

Inspection of Swift ACI Limited

Inspection dates: 23 to 26 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Swift ACI Limited is an independent learning provider based in Birmingham. They teach apprentices in the Midlands and London areas. At the time of the inspection, there were 488 apprentices enrolled on four different apprenticeships from level 2 to level 3. Early years apprenticeships are the focus of teaching for this provider.

The level 3 early years educator apprenticeship is the largest subject, with around 380 apprentices enrolled. The next largest is the level 2 early years practitioner apprenticeship with around 105 apprentices enrolled. The remaining apprentices are enrolled on the level 3 digital marketer apprenticeship and the level 3 improvement technician apprenticeship. The provider now only recruits for the two early years apprenticeships. There are 199 apprentices aged 19 or over.

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

Apprentices' attendance at sessions is high. Apprentices benefit from a calm, purposeful and motivating learning environment created by tutors and assessors. For example, on a level 2 early years practitioner apprenticeship assessors provide time for apprentices to carry out their tasks. They ask suitable questions and give praise appropriately. Because of this, apprentices enjoy their learning.

Apprentices display positive attitudes. They develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours and are motivated to learn. Apprentices feel cared for and supported with their work and any personal issues. As a result, apprentices flourish and develop as individuals.

Apprentices have an effective understanding of healthy relationships. They learn about toxic relationships and what financial, physical, or emotional abuse might look like. They know how to protect themselves when online. They can recognise the signs of abuse or neglect, female genital mutilation, cupping and breast ironing. Consequently, they know how to protect themselves and others.

Apprentices successfully learn about equality and diversity and the protected characteristics. They are respectful and considerate when celebrating children's differences. Apprentices take part in activities to celebrate diversity with their early-year learners. For example, apprentices use a world map to pinpoint the diverse family origins of the children that attend their nursery.

Apprentices feel safe. They are confident that any incidents of bullying will be dealt with decisively. Apprentices are clear about who to report concerns to, both in their learning and nursery settings. They know how to escalate concerns if they believe they have not been appropriately resolved.

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

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum that helps apprentices with their long-term career goals. For example, tutors on the level 3 early years educator apprenticeship teach different theoretical perspectives for writing a longitudinal study. Apprentices choose the theorists most relevant to the study they are writing. As a result, apprentices develop decision-making skills that can support them with their next steps.

Leaders and managers provide an effectively ordered curriculum. For example, the level 3 early years educator apprenticeship initially studies topics such as child development, transitions, and theoretical perspectives. Apprentices then move on to more complex areas of study such as phonics. Because of this, apprentices build their knowledge sequentially. This enables them to retain information in their long-term memory.

Leaders ensure that apprentices are successfully prepared for their apprenticeship. Apprentices on the level 2 early years practitioner undertake a two-week assessment at an assessment centre before starting their apprenticeship. This introduces them to the apprenticeship and job roles as early years practitioners. As a result, apprentices make an informed decision about embarking on the apprenticeship, and most achieve their apprenticeship.

Tutors use apprentices' starting points effectively. At level 2, tutors use information from the level 2 assessment centre to adjust the curriculum to meet the individual needs of the apprentice. They identify any additional learning needs and put in place resources and appropriate assessment strategies. At level 3, tutors use informative group profiles to identify the individual needs of apprentices. When needed they use a range of differing theories such as 'Harlow's monkey' to develop more able apprentices' comprehension of attachment theory. Because of these, apprentices make swift progress.

Tutors use a range of effective teaching strategies to help apprentices learn. For example, in the level 3 early years educator sessions, tutors use open questioning and link learning to the workplace. They set wider reading tasks and send materials to apprentices to read before sessions. Tutors use group discussions to enable apprentices to share their experiences. As a result, apprentices develop substantial new knowledge and skills swiftly. Many apprentices achieve high grades.

Tutors encourage apprentices to use industry-specific language. For example, in the level 2 early years practitioner apprenticeship, apprentices confidently use terminology such as transitions and the early years foundation stage. As a result, apprentices can interact on a professional level with their peers.

Tutors and assessors are experts in the apprenticeships they teach. They use their knowledge effectively in sessions, providing industrial-relevant examples to support learning. Tutors explain how they use Makaton in a nursery setting to support children not yet communicating verbally. Consequently, apprentices quickly relate learning to their job roles.

Tutors do not routinely provide apprentices with helpful feedback. Too many apprentices receive congratulatory feedback without being provided with the knowledge they need to improve. For example, spelling and grammatical mistakes in apprentices' written work are often missed and not corrected. As a result, apprentices do not improve, and continue to make the same mistakes in their work.

Tutors do not assess apprentices' learning effectively. Apprentices complete a self-assessment of current knowledge. Tutors conduct visual checks of apprentices' practical skills. However, in sessions, tutors use computer software to assess learning. This software does not provide tutors with apprentices' individual responses to questions. As a result, tutors are not able to check and ensure that apprentices have no misunderstanding. Nor are they able to use the information to plan further teaching to bridge any gaps in knowledge.

Most apprentices receive useful careers education, information, advice and guidance. They understand the opportunities their apprenticeship will create for them. For example, they know they can move on to study at a higher level. They understand they can specialise in areas such as special educational needs, primary schools, social services, or child psychology. However, in a small minority of instances, level 3 apprentices are not confident in describing the advice and guidance they have received to identify their next steps.

Leaders provide staff with effective continual professional development. This helps staff stay current with their industry and develop their teaching skills. Tutors are required to attend an annual work placement within the early years sector. Tutors are supported to achieve teaching qualifications. This ensures that apprentices benefit from tutors who are skilled practitioners and well informed on current practices within the sector.

Leaders have created an environment where staff feel valued and cared for. They are considerate of staff circumstances and needs. They meet with staff regularly to check on their well-being and work with staff to achieve a healthy work-life balance. As a result, staff feel they work in a supportive culture and environment.

Leaders and managers have put in place effective governance. Governors provide valuable expertise and guidance. This enables them to support leaders with strategic decisions. Leaders provide governors with appropriate information on the provider's performance. This information enables governors to accurately hold leaders to account for their actions. Because of this, governors have a solid understanding of the provider's strengths and weaknesses. When they identify areas of improvement, leaders swiftly implement appropriate actions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Feedback that apprentices receive should be helpful and support apprentices to make the necessary improvements to their work.
- Tutors should assess apprentices' learning to ensure that they have grasped key concepts and that there are no misconceptions or gaps in learning.
- Apprentices should understand the steps they must take to enable them to access their future career goals.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2654193
Address	Unit 8 Caroline Point Caroline Street Birmingham B3 1UF
Contact number	0121 594 0459
Website	https://www.swiftcc.co.uk/
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Greg Morrall
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality and compliance director, 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

Bev Ramsell, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Harkesh Ram	Ofsted Inspector
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Gemma Hart	Ofsted Inspector

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