

Inspection of SB Skills Solutions Ltd

Inspection dates: 15 to 18 October 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Information about this provider

SB Skills Solutions Ltd is an independent learning provider based in Skelmersdale, Lancashire. It provides Skills Bootcamps in construction to adults. At the time of inspection, there were 131 learners. Forty-seven learners were on telescopic handler (telehandler), 29 learners were on forward tipping dumper/ride on roller (dumper/roller), 21 learners were on 360 excavator (excavator), 14 learners were on streetworks, 10 learners were on construction site management. The remaining learners were on housing development, lifting operations and bespoke employer courses.

The provider does not subcontract any of its provision.

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

Learners receive high-quality training that enables them to achieve their career ambitions. Their attendance and punctuality to training are high. Learners are respectful and behave professionally. Most learners who enrol remain on and complete their courses.

Learners benefit from, and greatly value, sensitively provided support that makes them feel welcomed and respected by staff. Instructors thoughtfully support learners who struggle with anxiety to help them to remain calm and engaged. Leaders provide learners who are in need with transport to their training, a clothes bank, fruit and food during training days, and food parcels to take home. This removes a barrier to learning for individuals who would otherwise be unable to attend their course.

Learners develop their confidence and self-esteem. They safely and confidently use small and large plant machinery, such as dumper trucks and excavators. Instructors make sure that learners have the time they need to practise until they feel prepared for their final tests. Most learners pass their tests at their first attempt. They are proud of their achievements.

Many learners are involved in, and contribute to, community projects and charities, such as clothing banks and charity runs.

Learners feel safe and know who to go to if they need to report any concerns they have about themselves or others.

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

Leaders' construction Skills Bootcamp courses enable local people to develop the relevant skills that they need to have a successful career in construction. After completing their course, most learners who are unemployed move into sustained employment. Those learners who are already employed gain additional responsibilities. Almost all learners who are self-employed increase their business revenue through additional contracts. A small minority of learners move on to further learning.

Leaders work closely with employers to agree the content of their curriculums so that learners become multi-skilled construction workers. They provide a range of additional qualifications, such as emergency first aid at work, manual handling, abrasive wheels, cable avoidance tools, and signal generator. Gaining these qualifications provides learners with the vital skills and knowledge that meets employers' specific skills needs.

Leaders ensure that tutors have the appropriate industry expertise and teaching qualifications to teach learners. They regularly update and refresh their occupational knowledge and competence. Instructors receive Health and Safety Executive

updates on metalworking fluids to help them effectively monitor pH and bacteria levels in plant machinery. They work in industry as ground operatives on construction sites, driving telescopic handlers and forklift trucks. However, leaders have not provided the training for instructors that would further improve their teaching skills.

Instructors teach learners in a way that helps them to build their knowledge and skills. Learners safely and effectively carry out safety checks before using any plant machinery. Learners on the excavator course skilfully dig out trenches in a straight line and level out the bottom of their trench. Learners on the telehandler course confidently and safely lift, move and place heavy loads at different heights. Employers value the skills that learners bring to the workplace.

Instructors ensure that they meet learners' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) so that learners are not disadvantaged. Learners benefit from recorded audio theory test questions, someone to read out the questions, or to help them to write out their answers in tests. Consequently, most learners with SEND achieve in line with their peers.

Instructors use assessment effectively in order to identify gaps in learning and inform teaching. They routinely ask probing questions, facilitate useful group discussions and give helpful practical demonstrations. This enables learners to retain knowledge in their long-term memories. Learners on telehandler courses articulately explain when to use stabilising legs and how to safely carry a load to improve stability and reduce the risk of hitting obstacles on site.

Learners receive useful verbal feedback that helps them develop and hone their skills during practical activities. For instance, instructors inform learners on the dumper/roller course to focus on both front and back rollers when reversing. This enables learners to quickly correct and improve their technique to keep the rollers in line with the kerb. However, instructors do not provide the same developmental feedback to learners in their training logs and progress reports. This means that learners do not know what they specifically need to do to further improve their written work.

Learners are motivated to achieve their qualifications because they know that this widens their career options. Most learners know the career opportunities and options available to them in the construction sector, for example plant operator, site supervisor, or project manager.

Leaders have appropriate quality assurance and improvement processes in place. They routinely complete observations of teaching, and check learners' marked work. Leaders meet very regularly with instructors to discuss learners' progress. Most learners are on target to complete their courses on time. For the few learners who have fallen behind in their learning, leaders have appropriate plans in place to help them to quickly catch up and complete their course.

Governors receive a range of appropriate information from managers. This helps them to understand the strengths and areas they need to improve. Governors closely monitor the areas that need improving. They hold leaders to account to make the necessary changes to improve the quality of learners' training. For example, governors challenged leaders to reduce the number of learners who leave their courses early. Leaders' swift action has already slightly reduced this number.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Provide instructors with appropriate training that helps them to further improve their teaching skills.
- Provide instructors with relevant training to enable them to improve the developmental feedback they give to learners in their training logs and progress reports so that learners know what they specifically need to do to further improve their written work.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2654222
Address	Unit 4C Selby Place Skelmersdale WN8 8EF
Contact number	01695 558 420
Website	www.sbskillssolutions.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Neil Beaumont
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Dates of previous inspection	27 to 29 June 2023
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the human resources and funding 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

Kim Bleasdale, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alison Cameron Brandwood	His Majesty's Inspector
Nikki Brady	His Majesty's Inspector

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