

Prevista Limited

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

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Re-inspection Monitoring Visit: Main Findings

Context and focus of visit

Prevista Limited (Prevista) provides apprenticeship and other vocational training in a variety of settings. The head office is located in North London, but training takes place across the city and surrounding counties. The company directly delivers provision and is responsible for provision delivered on its behalf by a range of other providers. It also provides employability training through the Work Programme, although this is out of scope for inspection.

This re-inspection monitoring visit is a consequence of the previous inspection in June 2013 where Prevista received inadequate grades for all aspects of its provision. The visit, over two days, focused on themes derived from the inspection report.

Themes

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress are staff making in evaluating provision and implementing effective quality improvement strategies? **Reasonable progress**

The Managing Director and senior management team are implementing a challenging quality improvement plan which reflects the seriousness of the findings from the previous inspection. They have set ambitious targets following a frank and honest evaluation of all aspects of provision. The self-assessment process includes a more extensive range of information, views from learners, employers and training partners. It has meant a complete rebuild of the way staff manage and deliver learning, recruiting a more skilled workforce with the skills necessary for improving the learning experience. Managers now more closely monitor and question performance, and quality is at the centre of the delivery. The company is making progress in improving provision. Senior managers have an increasingly better picture of quality across the different learning programmes that they are responsible for. Better monitoring is also revealing hitherto unknown poor performance. Further work is required to complete observations of all assessors and teachers, although managers have made good progress in setting up and recently implementing this process. A much needed up-to-date system for monitoring learners' progress is imminent to enable managers to act swiftly to support learners in danger of falling behind with their learning.

Outcomes for learners

What progress is the provider making in increasing the number of learners achieving their qualifications? **Reasonable progress**

Inspectors at the previous inspection criticised the low achievement of qualifications of apprentices and outcomes for learners were inadequate. At that time one in five apprentices were achieving their apprenticeship qualification including English and mathematics. Achievement was particularly low for health and social care, early

years, business administration and customer service apprenticeship programmes. Since the inspection, the rates of achievement for all apprenticeships are improving. Monitoring of learners' progress by assessors and teachers is more rigorous. Learners that were in danger of not achieving are back on track to achieve their qualification, although the large majority will be late in successfully completing. Provider-held achievement data look a great deal healthier, through both minimum and maximum forecasts for the rest of this year; however, it is too early to be confident of achievement until a complete year of published apprenticeship success rates are available. Prevista has maintained achievement for learners on other vocational learning programmes, but work is well under way to make sure teachers and assessors place a greater emphasis on learners developing skills as well as achieving their qualification.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

What steps have managers, teachers and assessors taken to improve teaching, learning and assessment on all aspects of learning programmes? **Reasonable progress**

At the previous inspection, teachers and assessors did not have sufficiently high expectations, planning, teaching or assessment skills. Teaching, learning and assessment are now carefully planned. A wider range of resources is available for off-the-job learning sessions. Teachers make good use of technology to support learning, including the use of internet-enabled mobile phones. Learners are challenged during sessions and the pace of learning is good, encouraging their involvement and generating enthusiasm. Planning is sufficiently detailed, but further improvement is required to more adeptly identify and meet learners' individual needs in off-the-job learning sessions or their learning at work.

Arrangements to quality assure teaching, learning and assessment have much improved. The recently introduced observation of teaching and learning scheme is providing better assurance of the quality of teaching and assessment and observers' records of observations make clear what teachers and assessors need to do to develop their practice. Staff training activities have focused on improving teachers' and assessors' skills, including setting specific and measurable targets to help learners make good progress. However, further work is still needed to ensure targets are appropriately precise and realistic, understood by learners and employers and visible in all records of progress reviews.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

How effectively do senior managers identify and take action in directly contracted and subcontracted provision since the extensive management restructure and new management information system? **Significant progress**

Senior management took drastic action in changing and reshaping the delivery of all provision. This started before the previous inspection and continues. They have a much tighter grip on the performance of directly delivered provision and provision

delivered on the company's behalf. Inspectors recognised the embryonic start of this change at the previous inspection, but demonstrable impact was not at that time evident. Much of the hard work that has taken place over the last year has resulted in a complete change in culture regarding the way all Prevista staff approach and think of learning delivery.

Managers have made much progress in working with subcontractors and monitoring subcontracted provision. Partners are quick to recognise the positive changes that have taken place, particularly since the previous inspection, in sharing good practice and more effective performance management. They feel Prevista managers listen more effectively and note communication is far better of late. Senior managers at Prevista have also taken strong action to tackle poor performance. Leaders and managers at all levels have full ownership of, and fully understand, what they need to do in order to achieve a higher level of quality in learning delivery.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

What steps has the provider taken to include employers in coordinating training for learners? **Reasonable progress**

At the previous inspection, inspectors recommended that managers implement closer liaison with employers to ensure a coordinated approach to learning. Managers at Prevista are now more proactive in including employers in the coordination of training for learners. They have taken time to visit a number of employers and listen to the issues about the quality of service. Employers that until recently were unclear of the progress their staff were making on their learning programmes, and had made complaints to Prevista, have recognised a change, and most now feel more included in the learning process and communicate regularly with assessors and teachers. Teachers and assessors are planning learning with learners and employers more carefully. This is resulting in employers noticing the benefits of the learning taking place, for example from the way their managers manage staff and share good practice. Further work is required, however, to ensure that all employers feel included in their learning process.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

What improvements are staff making in identifying and recording learners' prior attainment and competences in English and mathematics? **Reasonable progress**

Functional skills support has improved since the previous inspection. A dedicated member of staff recently recruited to deliver the English, mathematics and information and communication technology provision, also supports assessors and teachers in developing learners' skills in these areas. Assessors are able to offer mentoring and coaching alongside the vocational training to help learners hone their skills and complete the on-line functional skills tests with confidence. Assessors are also completing functional skills qualifications to better understand the requirements and to increase their skills and confidence in working with their learners. A review of

current learners' functional skills identified as a result of initial and diagnostic assessments has been effective, enabling targeted support and helpful off-the-job individual or group sessions for those who need it.

The functional skills tutor delivers learning sessions in the workplace at times to suit the learners' hours of work. Prevista staff communicate effectively to ensure learners and employers are fully aware of the initial assessment process and the functional skills support available. Results of functional skills tests are issued weekly to enable assessors to update individual learning plans. Progress reviews incorporate records of functional skills achievements and are now routinely shared with employers.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

How effectively are learners supported to enable them to complete their learning programmes compared to the previous inspection? **Reasonable progress**

At the previous inspection, although progress reviews were timely and encouraging, and used to monitor learners' general progress well, they were not always conducted or recorded in sufficient detail to inform learners of what they needed to do to develop skills and knowledge or how they needed to do it. Since then, learners report positively about the support they receive. Newly recruited assessors now provide more frequent focused visits to help learners catch up with their work and complete their qualifications. Although progress was slow, more recent productive activity has now enabled learners to complete their courses and learning programmes.

Learners' portfolios of work show clear evidence of improved systems to capture their individual needs and help the learners improve their vocational, as well as English and mathematics, skills. There are much stronger relationships with employers who are involved in progress reviews and are more aware of learners' support needs. The newly developed standardised paperwork used in progress reviews enables assessors and teachers to include a comprehensive record of learners' achievements and plan further learning. However, the content, although much improved, has yet to include more specific and measurable targets to help learners more clearly understand how to improve their work.

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