

Short inspection of GK Training Services Limited

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 January 2025

Outcome

GK Training Services Limited continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

GK Training Services Limited (GKTS) provides education and training to young people, including learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and learners with high needs. Teaching takes place at the provider's premises in Leigh, Greater Manchester. Most learners have a range of significant challenges, which impact their learning. Many have had poor educational experiences in the past.

GKTS offer a 25-week level 1 study programme to around 100 learners a year with starts in September, October, February and April. During the inspection, 38 learners were on this course. Thirteen learners with high needs and six learners with SEND were following a 46-week programme. Both courses focus on developing learners' employability, English, mathematics, digital, and independent living knowledge and skills.

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

Learners enjoy their studies and are proud of what they achieve. They describe the environment as homely and appreciate the support they receive from staff who care about them. Almost all learners who remain on their course achieve their qualifications. Most progress to positive destinations, including further education and training, apprenticeships and employment.

Learners develop their academic and wider life skills at GKTS. Tutors plan lessons effectively. They make sure that tasks link together smoothly and consolidate learning. Tutors plan activities that relate directly to what learners need to do to achieve their qualifications, such as the development of their creative writing skills or how to present themselves at work. Learners become much more confident to speak to others, work as part of a team and help their peers. They improve their independence, and develop the self-esteem needed to contribute to group activities.

Learners feel very safe at GKTS. They are confident that any concerns they may have would be taken seriously and acted upon.

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

Leaders offer a very inclusive employability curriculum with bespoke English, mathematics and digital skills training for young people, many with significant barriers to learning. They flex the content to make sure that learners can take any combination of subject units to best suit their needs. Leaders work closely with local authorities and the careers service to identify emerging needs for their learners, such as digital skills including social media.

Tutors and support staff know learners well. They support learners effectively to help them to succeed. Tutors help learners to overcome their barriers to learning by teaching them useful strategies that they can apply to all aspects of their lives. They encourage learners to work out answers themselves. For example, tutors use a phonics approach to help learners to decipher correct spellings. However, tutors do not routinely plan teaching to cater for the individual needs of a few learners with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Tutors create calm and purposeful learning environments. Learners agree appropriate classroom behaviours together at the start of the course. They remain focused and on task during lessons. Learners demonstrate positive behaviours and attitudes to their studies and most attend well. However, a significant minority of learners with social, emotional and behavioural challenges do not attend often enough.

Learners develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours through the work that they complete. They become competent in calculating percentages, long multiplication and fractions. Learners' creative writing is of a high standard. They create well-written and well-structured pieces of work using highly descriptive prose.

Tutors provide clear explanations and use examples that learners can relate to. When exploring environment and climate change, tutors help learners develop their understanding of the term 'fast fashion' by linking concepts to well-known brands that they are familiar with. Learners receive frequent one-to-one sessions to go through their learning, check on their progress and to support them if they struggle with specific concepts.

Tutors provide learners with constructive and developmental feedback that they use to improve their work. They are not afraid to tell learners to put more effort into their work, where this is needed. Learners respond well, take pride in their work and make sure that it is well presented.

Tutors and staff provide effective careers information, advice and guidance for learners. Learners benefit from careers advice and information from external organisations about opportunities in the police, armed forces, sports coaching

companies and care providers. They practise completing application forms to help them to develop their confidence and skills to apply for jobs after their course. Learners are well prepared for their next steps in education, training, apprenticeships or employment.

Tutors plan career discussions and hold mock interviews with learners. They help learners to write and update their CVs and arrange work placements. Tutors support learners to research potential careers in a range of areas, including engineering, doggy day care, and swimming instruction. Learners explore salaries, responsibilities, and the pathways they can take towards pursuing specific careers. Most learners benefit from useful work experience in retail, customer service, hospitality or IT.

Leaders have an accurate oversight of the quality of education that students receive, and the progress that they make. They know the strengths and weaknesses of their provision. Leaders and managers use observations of teaching and learning and other quality checks to identify and take actions to continuously improve the education and training that learners receive.

Leaders have strengthened governance arrangements since the previous inspection. They have recruited governors with expertise in teaching, learning and employability to ensure a stronger focus on the quality of education and training that learners receive. Governors have extensive expertise in educational and employment settings that they use to provide leaders with the support and challenge that they need to promote a culture of continuous improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Use assessments of what learners already know and can do to plan teaching to cater for the individual needs of learners with EHC plans.
- Encourage learners with barriers to learning to improve their attendance and to catch up swiftly when unavoidably absent.

Provider details

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| Unique reference number | 58551 |
| Address | 89-91 Railway Road Leigh WN7 4AD |
| Contact number | 01942 208007 |
| Website | www.gktrainingservices.com |
| Principal, CEO or equivalent | Hayley Johnson-Tonks |
| Provider type | Independent learning provider |
| Date of previous inspection | 26 and 27 February 2020 |
| Main subcontractors | None |

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the second short inspection carried out since GK Training Services Limited was judged to be good in November 2015.

The inspection team was assisted by the managing 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

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Alastair Mollon, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Suzanne Wainwright | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Zoe Ibbotson | His Majesty's Inspector |

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