

TheLightbulb Ltd

Report following a monitoring visit to a 'requires improvement' provider

Unique reference number:	10345562
Name of lead inspector:	Georgina Ager, His Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	8 and 9 January 2025
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Edison House 2-3 Paycocke Road Basildon Essex SS14 3DP

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

TheLightbulb Ltd (TLB) was inspected in February 2024. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

The focus of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in resolving the main areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

TLB is an independent learning provider. In 2022, TLB became part of the Get Set UK Group. Leaders provide adult learning courses for the Greater London Authority. They also provide Skills Bootcamps in digital subjects for the Department for Education and Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils.

TLB provide a range of adult learning courses, including hospitality and catering, essential digital skills, teaching assistants, health and social care, employability skills and English for speakers of other languages. At the time of the visit, there were 411 adult learners. A further 113 learners were studying Skills Bootcamps in web development, cybersecurity and digital marketing.

There were 131 apprentices, most of whom were studying business-related apprenticeships, with a few on digital-related apprenticeships. Since the previous inspection leaders no longer offer apprenticeships in adult care. Leaders have recently started to offer level 5 operations manager apprenticeships working predominantly with local councils.

Themes

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that teachers of adult courses and Skills Bootcamps plan courses effectively by taking account of what learners know and can do? Reasonable progress

Leaders have improved the quality of information they collect before learners start their courses. Staff on the cybersecurity Skills Bootcamp have designed a thorough skills scan. They use this skills scan effectively to check learners' prior digital skills and their knowledge of cybersecurity. Teachers plan courses effectively to ensure that learners develop new knowledge. Learners on the cybersecurity Skills Bootcamp gain an understanding of cybersecurity risks such as phishing and voice scamming.

Teachers frequently check that learners have understood new concepts during their lessons. Teachers on cybersecurity Skills Bootcamps use cybersecurity awareness

escape rooms to check what learners can remember and recall. They check learners' understanding of password cracking and multiuser authentication. Teachers on entry level 3 essential digital skills courses use recap activities effectively. They check what learners have understood and can recall from previous lessons. Teachers use whole-class demonstrations effectively to show learners how to set up new folders and change the names of these. Teachers then set tasks that enable learners to practise these skills. In the few instances where learners are struggling to understand concepts, teachers adapt their teaching to provide additional support and explanation. Learners quickly become able to complete tasks that they were not able to previously do.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices receive effective advice and guidance before they begin their courses so they understand the demands of apprenticeship study? Reasonable progress

Apprentices are now recruited through a more rigorous and structured sign up and induction process. Staff provide apprentices and employers with accurate realistic advice and guidance. Staff make sure that apprentices know about the challenges of studying alongside their professional roles. Apprentices are better able to make an informed decision about taking on an apprenticeship.

Apprentices and workplace line managers understand their roles. They know what the requirements of the apprenticeship are. Apprentice's line managers know what they need to do to support them effectively. Apprentices who have started their programme more recently have valued this enhanced support and guidance. These apprentices are making effective progress with their studies.

Apprentices understand better the demands of their course. Employers provide apprentices with time at work to complete their studies. Apprentices appreciate the support they receive from their learning development mentors and their workplace line managers. Staff plan one-on-ones and reviews thoroughly and help apprentices to learn.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that learners and apprentices are provided with effective, ongoing careers advice and guidance? Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have strengthened the quality of careers advice and guidance that apprentices and learners receive.

Staff meet with them at the start of the course to discuss their short- and long-term career and personal goals. Learners and apprentices receive helpful information on possible career routes. They receive support with updating their CV's.

Apprentices know the transferable skills they are developing can lead to a wide range of career pathways. However, a few apprentices in the early stages of their apprenticeship have not yet had the support they need to consider their future aspirations and career.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that teachers prepare learners on Skills Bootcamps thoroughly for interviews and help them find relevant employment on completion of their studies? Reasonable progress

Skills Bootcamp learners now receive valued continual support from specialist IT recruiters. These staff support learners in developing their employment skills and helping them seek employment. This support continues well after learners have finished their Skills Bootcamps.

Leaders and managers have ensured that learners receive the appropriate support they need to prepare for interviews. IT recruiters offer learners specialist recruitment support and help them with making job applications. IT recruiters help learners set up social media networking accounts and teach them how to network effectively using social media with employers. Learners undertake practice interviews and receive effective feedback. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of these measures.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025