

# Inspection of Basingstoke ITEC

Inspection dates:

24 to 26 May 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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## Information about this provider

Basingstoke ITEC is a small, independent learning provider based in Basingstoke, Hampshire. It specialises in information technology (IT) and digital apprenticeships. Staff provide training at the centre in Basingstoke or remotely at apprentices' workplaces in Hampshire and the Thames Valley.

At the time of the inspection, there were 45 apprentices in learning. Of these, 38 apprentices were on information technology and digital programmes at level 3 and seven apprentices were studying cybersecurity at level 4. Most apprentices were aged 19 years or over.

Basingstoke ITEC does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Apprentices value greatly the welcoming and inclusive learning environment that leaders and staff create. They benefit from supportive training staff who plan their learning effectively. Consequently, apprentices are enthusiastic and well motivated and attend well. In the small number of instances where apprentices are unable to attend activities, training staff are swift in arranging catch-up sessions.

Apprentices gain new knowledge, skills and behaviours that give them confidence in the workplace quickly. Digital marketer apprentices master website search design, which helps their businesses to grow. Cybersecurity apprentices help to secure their employers' online businesses. As a result, most apprentices become better employees and make a valuable contribution to their organisations.

Apprentices are well informed about issues that are relevant to their personal and working lives. They benefit from useful information provided by staff on topics such as staying safe when online, managing stress and healthy relationships. However, apprentices do not consistently benefit from opportunities to develop their wider interests and talents.

Training staff provide relevant and useful careers guidance to apprentices. For example, they ensure that IT solutions technician apprentices are suitably advised on a range of further study options up to level 6. As a result, most apprentices are sufficiently informed about their next steps.

Apprentices rightly feel safe and know how to report a concern if necessary. Training staff support apprentices well to ensure that they are safe in the workplace, in training and when working remotely.

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

Leaders work closely with employers to align the curriculum to meet their needs and the demand for digital skills in the region successfully. They support employment needs in roles that include IT hardware and software support, cybersecurity and digital marketing effectively.

Leaders and training staff plan and teach the curriculum in a logical order. They ensure that apprentices have the essential knowledge they need before progressing to more complex content. For example, IT solutions technician apprentices study methodologies, security and legislation before specialising in software and hardware pathways. Digital marketer apprentices learn about marketing principles before they design their own digital marketing campaign. As a result, apprentices build their knowledge and skills over time and apply these in their work successfully.

Leaders and training staff recruit apprentices appropriately. They work closely with employers to assess apprentices' starting points using interviews, skills scans and diagnostic tools. Training staff use this information to adapt their teaching to meet

apprentices' needs well. They use effective teaching strategies and provide helpful support for apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, most apprentices, including those with SEND, complete and achieve their qualifications successfully.

Well-qualified and experienced training staff use their industry knowledge effectively to enable apprentices to develop vocationally relevant skills quickly. For example, IT solutions technician apprentices quickly develop their knowledge of binary and internet protocols to set up routers and networking equipment to industry standards. As a result, apprentices successfully improve their specialist knowledge and skills and become more effective in the workplace.

Training staff present new concepts clearly. They use repetition, questioning and recall effectively to help apprentices embed key concepts into their long-term memory. Digital marketer apprentices use helpful online tools, such as coding crosswords, to consolidate their understanding of technical vocabulary. As a result, apprentices use this knowledge well in their final assessments.

Most training staff check apprentices' understanding carefully. They use skilful questioning to ensure that apprentices link their knowledge to the workplace. This enables apprentices to understand and contextualise key concepts in their work successfully, such as engagement rate calculations in digital marketing. Most training staff use assessment well to help apprentices understand what they need to do to improve. For example, cybersecurity training staff give apprentices clear feedback about how to develop the structure and complexity of commercial programming language code. Subsequently, most apprentices improve their work and successfully complete their apprenticeships.

Training staff do not consistently set apprentices sufficiently challenging targets to help them achieve high grades. As a result, too few apprentices achieve the grades of which they are capable.

Training staff do not consistently provide apprentices with feedback on the spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in their written work. As a result, the small minority of apprentices who need to improve their written skills do so too slowly.

Training staff work well with employers so that most apprentices consolidate their learning in the workplace successfully. For example, employers of cybersecurity apprentices helpfully plan specific work activities, such as vulnerability testing, when their apprentices study this topic. Consequently, most apprentices quickly improve their knowledge and skills as they practise these at work.

Most apprentices gain new knowledge and learn concepts both in and beyond their current job role successfully. For example, IT solutions technician apprentices develop a secure understanding of the differences between compiled and interpreted programming languages, coding constructs and pseudo-code. As a result, they are well prepared for future roles beyond their current employment.

Leaders ensure that apprentices widen their knowledge of British values, such as democracy and the rule of law. For instance, cybersecurity apprentices and IT solutions technician apprentices gain a secure understanding of data protection legislation and the importance of data security. Digital marketer apprentices rightly recognise the legal duty to promote equality in their social media campaigns. As a result, apprentices contextualise these values effectively in their roles at work.

Leaders promote positive values and a supportive working culture. They regularly check on staff's workload and well-being. Training staff benefit from development opportunities that make them more effective in their teaching, such as courses in artificial intelligence and programming languages. Consequently, apprentices develop up-to-date and highly relevant knowledge and skills that they apply in their work roles successfully.

Leaders have strengthened the membership of the governing board of trustees. The well-qualified board members are suitably familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They provide effective support and challenge to leaders, which leads to improvements in training, such as improving the number of apprentices completing their courses.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff prioritise the safety and well-being of their apprentices. The suitably trained and experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL use effective processes to identify, report and monitor safeguarding concerns. They respond appropriately to concerns reported by staff or employers and ensure that apprentices are supported well.

Leaders use a suitable 'Prevent' duty risk assessment and action plan to help keep apprentices safe. They ensure that apprentices understand how to keep themselves safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

Leaders ensure that all staff complete safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training so that staff can identify and report any incidents appropriately.

Leaders ensure that staff are safe to work with apprentices.

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

- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices are suitably challenged and supported to achieve the high grades of which they are capable.
- Leaders should ensure that training staff support apprentices to develop their literacy skills to help them in their jobs.
- Leaders should ensure that all apprentices have access to opportunities to develop their personal talents and interests.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	50621
<b>Address</b>	Desk Lodge Belvedere House Basing View Basingstoke RG21 4HG
<b>Contact number</b>	01256 471161
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.basingstokeitec.co.uk">www.basingstokeitec.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Mark Hammond
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 May 2017
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the apprenticeship manager, 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

Sara Woodward, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Baz Wren	Ofsted Inspector
David Towsey	His Majesty's Inspector

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