

# Gecko Programmes Ltd

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

---

<b>Unique reference number:</b>	1270872
<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	William Baidoe-Ansah, Ofsted Inspector
<b>Inspection dates:</b>	24 and 25 May 2023
<b>Type of provider:</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Address:</b>	Newhampton Arts Centre 113 Dunkley Street Wolverhampton WV1 4AN

## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

Gecko Programmes Ltd was inspected in May 2022. 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.

At the time of the visit, there were 85 learners on health and social care courses. Sixty-five learners were on sector-based work academy programmes, and 21 learners were on entry level English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses.

### Themes

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in improving the quality of provision, particularly in ESOL, so that learners can develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours.**      **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have developed new course documentation for the ESOL programme. This includes a revised individual learning plan that both staff and learners use effectively to monitor learners' progress.

Leaders ensure that tutors use the information about learners' starting points well. Tutors gather a range of pertinent information about learners and their circumstances at the start of the course. They gain a good understanding of learners' prior experience and knowledge. They use this information to develop well-sequenced courses to meet learners' individual needs.

Tutors plan learning well. This helps learners to develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Tutors draw on their broad vocational and occupational experience to enliven and enrich learning for the benefit of their learners.

Most tutors set developmental targets for learners. This enables learners to understand clearly what they need to do to improve and the skills and knowledge they need to develop further. As a result, most learners enjoy their learning and make assured progress.

Tutors' support for ESOL learners in lessons has increased their confidence and self-esteem. As a result, learners feel able to ask for further explanations when they are unclear about concepts or topics. Learners have a good understanding of how

different parts of their learning programmes link together. They feel more motivated in their lessons as a result.

**How much progress have leaders made in improving the craft of teaching?**

**Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have implemented a range of effective continuous professional developmental activities to improve the craft of teaching. These include staff development workshops and meetings to share best practice in teaching and assessment across the organisation. Tutors have received training on the effective use of questioning and on setting personalised targets for learners. Most teachers are more confident in the craft of teaching. They help learners to remember information well and to apply their new learning in a range of vocational contexts.

ESOL teachers question learners and check their understanding of key topics before moving to the next topic. Teachers use a wide variety of techniques, including pair work, group work and role play. This helps learners to practise and develop English language skills effectively. Learners are proud of how well they have progressed throughout their studies. They speak of not being able to write the alphabet at the start of the course. They can now construct simple sentences linked to topics such as sustainability and recycling.

Trainers on employability courses use their vocational expertise and industrial experience well. They plan and teach relevant and engaging lessons. Trainers provide effective individual support to learners to help them to improve. Learners talk about their increased self-esteem and hope for the future. The course prepares them well to work as door security at nightclubs and site security at concerts.

Teachers use technology well to enhance learning in health and social care courses. These are mostly online courses. Learners benefit from the variety of activities that teachers introduce. These include interactive quizzes and use of pertinent video clips to support learners to develop the knowledge and skills they need to make progress. This helps learners to remember information about domiciliary care well.

In a few instances, tutors do not make enough use of learners' prior experience. As a result, those with more experience are not suitably challenged. A few learners on the security course are not encouraged to take notes. As a result, they have difficulty recalling some key points taught in previous lessons.

**How much progress have leaders made in refining quality improvement arrangements to ensure that learners are making the progress they are capable of?**

**Reasonable progress**

Following the previous inspection, managers have revisited and revised the improvement action plan. Staff's responsibility for implementing actions is clear, and managers hold them to account for the success of their actions.

Managers' observation of teaching and learning records are clear. They identify any strengths and weaknesses in teaching clearly. Managers have assessed and noted improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, particularly those associated with topics that leaders prioritise in staff development activities. Managers ensure that they follow up on any further areas for development identified through learning walks. In addition, managers also encourage teachers to keep up to date with their own subject knowledge on a regular basis.

All staff have an individual weekly meeting with the centre manager. These meetings focus on learners' attendance and performance. Staff now have a clearer understanding of what is expected of them and how their performance will be measured and supported.

Senior managers are now making better use of information about learners. They use it to inform the planning of challenging learning. They also check how well tutors use information to help learners gain the vocational skills to support their development. Managers have introduced new monitoring forms to record learners' progress over time. They provide greater scrutiny of summative assessments. However, recording by managers of learners' interim progress from starting points requires further development.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in improving aspects of safeguarding, particularly in relation to safer recruitment and ensuring that learners develop a better understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism? Reasonable progress**

Managers have made improvements to aspects of safeguarding since the previous inspection. They have revised the information that learners receive in induction. It includes a greater emphasis on how to keep themselves safe from radicalisation and extremism. The two designated safeguarding leads (DSL) introduce themselves to learners at the start of their course. They make learners aware of the dedicated email for safeguarding. As a result, learners know how to report and who to go to if they have any safeguarding issues.

Leaders and managers have streamlined the reporting of safeguarding incidents. Notifications go to DSLs, who produce an action plan. These are held in a simple log, which acts as the basis for reporting to the board.

Leaders and managers have put into place tighter safer recruitment processes. Managers have devised a checklist to ensure that key processes are carried out

around, for instance, interviews, Disclosure and Barring Service checks and the take up of references. The single central register also logs mandatory training undertaken. All staff are up to date with their safeguarding training.

Learners on the security course recall covering 'Prevent' duty. They remember talking about being vigilant and reporting suspicious behaviours. They recall being told about dangers in general terms. However, they do not recall tutors drawing attention to the risks within the local region or within the role of security.

ESOL learners were able to recall covering several topics related to safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty. This included discussions on terrorism, knife crimes and gangs. All learners feel safe.

### **How much progress have leaders made in improving governance arrangements?**

### **Reasonable progress**

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have strengthened governance. The board has quarterly formal meetings. The external governor meets at least monthly with the director. The board receives an improved range of information, which helps to monitor the quality of education. The board receives ongoing information on learner recruitment, retention and completions. It also receives rated risk assessments on the effectiveness of teaching. The board receives information from learner surveys. These are all discussed, and actions are agreed to improve the learning experiences of learners.

Governors receive a verbal safeguarding report at every meeting. However, they do not receive a written annual report. As a result, they cannot easily analyse trends over time.

One external governor assures themselves of the information they receive by visiting classes and speaking to learners. As a result, they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation.

External governors provide appropriate scrutiny and challenge. For example, they question leaders about the reasons for learners being beyond their end dates. They ask managers to rectify discrepancies in the information provided. They request leaders and managers to provide more detailed information when required.

### **How much progress have leaders and managers made in improving careers advice and guidance?**

### **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have continued to improve learners' access to careers advice.

Leaders and managers are supporting staff to undertake a level 3 information and guidance qualification. This is to enable tutors to better support learners with their

next steps. All tutors have registered to undertake this. A third of staff have completed this to date. However, it is too early to gauge the impact of this.

Managers have reviewed the initial assessment documentation for the security programme. As a result, they have revised the course content. They aim to ensure that the content gives learners an idea of all the possible roles within the world of security that they are able to apply for. The course also focuses on the wider skills learners need to access different parts of the industry, such as interpersonal skills.

Since the previous inspection, managers have run regular employer events. Current and past learners on the security programme are invited. These are well attended. They give learners the opportunity to match their skills and aspirations to local job opportunities.

For the ESOL and health and social care courses, tutors aim to give ongoing advice throughout the course. However, this is not consistent, as information about learners' possible next steps are not part of the planned curriculum. In the short term, ESOL learners are all focused on improving their English as a gateway to getting a job. Most learners also have long-term career goals, such as working in childcare or doing a degree. However, they have not been given any information on what their next steps would be to fulfil their longer-term goals.

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023