

Dianthas Ltd

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

Unique reference number:	2539236
Name of lead inspector:	Suzanne Wainwright, His Majesty's Inspector
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Unit 62–64 Woodside Business Centre Birkenhead CH41 1EL

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Dianthas Ltd was inspected in November 2021. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in resolving the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

Dianthas Ltd is an independent learning provider based in Birkenhead on the Wirral. It specialises in education and training for apprentices who work in the care sector. Most apprentices are based in the North West, with a few based in London. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 58 apprentices on seven standards-based apprenticeships at levels 2 to 5. There were 10 apprentices on the level 2 adult care, 13 on the level 3 lead adult care worker, nine on the level 4 children, young people and families practitioner, eight on the level 4 lead practitioner in adult care and 10 on the level 5 leader in adult care apprenticeships. A few apprentices followed the level 4 quality practitioner or the level 5 children, young people and families manager apprenticeships. Most apprentices were aged over 19 years.

Themes

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that they implement and monitor quality improvement actions swiftly, including establishing robust governance arrangements, to enable all apprentices to benefit from high-quality education and training? **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have taken appropriate action to rectify the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. They created an identified senior management team and recruited new and experienced staff to stabilise their workforce. Leaders reviewed the apprenticeship curriculums to ensure that they are individualised to each apprentice and provided relevant training to upskill their staff.

Leaders made appropriate changes to their apprenticeship recruitment process. They improved the quality of the information, advice and guidance that apprentices and their employers receive before they start their apprenticeships. Leaders now require potential apprentices to attend a pre-induction event. A majority of employers have also attended. This has helped employers to understand that an apprenticeship is a serious commitment and is not merely an opportunity to accredit staff training. Coaches insist that apprentices complete a significant piece of work to an appropriate standard prior to accepting them on an apprenticeship. These actions

have helped leaders to ensure that apprentices and their employers understand the expectations of them before they enrol.

Leaders now capture relevant and detailed information about apprentices' starting points, job roles and career ambitions in an individualised 'programme profile' that informs the curriculum plan. Coaches work closely with employers to ensure that the plan is accurate and meets employers' needs and expectations of what knowledge, skills and behaviours they want their apprentice to develop.

Employers recognise the improvements that leaders have made to the quality of education. They feel that communication has improved. Employers appreciate the flexibility that leaders provide in the teaching of the curriculum to meet their needs and the job roles of their apprentices.

Governors have a much-improved understanding of their roles. They now receive detailed reports around the quality of the apprenticeship provision well in advance of meetings. Governors use this information to provide rigorous challenge to leaders and to hold them fully accountable for their quality improvement actions. They challenge leaders regularly on relevant topics such as apprentices' achievements, reasons for breaks in learning and why a few apprentices do not complete their apprenticeship on time.

What progress have leaders and coaches made in planning the curriculum to meet the individual needs of apprentices based on their starting points? Reasonable progress

Coaches collect detailed information about apprentices' starting points to create a personalised curriculum. At the start of their apprenticeship, apprentices complete a skills scan based on the requirements of the apprenticeship standard to identify what they already know and can do. Coaches then carry out an initial observation of apprentices' practice in their work setting. This helps coaches to confirm or further identify any gaps in apprentices' skills and behaviours that they need to add to the curriculum plan. For example, coaches identified that apprentices who work in domiciliary care need to improve their knowledge of personal home security, and privacy and dignity when working with clients in their own homes. Coaches check the accuracy of these assessments with the apprentice's employer to ensure that the curriculum plan meets their needs and the needs of the apprentice.

Coaches work closely with employers to identify wider topics or optional units that align to their business needs. Apprentices complete optional units that will help them to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for their job roles such as infection control, administering medication and supporting service users who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Coaches work closely with apprentices to set and monitor the grades that they hope to achieve in their final assessments. Coaches set realistic target grades that are aligned closely to apprentices' starting points. They provide effective guidance and support to help apprentices to achieve the grades that they are capable of achieving. Coaches do this through having additional discussions and using guidance documents that apprentices use for independent study.

What progress have leaders and coaches made in developing apprentices' knowledge beyond their current employer, including through appropriate careers education, information, advice and guidance? Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to ensure that most apprentices understand the career options available to them on completion of their apprenticeship. Apprentices' access to careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) is broad and begins at the start of their apprenticeship. Coaches discuss CEIAG at reviews and at the end of the apprenticeship. Most apprentices are aware of the additional information that they can access through the training provider's website and its internal, online discussion board.

A majority of apprentices aspire to complete higher levels of learning, become nurses or move into management positions. They have discussions with their managers at work or with their coaches about their aspirations. Apprentices know what their next steps are in achieving their ambitions. Coaches support apprentices who want to progress to university to improve their academic writing skills by encouraging them to write evaluatively and to reference their sources of information appropriately.

Coaches use the information about apprentices' career aspirations to tailor the apprenticeship to meet their needs. They include topics such as palliative care and mental health for apprentices who want to specialise in end-of-life care or dementia. However, a few apprentices are still unclear about what they want to do after completing their apprenticeship.

In a few instances, employers use apprenticeships to help their employees to gain internal promotion. They link the different apprenticeships and levels to specific grades of jobs. This helps apprentices to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need to be successful at work, such as learning how to coordinate care on a large scale across several branches of their organisation.

How effective is the feedback that apprentices receive on their written work in extending their knowledge and understanding?

Reasonable progress

Since the previous inspection, leaders have provided coaches with suitable training to enable them to provide effective feedback to apprentices on their written work. Coaches often challenge apprentices to expand their answers to include more detailed work-related examples that illustrate fully the points that they make in their written work. They encourage apprentices to provide more links and analyses about the impact of workplace policies and procedures on their staff teams such as safeguarding, care plans, communication, duty of candour and duty of care. This helps apprentices to know what specifically they need to do to demonstrate how successfully they have developed the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to achieve high grades in their final assessments.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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