

Inspection of Waverley Training Services

Inspection dates:

13 to 15 December 2023

Overall effectiveness**Good**

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

Information about this provider

Waverley Training Services (WTS) is a local authority provider based in Farnham, Surrey. It is part of Waverley Borough Council. WTS provides apprenticeships, education programmes for young people and adult learning programmes. At the time of the inspection, there were 74 apprentices receiving training, including eight on a break in learning. There were five learners on education programmes for young people. There were no adults receiving training.

WTS offers apprenticeships from level 2 to 5. Most apprentices are over 19 years old and study level 3 apprenticeships, such as team leader or supervisor, and business administrator. Learners on education programmes for young people study a level 1 employability qualification and, as relevant, English and mathematics. WTS does not work with subcontractors and does not have any learners in receipt of high needs funding. WTS was last inspected in June 2018 when inspectors judged the quality of the provision to be good.

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

Most apprentices and learners have positive attitudes to learning and work. They rightly value the substantial new skills, knowledge and behaviours they acquire while studying at WTS. They participate in learning activities willingly and with enthusiasm. Most work hard and take pride in their achievements. As a result, most learners and apprentices enjoy learning and produce work that is at least to the standard expected.

Young learners on study programmes have often experienced disadvantage and faced barriers to their learning. They rightly appreciate the welcoming and inclusive learning environment that staff create. They respond positively to tutors' high expectations and the encouragement and praise they provide. Learners who previously lacked confidence contribute readily to classroom discussions, sharing their thoughts and ideas. Learners, including those who have not participated in education for some time, generally attend well. Consequently, learners grow in confidence, resilience and self-belief, which prepares them for the future well.

Younger learners who are ready to participate in work placements enjoy the experience and recognise the skills and knowledge they gain. For instance, they practise helpful administrative skills such as using desktop IT applications to print and laminate signs to direct clients. However, leaders rightly recognise that those learners not yet participating in work placements would benefit from more opportunity to interact with employers and participate in work-related learning to help hone their employability skills.

Apprentices and learners justifiably appreciate the carefully considered support they receive from staff. Apprentices value individual online learning sessions with their tutors. They correctly recognise that these sessions are tailored to their needs closely. Consequently, they develop useful new skills, such as leading teams effectively and responding to customer enquiries confidently. Learners on study programmes benefit from staff who know their support needs well and adapt teaching activities accordingly. As a result, most apprentices and learners receive the support they need to participate fully in the challenging learning activities tutors provide.

Most learners and apprentices receive sufficient careers advice and guidance on their next steps. Learners on study programmes benefit from well-planned careers guidance that is thoughtfully integrated into the curriculum. Consequently, they have a secure understanding of future study and work opportunities open to them. Apprentices often have a clear understanding of the progression routes available to them within their current employer. However, apprentices do not benefit from a planned programme of careers advice and guidance. Consequently, a small number of apprentices are unclear on the career and learning pathways available to them.

Learners and apprentices feel safe. They know who to talk to if they have concerns and are confident that any issues would be acted upon swiftly. They know how to keep safe while working and studying online.

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

Leaders and tutors understand the skills needs in the local area well. They work with employers and stakeholders, such as Waverley Borough Council, to understand economic development priorities and provide programmes that contribute to addressing them successfully. For example, they offer business and leadership apprenticeships to address skills needs in local NHS Trusts. Younger learners develop essential employability skills, including English and mathematics. As a result, most learners and apprentices develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours valued by employers and move on to further learning or work successfully.

Tutors plan programmes thoughtfully to ensure that learners and apprentices have a secure understanding of fundamental knowledge before introducing more complex information. For example, team leader or supervisor apprentices learn how to manage themselves and to communicate effectively before learning to manage resources and lead people. Tutors liaise with employers to align apprentices' learning with their job role and the training they receive at work. Consequently, learners and apprentices are confident in their understanding and can apply the knowledge and skills they acquire in the workplace.

Leaders have recently implemented new processes that identify what learners and apprentices know and can do at the beginning of their programme effectively. Tutors use the information they gather to plan learning programmes intelligently. For example, they tailor apprentices' programmes to focus on developing substantial new skills and knowledge and not repeat previous learning. Tutors on study programmes use the outcome of initial assessments to identify and address learners' support needs successfully. Accordingly, learners and apprentices make substantial progress from their individual starting points.

Tutors use their expertise skilfully to help apprentices and learners understand new concepts quickly. They explain information clearly, encouraging learners and apprentices to discuss topics thoroughly, often leading learners to ask sensible questions that staff answer helpfully. For instance, business administrator tutors explain the function of agendas, minutes and actions in supporting well-run meetings. Study programme tutors challenge learners to identify verbs, adverbs and use correct punctuation to improve the quality of their written English. As a result, learners and apprentices acquire relevant skills and knowledge, including English and mathematics, and pass their final assessments well.

Tutors check learners' and apprentices' understanding carefully, identifying gaps or misunderstandings and taking action that addresses them promptly. For instance, tutors check business administrator apprentices' understanding of the difference between discussion and verbatim meeting minutes and ensure they choose the most appropriate approach in the workplace. Tutors provide learners with praise when they have done well and feedback that helps them improve the standard of their

future work. Tutors on the level 5 operations or departmental manager apprenticeship provide feedback that helps improve the quality of apprentices' academic writing, enabling them to present clear and compelling written information. Consequently, the standard of learners' and apprentices' work improves over time.

Staff provide a range of useful activities that enable learners and apprentices to develop their wider skills and knowledge. They talk to learners and apprentices about topics including fundamental British values and equality and diversity, enabling them to understand their importance and potential application in different settings. For instance, business administrator apprentices understand how to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people in the workplace. Learners on study programmes recognise the importance of respect and valuing other peoples' opinions.

Staff ensure that learners and apprentices understand the importance of positive relationships. They develop younger learners' understanding of sexual consent and apprentices' ability to identify and remedy unacceptable behaviours in the workplace, such as bullying.

Learners and apprentices receive information and guidance on the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism during their induction. Tutors on study programmes revisit these themes regularly in helpful round table discussions, developing and securing learners' understanding well. However, a small number of apprentices, who have often been on their programme for a longer period of time, are less confident in their understanding of the risks from radicalisation and extremism.

Leaders take sensible steps to sustain and further improve the quality of the provision. They rightly recognise challenges in the timely recruitment of staff and have made sensible changes to address this. They have also made helpful changes to ensure learners and apprentices are placed on the correct programme and get the support they need quickly. Consequently, the number of apprentices leaving their programme before successful completion has declined significantly. Leaders have addressed most of the issues identified in the previous inspection and monitoring visit successfully. As a result, leaders ensure that most learners and apprentices continue to receive high-quality training and support.

Leaders ensure that suitable arrangements for oversight are in place. They have recently taken steps to further strengthen the board of governors, to ensure that it continues to possess the skills and expertise to support and challenge leaders effectively. For instance, governors recently challenged leaders to reduce the proportion of apprentices who are taking longer than planned to complete their programme. Consequently, leaders are monitoring the progress of these apprentices closely and ensuring they get the support they need to catch up. Leaders provide governors with sufficient, relevant information to aid their decision making and ensure that WTS meets its statutory obligations. For example, they provide

governors with information on learner qualification achievement rates and regular updates regarding the safeguarding of learners.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Provide all apprentices with sufficient, timely careers advice and guidance to enable them to make well-informed decisions on their next steps in learning or work.
- Continue to reduce the proportion of apprentices who take longer than planned to complete their apprenticeship.
- Ensure all apprentices, especially those who have been on their programme for some time, understand the risks from radicalisation and extremism.
- Enable learners on study programmes to further develop their employability skills by interacting with employers and participating in work-related learning activities.

Provider details

Unique reference number	55287
Address	Waverley Training Services Farnham Memorial Hall, Babbs Mead West Street Farnham GU9 7EE
Contact number	01252 725872
Website	www.waverley.gov.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Adele O'Sullivan
Provider type	Local authority
Date of previous inspection	12 to 15 June 2018
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the teaching and learning 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

Roland White, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jane Hughes	His Majesty's Inspector
Mark Hillman	His Majesty's Inspector

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