

Inspection of IPS International Limited

Inspection dates:

11 to 14 July 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Education programmes for young people

Good

Adult learning programmes

Good

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Information about this provider

IPS International Limited is an independent learning provider based in Kent. It offers apprenticeships, adult learning programmes and traineeships. IPS International last received a full inspection in November 2017 when inspectors judged training to be good.

At the time of the inspection, 15 16- to 18-year-old trainees were studying level 1 occupational studies. Around 15 adult learners were studying level 3 to level 5 courses in adult care and early years education. Around 400 apprentices were studying apprenticeship standards from level 2 to level 5. Most apprentices were studying apprenticeships in maintenance, engineering, health and social care, and business administration and management. Around 200 apprentices were aged under 19.

IPS International works with two subcontractors. NuYu Academy provides 16 to 18 traineeship courses. The Electrical Academy provides a level 3 installation electrician and maintenance electrician apprenticeship for around 30 apprentices.

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

Learners and apprentices enjoy their training. They benefit from welcoming learning environments where trainers support them well. However, too many apprentices and 16- to 18-year-old learners leave before completing their qualifications.

Nearly all apprentices do not benefit from a planned programme of impartial careers information, advice and guidance. Staff do not give apprentices information or guidance about wider career options beyond their current employment. Consequently, leaders do not ensure that apprentices have sufficient advice on their next steps.

Although learners and apprentices learn about the risks of radicalisation and extremism at the beginning of their course, staff do not help them apply their knowledge of radicalisation and extremism to the areas where they live and work.

Learners and apprentices who complete their courses gain valuable new knowledge and skills. For example, level 3 maintenance and operations engineering technician apprentices combine components to make adjustable spanners within expected tolerances. Level 1 occupational studies trainees speak confidently to the public when performing customer service roles. As a result, these learners and apprentices become more employable and contribute well to their organisations as valued members of staff.

Learners and apprentices grow in confidence quickly through the skills and behaviours they develop. For example, level 3 business administrator apprentices learn how to communicate professionally and assertively with their colleagues. Level 4 adult care learners supervise and appraise care staff successfully. Consequently, they are resilient at work and take pride in their achievements.

Learners and apprentices rightly feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. They are confident about how to report any concerns. Level 3 heavy vehicle service and maintenance technician apprentices store hazardous substances safely and use vehicle lifting equipment within its safe working load.

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

Leaders recognise most of the areas they need to improve, but they have not acted quickly enough to resolve them. For example, leaders do not ensure that apprentices who require functional skills maths and English begin to study them early enough in their apprenticeship programme. Leaders and managers do not monitor apprentices' progress in functional skills maths and English effectively. As a result, apprentices make slow progress with their maths and English and too few achieve their functional skills qualifications or their apprenticeships in a timely manner.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that they work effectively with a significant minority of employers to plan apprentices' training. Trainers do not keep these employers informed sufficiently about their apprentices' progress. Consequently, these apprentices are slow to apply their knowledge and skills effectively in the workplace.

Leaders and managers plan the order of topics in most courses skilfully so that apprentices and learners can develop their knowledge and skills effectively. For example, level 3 heavy vehicle service and maintenance technician apprentices learn how to keep themselves and others safe when working with vehicles before they apply these skills to diagnostic and repair techniques. Level 3 early years educator adult learners learn first about the regulations that apply to their role so that they understand what they can and cannot do when they practise carrying out practical tasks. Consequently, most apprentices and learners secure new knowledge and skills quickly and safely.

Trainers introduce new ideas effectively and ensure that learners and apprentices can understand and apply them well. For example, level 3 business administrator apprentices apply the models of primary, secondary and tertiary businesses to their own workplaces. Level 3 adult care learners use the concept of person-centred care to promote choice and independence when planning the care of individuals living with dementia. As a result, most learners and apprentices apply new learning quickly and incorporate it into their long-term memory securely.

Most trainers use assessment well to help learners and apprentices identify what they need to do to improve. For example, trainers observe level 4 lead practitioner in adult care apprentices as they interview applicants for care roles and give them useful feedback on their performance. Level 1 occupational studies trainees benefit from their trainer checking the accuracy of their use of a ruler to draw bar charts. Consequently, most learners and apprentices understand their strengths and areas for development and are able to act on these quickly.

Well-qualified and experienced trainers enable most apprentices to develop vocationally-relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours quickly. For example, level 3 maintenance and operations engineering technicians complete high-quality wiring diagrams for industrial electrical circuits. Level 3 business administrator apprentices design and produce improved versions of media packs for their publishing sales company. Leaders and managers work well with most employers to assess apprentices' existing skills and knowledge at the beginning of their programme and tailor their training appropriately. As a result, most apprentices who complete their courses either take on additional responsibilities at work or gain promoted roles.

Leaders use their adult learning programmes effectively to meet employers' skills needs and to create opportunities for adults to access training and employment. For example, level 3 adult care learners choose between options, such as end of life care, dementia care, residential or domiciliary care, to reflect the skills they need to

demonstrate in their job roles. As a result, employers value the skills adult learners develop.

Leaders and managers have high expectations for 16- to 18-year-old learners on traineeship courses. They design their traineeships to meet the needs of disadvantaged young people who are not currently in education or training effectively. Staff support trainees closely to attend well-planned programmes of learning. For example, trainees benefit from relevant work experience placements and valuable careers advice and guidance. Staff have a thorough understanding of trainees' individual needs. Consequently, most trainees develop valuable personal and social skills quickly. Too many trainees do not complete their traineeship or progress to further education or employment.

Leaders manage the well-being of their staff effectively. For example, leaders give staff access to an employee assistance programme and have appointed mental health champions. Consequently, nearly all staff feel well supported by their leaders and managers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The highly experienced and well-qualified designated safeguarding lead ensures that staff receive thorough and timely safeguarding training.

Leaders identify, manage and refer safeguarding concerns effectively. They work well with local safeguarding partners to do this. Leaders have identified risks from sexual abuse and harassment effectively. They work well with learners to raise awareness of these. As a result, learners and apprentices are confident to report any incidents and leaders deal with these quickly and successfully.

Leaders use effective procedures for safer recruitment to ensure staff are safe to work with children and vulnerable adults.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders must ensure that apprentices studying functional skills maths and English progress swiftly and achieve their qualifications.
- Leaders must ensure that apprentices benefit from a planned programme of impartial careers information, advice and guidance so that they are well prepared for their next steps.
- Leaders should ensure that they work with all employers so that apprentices apply what they have learned at work quickly.
- Leaders should ensure that apprentices and learners are well informed about local risks so that they can protect themselves from extremism and radicalisation.

Provider details

Unique reference number	52533
Address	Northbank House Sir Thomas Longley Road Medway City Estate Rochester ME2 4DU
Contact number	01634 298800
Website	www.ips-international.com
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Ramsay Cowan
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	14 to 17 November 2017
Main subcontractors	NuYu Academy The Electrical Academy

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of health and social care, 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

David Towsey, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sara Woodward	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Breheny	Ofsted Inspector
Marta Gajewska-Kopczyk	Ofsted Inspector
Sam Hanmer	Ofsted Inspector
Errol Ince	Ofsted Inspector

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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023