

Founders and Coders CIC

Address: 27 Dingley Place, London, EC1V 8BR

Unique reference number (URN): 2656257

Inspection report: 23 March 2026

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	● ●
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Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders promote an inclusive culture where everyone is welcome. Fundamental to their vision is increasing access and opportunities for people who would not traditionally consider a career in the technology sector.

Staff have an appropriate approach to assessing and reviewing the needs of apprentices. They are suitably trained to provide the support required. Apprentices receive the ongoing support they need, mostly through the inclusive teaching practices that teachers implement. Staff support apprentices with temporary barriers to learning effectively, so they remain on their apprenticeships.

Leaders quickly identify apprentices at risk of falling behind. They closely monitor the progress of all apprentices and intervene when needed to help them get back on track with their studies. However, leaders and those responsible for governance do not monitor closely enough the progress and achievements of groups of apprentices with differing barriers to learning to assess whether the support they provide is having the most impact.

Teaching staff have used their experience and expertise on supporting apprentices with barriers to learning to develop a range of learning platforms that are fully accessible by all apprentices. The learning platforms adapt to apprentices' preferred approaches, for example the use text or voice when accessing the platform.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders encourage a culture of collaboration and professional learning. Staff have a genuine interest in how people learn best. They read academic papers extensively to keep their pedagogical and technological knowledge up to date in this rapidly moving field. Staff have ongoing discussions on the best ways to teach new concepts to apprentices. They are current practitioners and keep their technical skills up to date. They have well-established networks that they use to share knowledge.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of their provision. They have high expectations and a strong ongoing focus on improving the quality of teaching. Leaders have prioritised improving their management of data to increase accuracy. However, it is too early to fully see the impact of this on published data.

Those responsible for governance understand the context of the provider and the challenges they face. Governors challenge leaders appropriately to ensure that they do the best for their apprentices. They encourage leaders to manage risks appropriately and consider the values of the organisation when making decisions. However, the information that leaders provide to governors on the quality of training is not detailed enough for them to have a full understanding of the standard of teaching.

Leaders are considerate of the wellbeing of their staff. They provide staff with autonomy and support. Staff appreciate a shorter working week and frequent dialogue with leaders.

2. Apprenticeships

Strong standard	● ●
Expected standard	●

Strong standard ●

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders are advocates of peer-led and mastery learning approaches. Apprentices teach each other concepts, share ideas and provide ongoing feedback to each other. They frequently revisit and repeat concepts they have studied. This helps apprentices to retain and fluently apply their new learning.

Teachers are highly skilled and experienced. They adeptly link more advanced concepts, such as the clustering of vectors and indexing, to fundamental knowledge that apprentices have learned previously, such as vector mathematics. Teachers swiftly incorporate innovative ideas and products into their programmes so that apprentices learn the latest technology, which is often not yet known in their companies.

Teachers use assessment extremely well to ensure that apprentices receive frequent ongoing feedback that helps them to improve. As well as the ongoing peer-led feedback that apprentices receive during sessions, leaders have designed a bespoke learning platform. This provides apprentices with an individualised learning experience based around their needs and starting points. Inbuilt artificial intelligence assistants provide apprentices with instant feedback on the quality of their work. This helps apprentices identify any errors and the improvements needed.

Leaders have designed programmes that closely link workplace activity with the face-to-face training that apprentices receive. Leaders work closely with employers and apprentices to ensure that the projects apprentices complete in the workplace add value to their companies, while also developing apprentices' skills and interests. Teachers closely monitor the progress apprentices make with their work-based projects. They provide frequent one-to-one coaching to ensure that apprentices continue to develop their skills in the workplace.

Participation and development

Strong standard ●

Staff provide apprentices with highly individualised and relevant careers advice, guidance and coaching based on their long-term career aims. This helps apprentices to consider the

right career pathway for them. Leaders work with apprentices to help them build their professional networks and provide apprentices with support to help them prepare for interviews and technical aptitude tests and to write CVs. They encourage apprentices to be part of career-mentoring schemes. Leaders support apprentices who want to set up their own companies with the requirements for self-employment.

Leaders ensure that staff support apprentices very well to develop their interests and wider skills. Leaders and managers plan opportunities for apprentices to participate in social action projects and community initiatives. Machine learning apprentices showcase their work in free community workshops offered by the provider. Through these activities, apprentices build their confidence and develop their public speaking skills.

Leaders have designed a comprehensive personal development programme. Apprentices complete a wide range of wellbeing and employability modules, depending on their needs. Through these modules, and their teaching sessions, apprentices develop a strong understanding of areas such as psychological safety and the responsible use of technology.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Apprentices mostly achieve their qualifications in the planned time. This is not fully reflected in the 2024/25 published data due to leaders' historic inaccurate submissions and handling of data. Of those apprentices who achieve their apprenticeships, a high proportion achieve merit or distinction grades.

Apprentices, including those with barriers to learning, quickly gain new advanced knowledge and skills from their starting points. They become more adept at systems thinking and learn more about the architecture of code. They become confident pitching ideas to clients and teaching challenging concepts to their peers. Apprentices produce work of an industry standard.

Apprentices are well prepared for their next steps. On completion of their apprenticeships, most secure employment in the sector. Several set up start-up technology companies.

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

Apprentices are highly motivated and passionate about their learning. They thoroughly enjoy their training and are keen to attend their sessions. Teachers closely monitor attendance, and in the few instances where apprentices miss sessions, teachers provide the support they need to catch up.

Apprentices relish the collaborative approach that leaders encourage during training sessions. They find their sessions challenging but fun. They value working with their peers to solve problems and develop their understanding of new and challenging concepts. They

find that working with people with a variety of diverse backgrounds and ideas brings different perspectives that enriches their learning. Through this approach, they develop deeper knowledge and become more confident voicing their opinions at work.

Apprentices are proud to showcase the interesting and varied projects they use their new skills to complete. They develop the skills to lead projects across their organisations, such as introducing artificial intelligence (AI) voice agents.

Apprentices flourish and develop as individuals. Teachers encourage apprentices to explore more deeply areas that interest them, such as ethics. Apprentices research and present their findings to their peers. This encourages discussion of wide-ranging issues, such as inbuilt bias in models, the environmental impact and harms of machine learning, as well as how to ensure that people interact with chatbots in an ethical way.

Apprentices study ambitious programmes that extend their understanding of new advanced concepts. On their level 6 machine learning courses, apprentices learn complex content on concepts, such as world models and learned simulators, vision transformers and multi-modal AI vision. Teachers ensure that apprentices master the specialist skills and fluently use the specialist vocabulary needed to work in the rapidly changing field of machine learning.

Next steps

- Leaders should improve their oversight and checking of data submissions to ensure that they are accurate and reflective of apprentices' achievements.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance should improve how they monitor the progress of differing groups of apprentices with barriers to learning so that they can fully assess the impact of the support they provide.
- Leaders should further strengthen governors' oversight of the quality of training that apprentices receive.

About this inspection

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

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

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the provider:

Founders and Coders CIC is an independent learning provider based in London. It offers apprenticeships in the digital sector. Training is mostly face to face, with apprentices attending weekly sessions in London.

At the time of the inspection, there were 25 apprentices in learning. Twenty-two apprentices were studying level 6 machine learning engineering. The remainder studied level 4 software developer. There were a further 11 apprentices who were awaiting their final assessments or their results. These apprentices were studying either the level 4 software developer or the level 7 artificial intelligence data specialist apprenticeships.

Chief Executive Officer: Dan Sofer

Lead inspector:

Georgina Ager, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Nirosha Holton, Ofsted Inspector

Lynda Bourne, Ofsted 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 23 March 2026

Number of learners

Total learners

36

Apprenticeships

36

Percentage of learning aims successfully achieved

Apprenticeships overall achievement rate

Year	This provider	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	87	61	Above
2022/23	47	55	Close to average

Apprenticeships pass rate

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

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.

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