

# Inspection of Blue Lion Training Academy Limited

Inspection dates:

13 to 15 June 2023

**Overall effectiveness****Outstanding**

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Apprenticeships

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

**Not previously inspected****Information about this provider**

Blue Lion Training Academy Limited started to train apprentices in 2020. The company provides training from level 3 to 6 for apprentices across the country. At the time of the inspection, there were 47 apprentices. Of these, 17 were enrolled on a level 4 improvement practitioner course and 15 on a level 4 associate project manager apprenticeship. The remainder were on apprenticeships for content creators, digital marketers, improvement technicians, assistant recording technicians and improvement specialists.

Trainers deliver apprenticeship training sessions through a mix of online and face-to-face sessions for individuals or small groups. A functional skills tutor provides online training in English and mathematics at level 2 for those who need to achieve a pass in these subjects. Most apprentices are aged over 18, and two are receiving support for additional learning needs. The company does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Apprentices thoroughly enjoy their courses and display positive attitudes to their studies. Most remain with their employer at the end of their studies, and many go on to promoted roles. Apprentices achieve well, with a majority gaining distinction or merit grades.

Trainers are exceptionally well qualified and experienced. They offer a well-structured and logically sequenced apprenticeship course, which apprentices value. As a result, apprentices develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours, which helps them to make a valuable contribution to the business of their employer.

Apprentices benefit from attending well-planned online seminars, face-to-face sessions and professional discussions. Trainers work well with employers to help apprentices apply theoretical approaches to their workplace. For example, apprentices learn how to identify inefficiencies in the workplace, save money and reduce waste.

Trainers provide accurate and helpful advice and information about the range of careers available to apprentices. This helps apprentices make informed decisions about future learning and career opportunities.

Apprentices rightly comment very favourably on the outstanding care and support that trainers provide to help them progress and achieve. As a result, apprentices develop confidence and resilience. They become better able to deal with workplace and personal challenges.

Apprentices feel safe and are aware of what they should do if they have concerns about personal or work issues throughout their studies.

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

Leaders have invested heavily in recruiting highly experienced trainers and designing bespoke online learning resources to support the apprenticeship course. They manage the provision with great care. They rightly made the strategic decision to offer only courses in the niche sectors in which they are confident of delivering outstanding provision. As a result, employers, apprentices and staff hold the company in exceptionally high regard. The positive feedback received from stakeholders supports this well.

Leaders carry out extensive organisational and training needs analyses for each employer that plans to offer an apprenticeship for their staff. They analyse job roles and work processes in detail. This helps to determine the suitability of an apprenticeship course to meet the needs of the company. For example, leaders visited a medical supplies employer that manufactured home oxygen therapy equipment for people living with lung disorders. Leaders' analysis helped to

determine how staff involved in the design, delivery and manufacture of these devices could benefit from an apprenticeship in continuous improvement techniques. As a result, these apprentices now make a valuable contribution to their business and its customers.

Trainers help learners, including those with additional learning needs, to understand key concepts well. Apprentices on the associate project management course develop excellent team and project management skills. They deploy these skills well to identify, control and manage special projects. This frequently leads to improved working practices, cost savings or efficiencies. For example, apprentices completed a project to determine the costs and benefits of allowing rail passengers to carry pushbikes onto their trains. The detailed report enabled senior managers to make an informed strategic decision about this practice.

Apprentices who study functional skills receive high-quality and effective tutoring to help them with their skills in English and mathematics. Topics are logically organised, and teaching sessions well prepared. Apprentices progressively build up their mathematical and English language knowledge and skills. As a result, functional skills achievement rates are good in mathematics. Achievements in English are generally good, but too few apprentices pass at the first attempt.

Trainers and apprentices make very good use of the company's highly accessible and intuitive software. Trainers record progress, attendance and achievement targets. Apprentices submit their assignment work. Trainers quickly identify the very few learners who fall behind and implement effective interventions to help them catch up with their peers.

Assessment practice is outstanding. Trainers provide very detailed and constructive written advice and guidance on assignments, which apprentices value. They build and develop apprentices' skills and knowledge. They also help them to apply these new skills in the workplace. Trainers use well-considered recap activities to help apprentices consolidate learning from previous modules. As a result, apprentices demonstrate an extensive range of new knowledge, skills and behaviours, which they and their employers value.

Most apprentices have a clear grasp of what they have to do to achieve well. Trainers have high ambitions for apprentices and prepare them well for their studies. As a result, most apprentices, including those with additional needs, achieve merit and distinction grades in their final assessment.

Apprentices complete an introductory module that covers safeguarding, British values and equalities. Trainers reinforce these topics during progress reviews and, where possible, integrate them with learning sessions. As a result, most apprentices can articulate their understanding of these topics reasonably well.

Leaders have developed a suitable range of personal development resources, which apprentices can access online. This includes a quarterly newsletter, which signposts apprentices to personal development resources on mental health, relationships,

healthy eating and resilience. In addition, apprentices use learning materials that trainers provide during face-to-face sessions. However, too few learners are aware of these resources. Leaders acknowledge that the personal development curriculum lacks structure. They accept that not all learners are aware of, or participate in, the range of personal development opportunities available.

Leaders have very high expectations and ambitions for staff and learners. They promote and share a high-performance culture. Leaders set high aspirations for apprentices in a range of fast-moving, competitive and challenging industry sectors. As a result, staff are proud to work for the company, and learners work hard to rise to the challenges that their apprenticeship provides.

Continuous professional development arrangements are highly effective. Leaders provide a quarterly forum for the full teaching and training team to review all aspects of the company's apprenticeship. They also share good practice during these sessions. In addition, they review content, consider apprentices' progress and identify key strengths and areas for improvement across the apprenticeship provision. As a result, staff at all levels in the company understand what they have to do to continue the company's objective of being the best in the business.

Quality improvement arrangements are excellent. Leaders use an exceptionally wide range of performance measures to assess, monitor and improve all aspects of the company's performance. They use data at granular level to identify potential barriers to high performance. Leaders have developed a comprehensive and thoroughly well-researched set of standard operating procedures matched to continuous improvement strategies. They then deploy these to set standards, monitor non-compliance, take remedial action and improve apprenticeship outcomes. As a result, the company's apprenticeship provision is outstanding.

Governance is effective. The company's chief executive officer and one external partner comprise the governance team. At the time of inspection, they had met twice. Governors consider a range of key performance measures, and they understand well the company's strengths and areas for improvement. They plan to further strengthen governance and are in the process of appointing additional members.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive enhanced checks to ensure their suitability for work. The company's designated safeguarding lead maintains an up-to-date single central record. Staff record safeguarding incidents electronically, and they take prompt action to ensure apprentices' safety and welfare.

Apprentices receive suitably detailed and helpful information about all aspects of safeguarding. This includes how to report a concern about their own welfare or that of a colleague. The learner handbook, together with information provided during

induction, clearly outlines the company's safeguarding policy and procedure in full. As a result, apprentices feel safe.

### **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Further develop the apprenticeship curriculum to ensure that all learners benefit from and participate in personal development activities that contribute to their health and well-being.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2626866
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<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Harjit Singh Dhanjal
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the chief executive officer, 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

Jai Sharda, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Gibson	Ofsted Inspector

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