

Well Associates Limited

Address: Forest House, Moors Gorse, Rugeley, WS15 2UZ

Unique reference number (URN): 1270876

Inspection report: 25 November 2025

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	● ● ● ●
Needs attention	●
Urgent improvement	

✔ **Safeguarding standards met**

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, learners are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect providers for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The provider has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- **Not met:** The provider has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

1. Inclusion, and leadership and governance

Expected standard



Needs attention



Expected standard

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders work closely with employers to design a curriculum offer that develops skills aligned with employers' culture and ethos. These apprenticeships in leadership and management reflect employers' skills needs to train and develop managers with the specific knowledge and skills they need to manage teams effectively.

Leaders understand their strengths and areas for development. They quickly identified that the proportion of apprentices leaving their apprenticeship early was due to the demands of an apprenticeship and the additional workload not being fully communicated to apprentices. Leaders have worked with employers and apprentices to improve their knowledge and commitment to the apprenticeship. Consequently, the proportion of apprentices achieving their apprenticeship on time has increased substantially.

Governors understand the provider's key strengths and areas for development. Leaders provide governors with the information they need to offer helpful support and guidance, such as challenging the high proportion of apprentices who have not achieved their apprenticeship on time. Leaders and governors agree effective strategies to improve apprentices' achievement.

Leaders have implemented a planned schedule of lesson observations, both face-to-face and online, to identify tutors' strengths and areas for development. Leaders use this information to support teachers in further developing their teaching skills, including peer observations, weekly hot topics to share new ideas and, where needed, external training.

Leaders support their staff's wellbeing. Staff feel valued and supported. New managers feel trusted to put in place strategies to improve apprenticeships. Coaches value the approach to flexible working. Their caseloads are manageable.

Needs attention

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders do not provide staff with training to help them recognise barriers to learning that apprentices have not self-disclosed. Too often, staff rely on their experience rather than

developing specialised expertise. Staff are slower to support these apprentices, and consequently, some achieve less well than their peers.

Leaders have implemented an inclusive policy to help apprentices overcome barriers to learning. Leaders have introduced measures allowing apprentices to self-disclose any barriers at the start of their studies. Coaches are also proactive in identifying whether apprentices encounter temporary difficulties during their apprenticeship.

Apprentices who declare they have additional learning needs, such as dyslexia, are supported by their coaches to achieve their goals. Coaches work with apprentices to understand how best to help them and provide the resources they need to participate and achieve.

Leaders have established a monthly one-to-one process to ensure apprentices can disclose any wellbeing concerns that may temporarily hinder their learning. They hold monthly reviews to monitor the quality of the support provided. Leaders quickly intervene when apprentices need further support, implementing revised action plans and adjusting the support provided to enable apprentices to fully engage in their learning.

2. Apprenticeships

Expected standard



Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Most apprentices who reach the end of their apprenticeship achieve. The proportion of apprentices achieving their apprenticeship has increased for 2 consecutive years. In 2024/25, it was substantially higher than the previous year. Many of those who achieve gain distinctions. However fewer apprentices with additional needs achieve distinction grades.

Apprentices make swift progress in their studies. Apprentices rapidly acquire the skills they need to manage their teams, including supporting team restructures, handling difficult conversations and managing finances within a budget. These skills help most apprentices achieve promotion during or on completion of their apprenticeship.

Apprentices produce written work that meets and often exceeds the expected standard. Coaches support apprentices with clear feedback that helps them to improve their work. Apprentices are well prepared for their final assessments, and the vast majority who reach this are successful.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear understanding of the quality of the apprenticeships they offer and know where improvements are needed. Since the change in leadership, they have focused on implementing actions to increase the number of apprentices who achieve.

Leaders work closely with employers to develop curriculums that closely meet their business needs and internal development programmes, supporting apprentices' progression into their future careers.

Teaching is purposeful and skilful, supporting apprentices in enhancing their leadership abilities. Teachers use their industry expertise and knowledge to deepen apprentices' understanding of important leadership theories and to provide guidance on when these theories can be effectively applied in the workplace. Teachers often incorporate case studies and role play so that apprentices fully grasp these theories and recognise any limitations theories may have. Apprentices value this approach and feel it is instrumental in improving their leadership skills.

Apprentices improve their English, mathematical and digital skills. Coaches identify apprentices' communication skills and create a personal development plan to help them improve in these areas. Apprentices become effective workplace communicators and learn to use tools such as spreadsheets to manage budgets.

Coaches model professional language in lessons. Apprentices quickly understand technical terms and use them fluently in work.

Coaches use assessments effectively to monitor apprentices' progress and adjust their teaching where necessary. They use assessment results effectively to target learners to do their best and support those with aspirations for distinctions to achieve them.

Participation and development

Expected standard 

Leaders and managers set high expectations for apprentices, both in their attendance in learning and their professional behaviours. They have created a professional learning culture in which apprentices are keen to learn. Consequently, attendance is high and apprentices catch up promptly when they are absent. In both virtual and face-to-face learning, apprentices demonstrate the professional behaviours that leaders and their employers expect. They are respectful of each other's opinions and backgrounds.

Apprentices develop an understanding of life in modern Britain. Apprentices often work in busy, customer-facing environments where respect and tolerance are key, and where vigilance against the signs of radicalisation and extremism is essential.

Coaches support apprentices in engaging with the broad range of community and charitable projects undertaken by their employers. Coaches support and celebrate this, encouraging apprentices to use examples of this work in their portfolios and, where needed, helping them with the planning and execution of these projects.

Tutors discuss apprentices' career options during their progress reviews. Many apprentices, particularly for larger employers, understand that the apprenticeship is supporting them in taking on additional responsibilities in the workplace and may help them secure area and regional leadership and management roles in the near future.

What it's like to be a learner and/or an apprentice at this provider

Apprentices enjoy their face-to-face and online teaching sessions. They value the safe space where they discuss and debate theories. Apprentices support each other on their learning journeys.

Apprentices become more confident throughout their apprenticeship. They build trust in themselves and others in the workplace, which helps them overcome the fear of working with people they perceive as more experienced. Apprentices learn to lead teams and make effective decisions.

Apprentices frequently practise their newly acquired knowledge and skills. Coaches and employers set tasks for apprentices to complete in the workplace that align with classroom learning. These new skills help apprentices build credibility as managers at work.

Apprentices mostly make positive progress in their studies. They quickly develop the skills they need to succeed in the workplace. Apprentices learn to manage team restructures and handle difficult conversations, while remaining calm and professional. Apprentices who disclose special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Coaches discuss the support they need, implement it quickly and ensure these apprentices have the tools they need to achieve. However, when apprentices do not disclose SEND, or it has not yet been identified, coaches do not provide effective support because they have not received training on how to effectively identify SEND. Because they are not effectively supported, these apprentices do not achieve distinction grades in line with their peers.

Apprentices are aware of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Coaches teach them how to protect themselves and their families from such dangers, for example the rise of involuntary celibates (incels) in the UK and the threat they pose.

Apprentices understand how to manage their own wellbeing and that of those they manage. They receive age-appropriate information on current topics such as cancer and stress awareness that helps them understand how to look after themselves and others.

Next steps

- Leaders should put in place training so that staff can identify apprentices who have not self-declared barriers to their learning. They should quickly put in place support for these apprentices so that they can achieve their very best.
- Leaders should provide further training for coaches to ensure they continue to improve their skills to become expert teachers.

- Leaders should further strengthen governors' scrutiny of apprenticeships to ensure they have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the provision, so that it has a sustained impact on the quality of apprenticeships.
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About this inspection

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with apprentices, employers, leaders, coaches and governors during the inspection.

Well Associates Limited is an independent training provider based in the West Midlands. It provides apprenticeship training across England. At the time of the inspection, there were 161 apprentices in learning, almost all of whom were over 18 years of age. There were 94 on level 5 operations or departmental manager, 36 on level 7 senior leader, 18 on level 5 coaching professional and a further 13 apprentices on one of 5 apprenticeships in business.

CEO: Anthony Payne

Lead inspector:

Sharon Dowling, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Joel Dalhouse, His Majesty's Inspector

Stuart Collett, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 25 November 2025

Number of learners

Apprenticeships

161

Percentage of learning aims successfully achieved

Apprenticeships overall achievement rate

Year	This provider	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	47	61	Below
2022/23	43	55	Below
2021/22	S	53	S

'This provider' and 'national average' figures are taken from the publicly available DfE achievement rates. Where the DfE have suppressed the figures, usually due to small cohorts, this has been mirrored in the Report Card and will be shown by an 'S'.

Apprenticeships pass rate

Year	This provider	National average
2023/24	100	98
2022/23	100	97
2021/22	S	98

'This provider' and 'national average' figures are taken from the publicly available DfE achievement rates. Where the DfE have suppressed the figures, usually due to small cohorts, this has been mirrored in the Report Card and will be shown by an 'S'.

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other providers can learn from it.

Strong standard

The provider reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The provider is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The provider needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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