

Short inspection of Asphaleia Limited

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 June 2023

Outcome

Asphaleia Limited continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Asphaleia training is part of the Asphaleia Group, which works to support disadvantaged children and young people. Asphaleia works with young people with complex personal needs and newly arrived unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) at the Worthing centre. Many of these learners have not been in education, employment or training (NEET) for an extended period of time. Asphaleia also works with a small number of refugee students at a refugee resettlement hotel in Crawley. Students enrol on study programmes throughout the year. At the time of the inspection, there were 59 learners, of whom 25 were studying a level 1 employability programme, and 34 are English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learners, studying English and mathematics functional skills. Almost all students are aged 16 to 18. Asphaleia does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Students at Asphaleia have a range of complex needs and vulnerabilities. They benefit greatly from the positive and calm learning environment that tutors have created for them. For example, staff have successfully introduced drama workshops, which helps students to explore and express their feelings in a safe environment. As a result, students' confidence and self-esteem increase. Students feel safe at Asphaleia. They know that any concerns or worries they have will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively by staff, who know their students well.

Students enjoy their learning and rightly appreciate the careful individual support from teachers, which helps them to build relationships, grow in confidence and participate in activities. Students benefit greatly from the very good support they receive from their tutors to improve academically. For example, in the mathematics sessions, tutors support them to understand and analyse questions and texts to help them prepare for their exams. As a result, students are well prepared for their exams, and most achieve well.

Students benefit from very good advice and guidance to help them understand their next steps in education or employment. Staff are highly aspirational for learners to

progress to education or employment. Tutors support students expertly to identify their career pathways and the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to be successful. For example, students have very regular and helpful one-to-one meetings to discuss their interests and aspirations. As a result, students are ambitious about their futures and are well prepared for their next steps.

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

Leaders work closely with appropriate partners to enable UASC and disengaged young people to participate in education. For example, tutors work with local colleges to provide access to taster days for the next steps of students who are NEET. Leaders work closely with the West Sussex County Council Social Care and Leaving Care Service to support UASC in Worthing. Leaders also work closely with the West Sussex County Council refugee resettlement team to support refugees in Crawley. Consequently, students attend well and are keen to learn.

Leaders have selected an appropriate curriculum to engage and successfully prepare students for their career journeys. For example, ESOL students study lower-level English and mathematics qualifications to prepare them for college successfully. Students who were NEET benefit from a curriculum that develops their personal and employability skills to secure their next steps. As such, students make good progress throughout their programmes and are well prepared for their next steps into further training or employment.

Staff have sequenced the curriculum logically so that students develop crucial skills early and build on their knowledge. For example, ESOL students learn about greetings and personal details, which enables them to access community services such as health professionals, before moving on to more complex functional English, such as reading from letters to sentences and increasing their vocabulary. Consequently, students develop the skills to converse with others and engage with their local communities confidently.

Tutors introduce topics clearly and use good-quality resources effectively to support students to build on their current knowledge. Tutors identify errors made sensitively, correct misconceptions carefully and clearly explain the reasons. For example, they explain clearly the use of capital letters for proper nouns to ESOL learners. In mathematics lessons, tutors skilfully relate the topics to real-life situations and the world of work. As a result, students understand better the topics they learn. In employability lessons, tutors clearly explain the skills and qualities employers look for. As a result, learners build the knowledge and skills they need quickly.

Most tutors use highly effective questioning to assess students' understanding before moving on to the next topic. Tutors have developed assessment tasks appropriate to students' levels. Consequently, students are building new knowledge and skills over time. Tutors provide helpful feedback to students and discuss their

strengths and areas for development during termly reviews. Students value the feedback they receive and, as a result, their work improves over time.

Staff benefit from comprehensive training, which improves the quality of their practice and their understanding of how to keep vulnerable learners safe. For example, staff complete training on giving effective feedback to students and on assessment of learning. Consequently, staff confidently and competently support their students to make good progress and achieve. However, not all staff are sufficiently trained to fully support students with education, health and care (EHC) plans and additional needs. As a result, these learners do not make as rapid progress as their peers.

Leaders and managers have taken positive steps to address the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. They assess the quality of the provision effectively. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision well and have appropriate actions in place, which have already had a positive impact on the experience of students. For example, lessons are well planned to meet individual needs, and attendance is monitored effectively. The functional skills mathematics provision has been quickly improved to ensure that students make swift progress in these subjects. However, although students studying English make good progress in developing their language skills, it is too early to see the impact on their overall examination results, which remain low.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers rightly recognise that the young people they work with have complex needs, and they ensure that safeguarding is a high priority. They continue to ensure that good safeguarding arrangements are in place through the use of appropriate policies and procedures. All staff complete appropriate safeguarding training. Managers and staff provide a safe environment for learning, where students know who to talk to if they have any concerns. As a result, students are safe and feel safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) deals with concerns swiftly. The DSL liaises with external agencies successfully, where appropriate. All staff benefit from a monthly safeguarding update to ensure they are aware of local incidents and threats. As a result, they are well informed and share this information appropriately with their students. However, not all students are sufficiently aware of the signs of radicalisation and extremism and how to stay safe online.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers must ensure that all tutors receive specialist training to support students with EHC plans and additional needs so that these students make the progress of which they are capable.

- Leaders and managers should continue to use their planned improvement actions so that students develop their literacy skills and achieve well in their English qualifications.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that students recognise signs of extremism and radicalisation, including online, so they can keep themselves safe.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58385
Address	22 Liverpool Gardens WORTHING West Sussex BN11 1RY
Contact number	01903 522966
Website	www.asphaleia.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Laura Thorpe
Provider type	Independent Learning Provider
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 November 2017
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since Asphaleia Limited was judged to be good in November 2017.

The inspection team was assisted by the director of quality and development, 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

Jo-Ann Henderson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Emma Leavey	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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