

Inspection of Cliffe House Day Nurseries Limited

Inspection dates: 30 June to 2 July 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Apprenticeships	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Cliffe House Day Nurseries Limited is a small independent learning provider that runs Cliffe House Training Academy in Horsforth, Leeds. Leaders began to offer apprenticeships in early years in January 2023. At the time of the inspection, there were 14 apprentices on the level 2 early years practitioner apprenticeship and 15 on the level 3 early years educator apprenticeship. Fifteen of the apprentices were under 19 years of age.

Leaders provide apprenticeships to the staff of Cliffe House Day Nurseries across seven early years settings in West Yorkshire, as well as five other nurseries in the local area.

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

Apprentices have highly positive and mature attitudes to their learning. They thrive in a culture of high standards and expectations set by staff. They are highly committed to developing their knowledge and understanding of early years, recognising the considerable responsibilities that they have for children.

Apprentices develop their professionalism quickly and become valued members of staff in their settings. They grow significantly in confidence as their early years knowledge and skills build. Tutors develop apprentices' skills in communicating with the parents of children very effectively.

Apprentices are taught a rich personal development curriculum. They attend innovative 'skills builder days' on topics such as healthy eating. This is useful for their own health and for understanding children's dietary needs.

Tutors successfully develop apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity in the workplace. For example, they skilfully teach apprentices about religious festivals and other celebrations that are important to children and their families. This enables apprentices to gain a good understanding of how to consider the diverse backgrounds of the children they support.

Apprentices have a clear understanding of safeguarding. They know how to keep themselves safe and recognise their safeguarding responsibilities. They develop their knowledge about local risks and can identify dangers related to radicalisation and extremism.

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

Staff use their wealth of experience in early years to design high-quality, ambitious curriculums that meet skills needs in the sector. Employers value the expertise of staff and the high-quality training that apprentices receive. Tutors work closely with employers to ensure that work-based training and classroom-based training are exceptionally well coordinated.

Leaders and managers carefully plan the curriculums to enable apprentices to master the fundamental underpinning knowledge that they need. Tutors ensure that apprentices quickly develop the working knowledge and skills required to understand and apply the early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework. They skilfully introduce level 2 apprentices, many of whom are new to the sector, to the roles and responsibilities of the job. Apprentices swiftly develop as professional practitioners and make exceptional progress from their starting points.

Tutors use their extensive experience to teach very stimulating lessons. For example, they enhance apprentices' understanding by combining verbal and visual information. They use photographs of activities that apprentices can use with children while explaining the theoretical concepts. Tutors also use a 'show me, tell

me' approach very effectively. Apprentices show tutors in their settings what they have been doing, including contributing to children's target boards.

Tutors assess apprentices' progress very thoroughly and accurately. Level 3 assessments include a project where apprentices demonstrate how they apply their child development knowledge to support children successfully. Apprentices reflect on their practice and amend activities and resources to reflect children's needs so that children are supported to meet their key milestones.

Tutors help apprentices develop their English and mathematical skills very effectively. They teach level 2 apprentices command words such as identify, explain and describe, which help apprentices understand the requirements of assignments. Tutors support apprentices well to fill gaps in their mathematical skills through a range of activities such as learning how to budget. The few apprentices who need to gain functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics achieve these quickly.

Apprentices produce work of a high standard. Their work develops in complexity over time and demonstrates that apprentices can link their understanding of the EYFS framework to effective strategies. Tutors provide helpful developmental feedback that enables apprentices to identify the weaker aspects of their work and improve it rapidly.

Tutors encourage apprentices to contribute substantially to wider activities in their workplace and their communities. Apprentices demonstrate their maturity by eagerly taking on roles as staff representatives in their settings. They organise activities enthusiastically in the local community such as visiting care homes with children and organising well-being walks for staff.

Tutors provide apprentices with helpful and informative careers advice. They encourage apprentices to be ambitious. Tutors support apprentices to consider broader careers such as becoming a special educational needs coordinator. Managers provide good support for apprentices interested in degree-level training.

All apprentices who have completed their apprenticeships so far have passed, with many achieving grades at distinction level. A substantial proportion take on more responsibility at work, including becoming room leaders. Managers celebrate the achievements with 'apprentice of the month' awards voted for by colleagues and children's parents, which are then proudly shared on social media.

Leaders have in place very effective arrangements for overseeing the quality of their growing apprenticeship provision. Leaders and managers make good use of a range of strategies to improve the quality of education they provide. For example, managers frequently meet with tutors in standardisation meetings to share good practice and discuss any concerns.

Leaders ensure that staff workloads are manageable. Tutors get many opportunities to develop their practice in settings and to enhance their teaching skills, such as

giving effective feedback to apprentices and using approaches such as the 'observe, wait and listen' technique.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2741629
Address	Cliffe House Day Nursery Back Featherbank Terrace Horsforth Leeds LS18 4SZ
Contact number	0113 3452850
Website	www.cliffehousetrainingacademy.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Della Stocks
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the training 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

Mark Keen, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Lonsdale

His Majesty's Inspector

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