

Inspection of Steadfast Training Ltd

Inspection dates: 2 to 5 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

Information about this provider

Steadfast Training Limited is a multi-regional independent learning provider. It provides a range of apprenticeship and adult learning training across the east of England and the Midlands.

There were around 619 apprentices and 323 adult learners at the time of the inspection. Most apprentices study level 2 or level 3 health and care courses. A small number study business and management courses. Adult learners' study short, intensive courses in a range of sectors, to support re-engagement into the workplace or to provide skills for personal development. Most adults study level 2 support in schools, level 1 health and safety in construction and/or level 1 certificate in personal finance.

Steadfast Training Limited offers adult learning courses through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

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

Apprentices and learners benefit from a supportive and calm learning environment, which encourages a culture of respect and tolerance. They demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning and attend their courses well and on time.

Apprentices and learners feel safe, both at the provider premises and in the workplace. They know who to contact if they have any concerns. Apprentices understand how to apply their knowledge of safeguarding in the workplace to support the clients they work with.

Apprentices within care and healthcare sectors are passionate and committed to their job role and contribute positively to the communities in which they work. They work with residents to prepare for celebrations, including the coronation, support visits to local landmarks and take part in sensory activities to enable those with dementia to recall life events.

Learners are extremely proud of their progress and rightly take pride in their achievements. They benefit from knowledgeable and supportive tutors, who help them to participate and make them feel valued as individuals.

Learners and apprentices develop high levels of confidence throughout their courses. For example, healthcare apprentices confidently communicate with family members and health professionals to provide better care for their patients. Construction learners build their skills and knowledge, so they are more confident to apply for jobs.

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

Managers have designed a well-planned and responsive curriculum to support economic and employer needs. They work effectively with regional and local stakeholders, such as Job Centre Plus, the NHS and the local combined authority. For example, health and care apprenticeships support employers to develop the local workforce, support staff retention, and provide career pathways to professional registration.

Managers are ambitious for their apprentices and learners. They offer courses that link to meaningful progression opportunities. Adult learning courses have a clear focus on raising aspirations and improving prospects for adults to re-enter the workplace and re-engage with society. For example, the level 2 support in schools curriculum provides learners with an introductory qualification that enables them to work in schools and develop a career in education. Personal finance courses help learners understand budgeting as they move to weekly paid employment.

An effective induction identifies learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Tutors use this information to make suitable adjustments to their teaching and assessment, such as coloured overlays, microphones, or extra time for exams. This ensures that learners and apprentices with SEND make progress in line with their peers.

In most cases, the curriculum is well structured. Carefully designed courses build learners' and apprentices' knowledge and skills over time. Level 3 adult care apprentices can undertake a level 4 mentoring unit to enhance their job roles. Level 2 adult care apprentices select from a range of specialised modules to support their talents and interests, such as person-centred care, dementia, or specific learning disabilities. As a result, apprentices become more proficient in what they know and can do.

Most tutors use effective teaching strategies to reinforce key knowledge and skills. For adults, topics are explored in detail via subject workbooks and through carefully planned group discussion. Tutors skilfully use questions and prompts to check apprentices' knowledge and understanding. The standard of work learners and apprentices produce is high, and they understand a range of complex topics with breadth and depth.

Tutors encourage learners and apprentices to develop technical language on the course and in the workplace. This helps to build their confidence and supports their professionalism at work. Tutors use professional and technical vocabulary in healthcare sessions to encourage apprentices to apply appropriate terminology in response to questions.

In most cases, apprentices benefit from appropriate review meetings with their tutors and employers. Meetings are comprehensive and personalised to the apprentice and their roles. However, in a few cases, employers do not take part in apprentices' reviews. Consequently, employers do not have the opportunity to review the skills apprentices develop in the workplace and agree on their future development needs.

Apprentices and learners benefit from well-qualified and experienced tutors in their vocational sectors. Many continue to work in their industry and understand current practices well. Tutors maintain direct links to employers within industry to keep their knowledge and skills relevant and up to date. As a result, they provide apprentices with detailed examples of best practice and strategies to develop work-based skills.

Managers support staff to complete their roles effectively. New staff benefit from a thorough induction and mentor support. They also have opportunities to shadow teaching and learning activities. Staff feel very well supported and enjoy their roles.

Quality assurance arrangements for standardisation, assessment procedures and qualification outcomes are good. However, observations to review teaching and learning do not always consider teaching methods or strategy to support learning.

Where areas for improvement are identified, the resultant action plans do not identify relevant training to support tutors' development.

In a few cases, apprentices do not receive high-quality, impartial careers advice and guidance (CIAG) to help them make informed decisions on their next steps. Apprentices who actively seek CIAG receive useful information about what they need to do to progress towards their goals. However, in a small number of cases, apprentices who wish to advance on to nursing do not benefit from meaningful discussions or guidance to support these aspirations. Consequently, they are unsure how to prepare for future progression.

Managers acknowledge the benefit of external governance and have recently appointed well-qualified governors to provide external oversight and scrutiny. Governance structures and processes are in place, with clear and appropriate plans for targeted actions. However, it is too early to judge the impact of these plans.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Managers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures. They provide staff with useful guidance on how to report safeguarding concerns. The designated safeguarding lead and staff undertake appropriate training, which they update annually.

Where safeguarding or welfare concerns are raised, actions are prompt, detailed notes are taken, and appropriate support is put into place for those involved. Managers are proactive with employers and make them aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding.

Adult learners and apprentices feel safe and know how to keep themselves and others safe. Staff carry out frequent checks on the mental well-being of learners and apprentices, and they signpost them to useful sources of help and support when necessary.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Managers should ensure that all level 3 apprentices receive comprehensive and impartial careers information, advice and guidance to support future progression opportunities.
- Managers should strengthen observation activities to ensure they focus on pedagogical approaches that have the most impact on learning. They should ensure that tutors are provided with ongoing training to ensure weaker aspects of teaching are addressed swiftly.

- Managers should ensure that all apprentices benefit from reviews, with employer involvement, that capture the skills apprentices develop in the workplace and set individualised, targeted actions for development.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58277
Address	5 Enterprise Way, Pinchbeck Spalding PE11 3YR
Contact number	01775 513050
Website	www.steadfasttraining.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Jason Parnell
Provider type	Independent Learning Provider
Date of previous inspection	30 June 2014
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of assessment services, 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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