

# Inspection of Simply One Stop Limited

Inspection dates: 9 to 12 April 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Information about this provider

Simply One Stop, trading as Learn Plus Us is based on Barnet, north London. They have been teaching apprenticeships and courses to adult learners in childcare and early years since 2009. In 2020 the company was acquired by the Angus Knight Group and in February 2023 took over the apprenticeship provision from another training provider. This has resulted in Simply One Stop now offering apprenticeships in subjects related to hospitality, housing, and business, mostly at levels 2 and 3, in addition to apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3 in childcare and at levels 2 to 5 in early years subjects.

At the time of the inspection there were approximately 500 apprentices, mostly in London, the East of England, East Midlands and the North East. Around half are on early years apprenticeships. There were approximately 50 learners on early years workforce and early years practitioner courses funded through adult loans.

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

Apprentices and learners enjoy their studies because of the good support and teaching they receive. Experienced tutors, who have extensive industry experience, provide good work-based insights that help apprentices and learners to develop up-to-date knowledge and understanding that they can immediately apply in their workplace.

Apprentices and learners are motivated to learn and achieve. In lessons, they are engaged and interested in the topics taught. Tutors make sure apprentices and learners develop substantial new knowledge by challenging them to go beyond the minimum requirements of the course. For example, they encourage childcare apprentices to read widely about different child development theories. Apprentices then incorporate these perspectives into activities they plan for children in their settings.

Apprentices make good use of the knowledge they gain to be effective in their jobs. For example, housing and property management apprentices learn about the building regulations that apply to private and social housing, and how to resolve tenants' issues relating to repair and upgrading.

Apprentices have access to a large range of additional online courses to extend their interests. Most apprentices make good use of the resources that are directly related to their training, such as safeguarding and understanding fundamental British values. Adult learners, who are taught online, make good use of the high-quality resources that tutors give them for their independent study.

Apprentices develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They learn in a safe environment. They develop their understanding of topics that include child sexual exploitation, harmful behaviour and domestic violence. This knowledge helps apprentices become confident in reporting any concerns to their tutor or the safeguarding team. They feel that staff will take their concerns seriously and act quickly and appropriately.

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

Leaders and managers have created a programme of courses that meets the needs of adult learners and apprentices very well. They work effectively with local partners and employers to design courses that support the needs of the community where learners and apprentices live. This has led, for example, to the introduction of courses for companies that own and manage social housing, providing opportunities for local individuals to gain employment in these sectors. In hospitality courses, leaders increasingly focus on training for work in community cafes rather than in large restaurant chains, as this is more in demand in the local area.

Leaders and managers have developed curriculums for each subject which are ambitious and structured well with a clear purpose. They have worked with

employers to adapt the taught content to meet their needs. This has resulted, for example, in a customer service module being added to the social housing apprenticeship. In childcare and early years courses, employers have asked that safeguarding topics run through the curriculum, rather than being taught in a standalone module. Employers are suitably involved in apprentices' reviews so that they know the progress apprentices make.

Leaders and managers provide learners and apprentices with the opportunity to gain additional qualifications that are purposeful for their jobs. These include first aid for those working in childcare and nursery settings, and food allergen training for those in the hospitality sector. Housing and property management apprentices gain qualifications in manual handling and the safe use of chemical cleaning substances. Achieving these extra qualifications motivates apprentices to aim high, gives them additional skills and improves their employment prospects.

Tutors have high expectations of learners and apprentices. They plan and teach their subjects consistently well. They set an appropriate level of challenge and adapt their teaching strategies according to the needs of different learners. In lessons and during reviews, they skilfully link the taught content with apprentices' jobs. They integrate topics related to fundamental British values very well into their teaching and make sure learners and apprentices know how these apply in their jobs. As a result, for example, adult learners speak confidently about individual liberty, tolerance, the rule of law and democracy. They know how they apply in a nursery setting when they create rules for children, and when considering the rights of parents of children with additional needs.

Tutors skilfully plan and teach lessons so that students have a good understanding of the topics taught. For example, housing and property management tutors explain clearly to apprentices how changes in a social housing company impact on the experience that tenants receive. Learners and apprentices studying qualifications in early years, learn how to relate the observations they make on children in their setting to the stages of child development that they learn about in their training.

Tutors use assessments well to check learners' and apprentices' knowledge. They provide helpful feedback so that students know how to make improvements. This includes guidance on how learners and apprentices can become more evaluative in their work, and on how to use references correctly in written assignments.

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to increase the proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualifications in English and mathematics, which has been too low and held apprentices back from achieving their apprenticeship on time. They have invested in good resources and recruited expert functional skills tutors. They provide extensive training to tutors to help them develop apprentices' English and mathematics skills within their subject. This has started to have an impact on raising achievement rates in English and mathematics qualifications.

In the previous year, too few adult learners achieved their early years courses. Too many learners did not stay to the end of the course. Leaders and staff have put in

place effective strategies to bring about improvements. They have worked with employers to make sure the courses are more relevant to their needs. They track the progress of learners closely and provide effective support for those who struggle. As a result, current learners make good progress.

Leaders care about and value their staff. They are aware of the pressures on staff, particularly when working with apprentices who work shifts. They have put in place a range of very effective measures, including flexible working, to support staff with their wellbeing. These are appreciated by staff who are positive about their jobs and enjoy working at the provider.

Staff support learners and apprentices well, including those who need extra help to achieve. Learners and apprentices have frequent opportunities to discuss with their tutors any concerns that may impact on their ability to achieve their qualification. This includes providing additional learning support, referring individuals for external specialist support, or providing helpful strategies to use in the workplace for those who may experience anxiety.

Leaders have implemented a good personal development curriculum. They encourage learners and apprentices to participate in social action projects related to their jobs and studies. Apprentices complete a series of mandatory modules that help them gain a good understanding of topics that are pertinent to their work and personal lives. For example, early years apprentices have a good knowledge of social issues that can affect young children and their families, such as female genital mutilation and a variety of domestic issues parents and children may face. However, not enough apprentices on housing-related courses participate in these modules.

Learners and apprentices receive effective careers advice and guidance. Subject tutors supplement this by providing additional guidance to learners and apprentices based on their own industry knowledge and experience. This helps apprentices and learners to gain knowledge about the variety of options available to them.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

### **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Increase the proportion of apprentices who pass their English and mathematics qualifications.
- Increase further the proportion of adults who achieve their vocational qualifications.
- Increase the participation of apprentices in the personal development course.

## Provider details

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<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Debbie Gardiner
<b>Provider type</b>	Independent learning provider
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 to 7 October 2021
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	n/a

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the operations and quality 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

Steve Lambert, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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