

Cavity Dental Training Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2804861
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Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Ofsted undertakes to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Cavity Dental Training Limited (CDT) is an independent learning provider based in Wokingham, Berkshire. They started teaching apprenticeships in 2023, building on the work of their locum dental staffing agency. They teach apprenticeships in the dental, business and management sectors to apprentices who live and work across England.

At the time of the visit, there were 88 apprentices in training. Of these, 43 were studying level 3 dental nurse apprenticeships and 22 were studying level 7 senior leader apprenticeships. There were smaller numbers enrolled on other apprenticeships, including business administrator, team leader, learning and development practitioner, human resources support officer, dental practice manager and operations department manager. Eleven apprentices were aged 16 to 18 years old. The remainder were aged 19 years of age or older. The provider does not work with any subcontractors.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

Leaders have a clear rationale for the apprenticeships they provide. They offer dental nursing apprenticeships which enable dental practices in their network to fill challenging recruitment gaps. They provide business apprenticeships which meet the skills gaps of managers in the practices. As a result, managers lead their multidisciplinary teams effectively.

Leaders work closely with employers to make sure that applicants are enrolled on apprenticeships that align well with their job roles. Employers provide apprentices with sufficient time to attend training and complete their studies. Most employers participate fully in frequent helpful progress reviews. As a result, they understand well the progress apprentices are making and know how to support them in the

workplace. In the few cases where employers have not supported apprentices well, leaders act quickly and effectively to improve the situation.

Leaders have designed curriculums that carefully integrate the ongoing development of English and mathematical skills. For example, dental nurse apprentices learn to communicate using a patient-centred approach. They learn to make accurate patient records in line with legal and regulatory requirements. Operations manager apprentices learn to monitor budgets and consider the financial implications of decisions they make. Apprentices who need to achieve functional skills qualifications complete them successfully before the end of their apprenticeship.

Leaders have introduced a clear system of governance and oversight. Many of these structures are still in their infancy and are not yet fully embedded. Staff produce helpful reports for the operations group which enable leaders to build an appropriate understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Leaders use this information to inform their quality improvement strategies well. They have recently introduced a governing body to provide a greater level of external challenge.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? Reasonable progress

Staff identify what apprentices know and can do at the start of their apprenticeship carefully. They use this information to tailor individual learning plans. Apprentices with relevant experience have their training adapted so they do not repeat learning unnecessarily. For example, business administration apprentices who have completed training on self-management move into learning about change management and organisational policies. Apprentices who need to gain functional skills qualifications focus on skills gaps, so they make swift progress.

Leaders have structured their curriculum well. Apprentices develop new skills and knowledge based on what they know and can do. They apply their new learning confidently in the workplace because of the support and mentoring they receive on the job. For example, dental nurse apprentices use strict hygiene practices at work to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Senior leader apprentices use their new skills to prepare tenders and win contracts.

Teaching staff are well qualified. They support apprentices effectively. They use their sector experience skilfully in carefully structured online 'knowledge sessions' that bring learning to life. Dental nursing tutors show videos on steam penetration. They use targeted questioning to check apprentices' understanding and promote recall of key points. Staff provide timely helpful feedback on apprentices' work. As a result, apprentices understand the progress they are making and know how to improve.

Too many apprentices who joined as part of a managed move from another provider are past their planned end date. Staff have worked closely and successfully with these apprentices to put in place action plans to help them to re-engage and get back on track. As a result, most are now making good progress.

Apprentices, and their employers, understand well what they need to do for their final assessments. The few who have reached the end of their apprenticeship have completed successfully. However, too many apprentices do not understand the career options open to them after their apprenticeship. Consequently, they are not well prepared for their next steps.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress

Leaders have created an effective culture of safeguarding. They make sure that staff they recruit are safe to work with learners. They train them to ensure they remain safe. They record safeguarding concerns carefully and provide swift, effective support for apprentices in need. Leaders rightly recognise they need to further develop their 'Prevent' duty risk assessment to reflect national and local risks that may impact apprentices.

Apprentices feel safe and know how to raise concerns. They benefit from training on topics including online safety, bullying, harassment and preventing cross-infection so they know how to keep safe in the workplace.

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