

Inspection of Croydon School of Accountancy and Management Limited

Inspection dates:

19 to 21 April 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Apprenticeships

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Croydon School of Accountancy & Management Ltd (Croydon SAM) is an independent learning provider.

Croydon SAM was established in 2011 and provides training to the early years and healthcare sectors. The company recruited its first apprentices in January 2021. At the time of this inspection, there were 21 apprentices across four apprenticeship standards: 10 apprentices studying level 3 early years educator, eight apprentices studying level 5 early years lead practitioner, two apprentices studying level 2 early years practitioner, and one apprentice studying level 3 team leader or supervisor. All except one apprentice were adults. Croydon SAM does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Apprentices learn substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours and put them into practice effectively in their nurseries. Apprentices on early years programmes learn how to successfully plan and lead activities for children. Team-leading apprentices learn how to cost projects, problem-solve and chair staff meetings. Apprentices develop professional behaviours that contribute well to meeting their employers' needs as well as their own personal development.

Apprentices enjoy their programmes. They have a positive attitude towards their studies and so attend well. Apprentices appreciate the support they receive from their teachers and line managers and feel that they grow in confidence through their apprenticeship.

Apprentices contribute very effectively to discussions with their teachers and managers during their frequent progress reviews. For example, apprentices explain when and how they apply their new skills and knowledge while at work. As a result, apprentices develop confidence and recognise the progress they are making.

Early in their programme, teachers and managers discuss a five-year plan with apprentices to help them to consider their next steps within the early years sector or higher education. However, teachers do not always revisit apprentices' five-year plans frequently enough. As a result, too many apprentices do not recall creating a plan and are unclear about the next steps in education or work that they need to take to achieve their aspirations.

Apprentices feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. Apprentices learn about the dangers of radicalisation and extremist views through progress review meetings and in their taught sessions. Apprentices speak with confidence about the importance of not being influenced by those who hold extreme views and the importance of respecting each other's opinions. Apprentices say that if they reported a safeguarding concern, staff would deal with it quickly and effectively.

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

Leaders have a clear strategic intent for their apprenticeship programmes. Leaders attend local business forum meetings and collaborate well with local employers to ensure they know about local and national skills shortages. Employers state that they are well supported, and their apprentices gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to be successful in the early years sector. Most employers would recommend the provider to other employers.

Leaders and teachers plan a challenging curriculum that helps apprentices to learn knowledge beyond the requirements of their apprenticeship standard. For example, when teaching early years apprentices about the role of play, teachers introduce apprentices to additional sources about the United Nations convention on the rights

of the child. Most apprentices complete the extra reading, the contents of which they find helpful in their home and work lives.

Teachers are industry experts who use their experience in the early years sector to help apprentices to solve real-life challenges. For example, teachers guide level 5 apprentices about how to use their team more effectively during staff shortages. Apprentices appreciate their teachers' support and feel more confident to make complex decisions that help their nurseries to function effectively.

Teachers work closely with employers to ensure that apprentices benefit from effective on-the-job training which complements their off-the-job studies. Apprentices learn about topics such as safeguarding, the early year sufficiency service and autism awareness in their frequent on-the-job training sessions. Managers identify gaps in apprentices' knowledge and provide training to close those gaps. For example, managers train apprentices in how to plan activities for children with special educational needs and disabilities, including how to make effective use of visual aids.

Most teachers use assessment well to check that apprentices understand new knowledge before moving on to the next topic. For example, in early years lessons, teachers check that apprentices understand the key concepts of cognitive development before teaching them about the role of creative play in children's cognitive development. This helps apprentices to develop new knowledge which they apply effectively at work.

Teachers do not consistently provide apprentices with high-quality feedback that tells them how to improve their work. They do not routinely correct errors in their writing, nor do they give apprentices specific suggestions about what they need to do differently. As a result, apprentices' work does not always improve over time.

Leaders have not prioritised the teaching of English and mathematics qualifications early enough in apprentices' programmes. As a result, very few apprentices who need to gain qualifications in English or mathematics have taken and passed their examinations. In a few cases, this means that apprentices are in danger of not completing their apprenticeship by their planned end date.

Leaders have a thorough oversight of the quality of their provision which they use to inform their improvement plans. Leaders have acted on these plans to good effect. For example, leaders have introduced work trials for potential apprentices before they start so that they gain a greater understanding of the industry before they commit to their apprenticeship. This action has improved the retention of apprentices.

Leaders are in the early stages of putting in place governance structures to include employer and learner representatives. Leaders recognise that the introduction of governance will provide additional oversight of their provision and help them to understand any changes in the apprenticeship landscape.

Leaders encourage the professional development of teaching staff. For example, teachers are enrolled on level 5 teacher training programmes and other staff have benefitted from training in equality and diversity and safeguarding. Leaders' investment in training has resulted in staff feeling valued and well equipped to do their jobs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have created a culture in which the safeguarding and well-being of apprentices are promoted and checked frequently. Leaders have provided staff with appropriate training, in addition to frequent safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty updates.

Leaders and managers have implemented suitable safeguarding policies and procedures to keep staff and apprentices safe. They have links with local safeguarding partnerships which help leaders to understand and respond to emerging risks in the local area.

Leaders and managers employ safer recruitment practices to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with apprentices.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should prioritise the delivery of English and mathematics earlier in apprentices' programmes.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that all apprentices have access to effective careers advice and guidance.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that teachers provide apprentices with helpful feedback that clearly identifies what apprentices need to do to improve their work.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2654185
Address	37 Tamworth Road Croydon CR0 1XT
Contact number	0208 684 4241
Website	www.croydonsam.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Eddie Ogunbor
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of support services, as the 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

Paul Manning, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Claudia Harrison

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023