

Inspection of Mantra Learning Limited

Inspection dates:

13 to 16 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Education programmes for young people	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Mantra Learning Limited is an independent learning provider based in the north west of England. It was established in 1968. Mantra offers traineeships and adult learning, including skills bootcamps and apprenticeships. At the time of the inspection, there were five young people studying a traineeship in automotive. There were 1,321 adult learners, of whom 597 learners were enrolled on the heavy goods vehicle (HGV) skills bootcamp programme. The remaining learners study on a range of pathways, with the highest enrolments on logistics and security. There were 88 apprentices on standards-based apprenticeships, with three quarters of enrolments in level 2 autocare technician and level 3 heavy goods vehicle and maintenance technician. Mantra subcontracts to eight providers who provide training for adult learners. A further 22 providers provide practical HGV training on HGV skills bootcamp programmes nationally.

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

Learners and apprentices benefit from learning in an inclusive environment, where tutors promote equality and diversity. They talk about how they develop their communication skills to share experiences with their peers. Learners and apprentices enjoy their learning and are motivated to achieve. However, attendance for learners and apprentices is inconsistent across programmes.

Learners and apprentices develop their confidence and characters because of their training. Autocare apprentices develop their confidence to speak to managers and customers. When carrying out fault-finding tasks, they confidently discuss fault diagnosis and repairs with their customers. Learners in English functional skills develop their confidence to speak to their peers in class when completing group activities.

Learners and apprentices receive useful information on how to improve their health and well-being. Learners on traineeships learn about the negative impact of the use of alcohol and drugs. They understand how people may be adversely affected and the impact of this when driving cars and using machinery. Adult learners learn how to recognise and manage the symptoms of stress and anxiety.

Learners and apprentices benefit from gaining additional qualifications and learning beyond the requirements of their courses. Traineeship learners complete driver safety awareness training in preparation for employment. Apprentices and learners on adult courses complete qualifications such as first aid and Irtec (The Institute of Road Transport Engineers) accreditation. Apprentices gain new skills and carry out additional tasks, such as collecting vehicles from customers.

Learners and apprentices are prepared well for their next steps. Adult learners learn how to complete job applications and complete mock interviews. They practise how to demonstrate positive body language to interviewers. Most learners on skills bootcamp courses secure employment. However, a few traineeship learners do not develop the employability skills and behaviours required for employment. As a result, a few traineeship learners do not move into further study or employment swiftly enough.

Learners and apprentices feel safe. They learn how to work safely and apply this learning effectively when carrying out tasks in the workshop or at work. Apprentices learn how to work safely with vehicles and mechanical handling equipment. They adhere to health and safety rules when moving around workshops, such as adhering to walkways. Adult learners learn how to enter and exit the cab in an HGV correctly by using the three-point touch. They explain how this prevents them from falling if the steps are icy.

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

Leaders develop a curriculum that meets the needs of the local and national skills priorities. They offer apprenticeships, traineeships and adult learning for those who wish to enter the logistics and frontier sectors. Leaders are passionate about the communities they serve. They develop adult programmes to support learners in the local community to gain employment, change careers and improve their life chances.

Most tutors and instructors use assessments about what learners and apprentices already know and can do to plan their teaching. However, a few tutors on logistics and well-being programmes do not use this information effectively. As a result, these learners repeat learning on topics that they already know and are not sufficiently challenged to build on their existing knowledge.

Leaders plan the curriculum in a logical order. Learners on logistics complete health and safety awareness before moving on to practical considerations of hazards when driving. HGV skills bootcamp learners complete masterclasses on how to drive safely before moving on to their practical off- and on-road training. Learners complete 's-shaped' reversing into a bay and confidently drive safely on public roads.

Leaders plan an ambitious curriculum for most learners and apprentices. They create a structured curriculum, where learners and apprentices, including those on programmes taught by subcontractors, incrementally build their knowledge, skills and behaviours over time. Learners studying functional skills English explore organisational and structural features of texts before learning about writing styles and bias. Autocare technician apprentices learn how to carry out vehicle inspections. Following this training, apprentices successfully carry out vehicle checks in the workplace.

Tutors and instructors present information clearly, providing useful demonstrations to develop learners' and apprentices' skills. Learners on warehousing watch demonstrations of using a stretch film pallet wrapping machine to safely transport pallets of products. Learners practise this skill until they complete the process accurately. Apprentices learn about battery technology and the effects of different ways to wire a battery.

Tutors and instructors use assessments effectively to check and consolidate learners' and apprentices' learning. Tutors complete observations in workshops to improve trainees' maintenance skills. Learners confidently take tyre logs and change tyres in preparation for their work placements.

Tutors and instructors provide effective feedback to learners and apprentices. Learners and apprentices know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. HGV skills bootcamp learners receive highly personalised feedback to correct and improve their driving skills. Learners on adult courses increasingly improve their written work and use grammar correctly. However, traineeship learners

do not always receive sufficient feedback to help them to improve. In these cases, a few learners continue to repeat errors in their written work.

Leaders do not coordinate on- and off-the-job training effectively for all apprentices. A few employers are not sufficiently aware of what apprentices learn to enable them to swiftly practise their skills in the workplace. Leaders do not ensure that a few employers are routinely involved in apprentices' progress reviews. As a result, a few apprentices do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Apprentices are prepared effectively for their final assessments. They complete mock tasks and receive timely feedback to help them improve. In the few instances where apprentices fail their final assessments, tutors put effective support in place. As a result, the majority of apprentices achieve their final assessments.

Learners and apprentices benefit from effective initial advice and guidance. This ensures that they are on the most appropriate course linked to their future employment plans. However, not all learners and apprentices receive effective ongoing careers advice and guidance during their course to make informed decisions about their next steps.

Leaders have a clear oversight of the subcontracted provision. They meet regularly with most subcontractor staff to discuss learners' progress and achievements. Leaders take swift action when they identify issues with the quality of education and put in place appropriate actions. As a result, learners at subcontractors achieve as well as those at Mantra.

Board members are suitably qualified and experienced to carry out their roles. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. They receive detailed reports, enabling them to provide suitable challenge and hold senior leaders to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders place a high priority on the safeguarding and safety of their apprentices and learners. They instil a culture of health and safety in a high-risk environment. Apprentices and learners know how to remain safe at work and when learning. They know how to report any safeguarding concerns.

The designated safeguarding lead and deputies are appropriately trained and qualified to carry out their roles. They record and monitor safeguarding referrals and welfare concerns carefully. Leaders put additional support in place swiftly and liaise well with external agencies when required.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that employers are routinely involved in the planning of on- and off-the-job training and reviews of their apprentices' progress to support apprentices to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders should identify what learners already know and can do at the start of their programme and use this information to ensure they plan a challenging curriculum.
- Leaders should ensure that they put appropriate actions in place to ensure learners and apprentices with low attendance attend regularly.
- Leaders should improve the careers information, advice and guidance that learners and apprentices receive so that they are aware of further study and career options available to them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53237
Address	Greengate Middleton M24 1RU
Contact number	0161 653 5767
Website	www.mantralearning.co.uk
CEO	Mark Currie
Provider type	Independent Learning Provider
Date of previous inspection	7 to 9 June 2017
Main subcontractors	Ashley Hunter Dynamis Enterprises Focusing First On People Golden Centre of Opportunities Manchester First 1 st 2 Achieve Training Training Strategies Tropical Palms Group Education

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the CEO, 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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