apprentices were over the age of 19.

The Trust does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Apprentices enjoy their learning. They value the close support that staff give to them and are helpful and respectful to one another. As a result, apprentices gain the skills, behaviours and knowledge they need to make progress quickly.

Apprentices develop relevant skills that they apply well at work. For example, level 3 business administrator apprentices learn how to use spreadsheets and databases effectively. Level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprentices contribute knowledgeably to discussions with nurses and doctors about service users' capacity to make decisions. As a result, their managers rightly appreciate the positive impact apprentices have in the workplace.

Although staff inform apprentices about internal and external job opportunities, apprentices do not benefit from a programme of impartial careers information, advice and guidance. Leaders acknowledge this and have already put plans in place for a suitable careers programme, but it is too early to see the intended impact of their actions.

A small minority of apprentices benefit from membership of staff networks and participate in other volunteering activities. For example, a few apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities value their membership of the staff neurodivergent network. However, leaders do not ensure that most apprentices are aware of these opportunities.

Apprentices rightly feel safe. They are confident about how to report concerns should they have any. Leaders ensure that apprentices know how to keep themselves, colleagues and service users safe, including online. Level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprentices dispose of needles and other infectious waste resulting from venous puncture procedures safely and correctly.

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

Leaders and managers plan the order of topics in each course carefully so that apprentices cover the skills and knowledge that are most important to their roles first. For example, level 3 business administrator apprentices learn about roles and responsibilities and how to communicate effectively before moving on to techniques for project management and organisational structure. Level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprentices become familiar with safeguarding and the duty of care before progressing to specialist units in mental health. As a result, apprentices support colleagues and service users quickly and reliably while they continue to study more advanced topics.

Trainer assessors work with line managers closely to ensure that apprentices apply their learning at work quickly. For example, senior healthcare support worker apprentices learn guidelines for effective communication, and shift managers observe them using these to communicate with service users with complex needs in

their own homes. Consequently, apprentices practise new learning in practical situations to ensure that they incorporate it into their long-term memory securely.

Trainer assessors assess apprentices' work effectively to check and extend their learning. For example, in a project management session taking place online, level 3 business administrator apprentices share what they have learned so their trainer assessor can identify and correct misunderstandings. Staff work with apprentices' line managers to assess their existing knowledge and skills carefully and make suitable adjustments to what they learn. For example, level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprentices with experience as support workers study additional topics in physical health. As a result, apprentices acquire substantial new knowledge and skills swiftly.

Experienced and well-qualified staff enable apprentices to develop highly relevant and up-to-date vocational skills quickly. For example, the Trust's project management team teaches project management to level 3 business administrator apprentices, and the infection control team teaches infection control to level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprentices. Leaders are ambitious for the level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprenticeship as an effective entry point for apprentices into the care sector. Consequently, apprentices gain the skills and experience they need to move on to their next steps, such as social care roles or studying for a nursing degree.

Leaders manage the well-being of their staff carefully and effectively. For example, leaders give staff access to an employee assistance programme, managers have regular well-being meetings with staff, and leaders use appraisals every six months to confirm that staff are performing well and have access to suitable development opportunities. Staff benefit from the chance to gain further qualifications and attend training provided by awarding bodies and industry associations. Consequently, staff enjoy working at the Trust.

Leaders and non-executive directors, with responsibility for governance, have a reasonable understanding of the quality of training. The non-executive directors have a firm understanding of the strategic benefits and challenges of the Trust's apprenticeship recruitment. However, leaders and non-executive directors do not understand the impact that improvements they are making to teaching have on apprentices' progress.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The appropriately qualified and experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL) ensures that all staff benefit from regularly updated safeguarding training, including a level 2 certificate in safeguarding.

The DSL identifies, records, refers and manages safeguarding and welfare concerns appropriately. They work with the Trust's wider safeguarding team and external

safeguarding partners effectively to do this, including regional 'Prevent' coordinators.

Leaders use clear processes for safer recruitment to ensure that staff are safe to work with apprentices.

Leaders ensure that level 3 senior healthcare support worker apprentices have a detailed awareness of local risks. They are taking steps to make sure that level 3 business administrator apprentices have the same awareness of local risks, but it is too early to see the planned impact.

### **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Leaders should ensure that apprentices benefit from a programme of impartial careers information, advice and guidance.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices are aware of wider opportunities for personal development, including volunteering.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they evaluate the impact of teaching and assessment on the progress apprentices are making.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2654179
<b>Address</b>	Portland House 44 Richmond Road Worthing West Sussex BN11 1HS
<b>Contact number</b>	0300 304 0100
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk">www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Dr Jane Padmore
<b>Provider type</b>	Employer provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the workforce transformation manager (apprenticeships), 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

David Towsey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Richard Kirkham

His Majesty's Inspector

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