

Inspection of Academies Enterprise Trust

Inspection dates: 22 to 24 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Academies Enterprise Trust is a training provider within a multi-academy trust based in Camden, London. The trust sponsors 57 primary, secondary and/or special schools located across England.

At the time of the inspection, there were 82 apprentices, including 64 adult and 18 16- to 18-year-old apprentices, employed mostly in trust-sponsored schools. Almost half were on level 3 teaching assistant apprenticeships, with the remainder on early years workforce apprenticeships at levels 2, 3 and 5 or on level 5 operations or departmental manager, level 3 information technology solutions technician or business administration apprenticeships.

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

Trainers create calm, respectful and very welcoming learning environments, including online. Apprentices quickly adopt positive behaviours in their workplace and lessons. Apprentices in early years and teaching assistant courses are respectful of the children and their parents when they speak with them. Apprentices feel valued and respected as colleagues at work.

Staff foster a positive attitude in apprentices towards their training. They provide effective support to those apprentices who are anxious about returning to study. Apprentices are proud of their work and value the training and support they receive.

Apprentices quickly become competent in doing tasks at work, such as information technology technician apprentices completing maintenance on the school's main servers. Business administration apprentices become adept at creating spreadsheets to monitor communication between parents and nurseries. Consequently, they often take on extra responsibility, such as early years apprentices temporarily taking the role of room leader.

From the outset of the apprenticeship, staff encourage apprentices to think about their careers and how the training will help them achieve their aspirations. Staff do this thoroughly through discussions at induction and during progress reviews. As a result, apprentices have a good understanding of how their apprenticeship can help them achieve their career goals.

Staff ensure that apprentices feel safe. All apprentices complete safeguarding training both in schools and with the provider. They understand well their responsibility relating to safeguarding children and their responsibilities to report any safeguarding concerns.

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

Leaders have a clear reason for the apprenticeship training they offer. They aim to professionalise school support roles within the trust so that employees have sustainable careers in education. Leaders and staff have high expectations for apprentices to learn quickly the skills they need to be effective members of the schools where they work. Trainers work closely with the apprentice's line managers to decide the order in which they teach topics to suit the context of the different schools in which apprentices work.

Trainers use their skills effectively to teach apprentices new knowledge. They frequently break tasks into manageable chunks and provide clear explanations of topics. Trainers observe early years apprentices in the workplace and provide helpful feedback on their use of phonics with children. Apprentices enjoy their training sessions which they find interesting. They are quickly able to apply what they have learned in the workplace.

Trainers use a range of different assessments effectively to check apprentices' understanding of topics. For example, trainers on the teaching assistant course use quizzes effectively to check apprentices understand the theories they have learned. Trainers set apprentices' frequent mock examinations as homework and provide helpful feedback in one-to-one sessions. Apprentices learn from their mistakes and how not to repeat them. However, trainers do not give apprentices consistently good guidance on how to achieve merit and distinction grades.

Leaders recruit knowledgeable trainers who are skilled practitioners and have a broad range of teaching experience. Leaders ensure that trainers maintain their subject knowledge by completing industry days where they keep up to date with current trends in their respective sectors. Staff also attend training on topics including autism and dyslexia and use the knowledge they have gained when teaching apprentices how to support children who need extra help. Staff share with each other what they learn from attending events such as the World Skills Team GB competition. They also share knowledge of their practice, such as the use of sign language with deaf children. Consequently, apprentices are taught by knowledgeable staff with a good understanding of current practice.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement of the apprenticeships. Senior leaders have recently introduced an apprenticeship performance board as the principal governance board. Members of the board are effective at holding staff to account for the quality of the apprenticeships. Leaders and managers have taken positive action to increase the proportion of apprentices who complete their course. This includes apprentices with additional learning needs, who make good progress. Nearly all apprentices who pass their apprenticeship remain in employment with their school.

Trainers teach apprentices about the importance of fundamental British values. Trainers skilfully link topics on British values to situations that may arise in school. For example, they explore with apprentices how a lack of respect and tolerance can trigger poor mental health in an individual. When discussing democracy, trainers link this effectively to the role of the school council or allowing a child to select their own reading book. This helps apprentices to develop a nuanced understanding of British values.

Leaders have taken effective action to increase the proportion of apprentices who pass functional skills in English at their first attempt. Trainers identify early on what apprentices know at the start of the course and plan their training based on their individual needs. In mathematics, first-time pass rates are improving but remain too low. In a small number of cases, this has caused delays in apprentices completing their qualifications.

Most apprentices have frequent, well-planned and useful reviews with their trainers and employers. Most employers play an important part in reviews and identify the progress apprentices make in the workplace and the skills developed. Apprentices reflect on their progress and receive feedback on their performance in the workplace. However, in a few cases, teaching assistant employers do not take part in

the review. Consequently, they are not clear on the progress their apprentices make.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Give guidance to apprentices on how they can achieve merit and distinction grades.
- Increase the proportion of apprentices who achieve their functional skills mathematics qualification.
- Involve all employers of teaching assistant apprentices in reviews so that they know what progress their apprentices make.

Provider details

Unique reference number	59131
Address	Ground Floor 163 Eversholt Street London NW1 1BU
Contact number	020 3947 5700
Website	www.academiesenterprisetrust.org
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Rebecca Bommer-Clark
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	7 to 9 November 2017
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the assistant director of apprenticeships, 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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Patricia Rogers	Ofsted Inspector

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