

Heathercroft Training Services Limited

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

Unique reference number:	52165
Name of lead inspector:	Richard Kirkham, His Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	2 and 3 November 2023
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	142 Whitley Road Eastbourne BN22 8LT

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Heathercroft Training Services was inspected in November 2022. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in resolving the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

Heathercroft Training Services (HTS) is based in Eastbourne. At the time of the inspection, HTS provided apprenticeships and adult learning programmes. There were 229 apprentices, including 15 who were on a break in learning. There were 106 apprentices on four programmes from level 2 to level 5 in health and social care, and 108 apprentices on five programmes at levels 2 and 3 in early years. There were seven apprentices on four digital programmes at levels 3 and 4. There were six apprentices on the business administrator programme at level 3, and two apprentices on the team leader programme at level 3. Eighteen apprentices were under 18 years of age. Five adult learners were on study programmes at level 3 or level 5 in early years or adult care. HTS has no subcontractors.

Themes

What progress have leaders made in ensuring learners and apprentices benefit from support that leads to positive and timely outcomes?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have restructured the organisation since the previous inspection to ensure that appropriate staff are in place to support learners and apprentices. Leaders have employed new coaches, a learner support coordinator and a quality manager. Apprentices and learners recognise the positive impact the new team is having on their progress, such as greater communication and support that are accelerating their learning.

Leaders have implemented positive opportunities for apprentices to develop their ability in English and mathematics. Apprentices benefit from one-to-one English and mathematics teaching and online resources that enable them to develop these essential skills. Apprentices value this support, with an improved proportion now achieving their functional skills qualifications and progressing towards their end-point assessment.

Leaders have implemented effective processes to identify and support apprentices with a health-related or learning difficulty or disability. The learning support coordinator assesses apprentices' and learners' needs and implements regular support and reasonable adjustments to their learning. The coordinator works closely with the coaches to ensure that they are aware of how best to support these

individuals. Apprentices with support needs are progressing in line with, or better than, their peers.

Leaders and managers have implemented positive support for apprentices who are past their expected end date. Apprentices are benefiting from these helpful interventions and have started to make quicker progress. Of those who achieve, a good proportion achieve a high grade.

What progress have leaders made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from a curriculum that extends beyond the technical content of the apprenticeship and provides sufficient careers information, advice and guidance? **Insufficient progress**

Leaders have not yet implemented a curriculum that extends beyond the technical and vocational content of the apprenticeship. Apprentices and learners do not benefit from a personal development curriculum that promotes opportunities for them to develop their wider talents and interests.

Leaders have not implemented a curriculum that ensures that apprentices are aware of how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Leaders have not focused sufficiently on ensuring that young apprentices have access to age-appropriate information about healthy relationships.

Leaders have been too slow to implement a well-planned careers, education, information, advice and guidance curriculum. Leaders do not routinely make apprentices aware of the full breadth of careers open to them on completion of the apprenticeship. Apprentices are not aware of how their skills could be transferable to other sectors and job roles.

Tutors promote equality of opportunity and fundamental British values through the content of the programme. Apprentices develop their understanding and appreciation of equality and diversity and demonstrate this well in the care they provide to others at work. Apprentices develop positive and respectful relationships with colleagues and with service users and their families.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that employers contribute positively to apprentices' programmes? **Reasonable progress**

Employers value their relationship with HTS. Employers recognise the improvement that leaders have made in their communication and support since the restructuring of the team and value the impact this is having on their apprentices. Employers recognise the positive impact that apprentices are having in the workplace.

Leaders and managers have made progress in ensuring that employers are actively involved in their apprentices' learning. Leaders have introduced a mentoring role to

change employers' expectations and improve employers' participation at apprentices' progress reviews. Apprentices who have enrolled more recently have benefited more from these interventions. However, leaders recognise that too many employers are still not fully aware of the progress their apprentices are making or the time and support they need to provide to enable apprentices to make the rapid progress of which they are capable.

Leaders have ensured that employers who are not able to attend apprentices' progress review meetings are still able to contribute to their learning. Employers report that due to the demands of the care sector, they cannot always commit to attending meetings in person. In many cases where this occurs, coaches now use other communication tools effectively, such as the online portal, to seek employers' feedback and inform them of their apprentices' progress. Where this works well, employers use this information effectively to review and support apprentices in the workplace.

Leaders and committee members recognise the need for further employer engagement in curriculum design and implementation. These plans have not yet been fully implemented in order to have a positive impact on apprentices and their progress.

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