

Inspection of Michaeljohn Training, Manchester

Inspection dates:

23 to 25 May 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

Michaeljohn Training, located in Manchester and trading as Michaeljohn Training School (MJTS), is an independent learning provider that provides education and training in the hairdressing and barbering sectors. At the time of the inspection, MJTS had eight traineeship learners aged 16 to 19 and 125 apprentices. Around two-thirds of apprentices are aged 16 to 18. The provider offers two standards-based apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3. Just over half of apprentices study the level 2 hair professional, and the rest follow the level 3 advanced and creative hair professional apprenticeship. The provider works with employers in Greater Manchester in the north west of England.

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

Apprentices and learners enjoy their apprenticeship and have positive attitudes to their learning. They are enthusiastic and motivated to achieve. Apprentices and learners appreciate the calm and professional environment that their educators create. They are comfortable to ask for help, when needed, such as how best to direct the air flow of the dryer when straightening hair.

Apprentices and learners benefit from an ambitious curriculum in which they develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Level 3 apprentices perfect their precision cutting skills. Learners shampoo and blow dry hair on their work placements. Employers value the skills and contributions apprentices and learners make to their businesses.

Apprentices and learners take part in a range of careers advice and guidance activities, which helps them to prepare for their next steps. Apprentices appreciate the talks from guest speakers about working on a cruise ship and becoming a salon owner. Learners explore the range of careers open to hairdressers, including becoming an international salon manager.

Apprentices and learners feel safe at MJTS and in work. They know how to work safely in the salon. Apprentices check for the correct contraindications before carrying out complex colouring services. Most apprentices and learners understand the potential risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

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

Leaders plan an ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of apprentices and learners, many of whom are from socially deprived backgrounds or have low attainment in qualifications at school. Apprentices learn about more complex hairdressing techniques over and above their apprenticeship curriculum. For example, level 3 apprentices study wedding hair. They build their own hairdressing brand using social media. Level 2 apprentices learn feather locking, which they use in festival hair designs.

Leaders make changes to apprenticeship curriculums through review processes and feedback from employers. They have introduced more styling repetition and practise so that level 2 apprentices can hone their skills to a higher level. Leaders included a qualification as part of the level 3 apprenticeship curriculum following requests from employers.

Apprentices and learners benefit from good-quality education and training. Educators are professionally qualified and have up-to-date industry experience. They use their knowledge and sector expertise well to provide training that is informative and underpinned by specialist knowledge. Apprentices and learners value the

experience and knowledge that their educators share with them throughout their apprenticeship.

Leaders work with employers to plan the curriculum so that apprentices can practise in the salon what they learn in the training school. Employers support apprentices to develop their skills and prepare them for their final assessment. Apprentices and employers select the optional unit they will study. For example, most level 2 apprentices select hair extensions so that they can offer this popular service in their salon.

Leaders and educators sequence the curriculum logically. Apprentices and learners build their knowledge, skills and behaviours over time. Level 2 apprentices start by learning about consultation. They move on to shampooing and conditioning, followed by treating the hair and scalp. On their work experience placements, learners initially help to keep the salon clean and tidy. They arrange products for display and make drinks for clients. Learners quickly progress on to mixing colours, shampooing, and blow drying hair. As they learn new skills, apprentices and learners grow in confidence and resilience. Most apprentices and learners make good progress.

Educators use repetition, practise and frequent recall to help apprentices and learners commit their learning into their long-term memory. They identify gaps in apprentices' and learners' knowledge and teach any areas where gaps are identified. Apprentices use the helpful feedback that educators provide during practical activities to improve their practice. However, written feedback to apprentices does not routinely help them to produce work to a higher standard.

Apprentices develop their English and mathematical skills during their apprenticeship. For example, educators reinforce apprentices' knowledge of angles when cutting hair. However, educators do not routinely challenge learners to develop their written English skills. Too often, learners do not make improvements in the specific area of English that they need to improve, such as the use of capital letters or sentence structure.

Leaders developed and introduced a personal development curriculum earlier this year. They have included key themes, such as safeguarding, sexual harassment and fundamental British values. Apprentices and learners revisit these topics over time in a range of different contexts, including localised issues. Learners and most apprentices can remember what they have learned. For example, they understand the importance of sexual health and maintaining healthy relationships and know to whom they should report incidents such as domestic violence.

Governors provide appropriate scrutiny and challenge to leaders. They question leaders about the links between on- and off-the-job training and the curriculum for personal development. Governors are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the provider. They hold leaders to account to make improvements, including the areas for improvement from the previous inspection.

Governors and leaders recognise that apprentices' achievement rates were too low last year. This was primarily due to apprentices leaving their programme before they completed. In most cases, this was due to the impact of the pandemic. Leaders identified in detail a range of issues, such as employer insolvencies. They have included this as an area for improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders create a culture at MJTS in which safeguarding is prioritised. Safeguarding leaders record and maintain detailed and up-to-date safeguarding records. They make appropriate referrals with external agencies such as the police and the local authority. Leaders carry out risk assessments of apprentices' and learners' needs, including their level of risk. They frequently hold keep-in-touch meetings for apprentices and learners to discuss any issues affecting their well-being.

Leaders identified that mental health is a key safeguarding concern. One of the safeguarding team is a trained mental health first aider. They provide suitable support and guidance to apprentices and learners who need it.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should ensure that, when educators provide written feedback to apprentices, it is sufficiently detailed to enable them to improve their work to a high standard.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that learners develop the English skills needed to drive improvement.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that they reduce the number of apprentices who leave their programme early and improve the achievement rates for apprenticeships.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53349
Address	77 - 83 Oldham Street Manchester M4 1LW
Contact number	0161 819 2552
Website	www.mj-training.co.uk
Managing director	Lesley McCormack
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	14 to 15 September 2016
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of education, 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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