

# Mitre Group Ltd

Independent learning provider

**Inspection dates**

19–22 March 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>		<b>Good</b>	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>	Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>	Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Good</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- Achievement rates for learners on adult programmes are high.
- Apprentices develop a wide range of sports coaching and training skills that they apply proficiently in schools and community settings.
- Adult learners attend high-quality employability courses that lead to jobs in their local community.
- Learners and apprentices gain valuable skills in customer service, employability skills, coaching, exercise and nutrition.
- Learners and apprentices receive high-quality teaching, learning and assessment which lead to good progress and achievement.
- Leaders, including governors, have tackled successfully the weaknesses identified during the monitoring visit; learners' outcomes are good, and the quality of provision has improved.
- Leaders, supported by governors, work with Job Centres and high-profile sports and sports-related community enterprises to tackle local skills shortages.
- Learners and apprentices are safe and feel safe, because safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Many learners, and a few apprentices, fail to pass their functional skills tests in English and mathematics, because tutors lack the confidence and ability to prepare them sufficiently thoroughly for these tests.
- Adult learners do not appreciate, or benefit from, the full range of jobs and courses available to them, because tutors do not provide them with enough information about vacancies or training opportunities outside their local community.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Mitre Group Ltd (Mitre) is a small provider with a head office near Belper, Derbyshire. The company's managing director oversees the business. She is supported by managers responsible for operations, quality and finance. Mitre began providing apprenticeships in May 2017. It previously provided apprenticeships through subcontracting arrangements with Nottingham College and Babington Business College Limited, which it continues to do. Mitre's apprentices work in sports clubs across the country.
- Mitre has 35 apprentices, who follow a mix of framework and standards apprenticeships, from level 2 to level 4, in activity leadership and coaching, sports development, management, customer service, business administration and team leading. Mitre also uses its links with professional football and sports clubs to provide employability programmes for unemployed adults, referred by Job Centres. At the time of inspection, 50 learners, most of them in London, were on adult programmes.

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that tutors provide adult learners with comprehensive information about vacancies and training opportunities outside their local community, so that learners appreciate and benefit from these opportunities.
- Provide tutors with high-quality support and, if necessary, training to help them prepare learners and apprentices more effectively for functional skills tests in English and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Senior leaders are committed to achieving their ambitious strategy of providing high-quality apprenticeship training for the sports sector. They work with a wide range of employers, including professional football and cricket clubs, to offer programmes that tackle local employment and skills shortages effectively. Senior managers use their links with sports-related community schemes to recruit unemployed adults onto learning programmes. They deliver these in community venues attached to well-known football and cricket clubs.
- Leaders and managers work very productively with local Job Centres to identify and train adults returning to employment. Vocationally specific adult programmes link well to guaranteed job interviews with prospective employers. In addition, a good proportion of adult learners attend a wide range of work experience placements. This offers them valuable opportunities to practise their newly acquired skills.
- Senior leaders have responded swiftly and effectively to the weaknesses identified during the previous monitoring visit. They no longer contract with employers who are unable or unwilling to commit to all the requirements of an apprenticeship. As a result, apprentices now receive their full entitlement to off-the-job training, which enables them to progress well in their apprenticeship studies.
- Managers plan and manage the curriculum well. They carefully develop programmes so that apprentices and adult learners gain the skills employers require. For example, they extended the duration of adult programmes to allow for more time to develop essential employability skills. Consequently, learners acquire an appropriate work ethic, including an appreciation of the importance employers attach to attendance and punctuality. Apprentices and learners receive good preparation for work and most have a very clear idea about their next steps.
- Managers make suitable use of data to monitor the performance of apprentices and adult learners. They implement rapid and effective actions when achievement does not match the expected standard. Managers systematically collate and evaluate data to identify trends. Actions to reduce disparities in the performance of different groups are successful.
- Managers ensure that training is of a consistently good standard to secure high achievement rates for apprentices and adult learners. Quality assurance of taught sessions, through direct observation, raises their effectiveness. Observers implement suitably detailed actions to help weaker tutors improve. However, the evaluation of sessions often places insufficient emphasis on the effectiveness of learning, resulting in a few tutors not improving their practice rapidly enough.
- Managers use an appropriately critical and evaluative self-assessment process to identify areas for development. Weaknesses highlighted in the self-assessment report are valid. Senior managers use the quality improvement action plan to raise the standard of provision.
- Managers have not implemented actions to raise tutors' professional practice in planning and preparing learners and apprentices for functional skills tests in English and mathematics. As a result, pass rates for the few adult learners who study for an English

and mathematics qualification are too low. Although apprentices achieve well overall in their functional skills tests, not enough do so at their first attempt.

### **The governance of the provider**

- The board of directors is rigorous in challenging senior staff to improve rapidly the quality of provision. Governors scrutinise leaders' and managers' actions incisively and thoroughly. This holds them very effectively to account for their decision-making and actions. The board instigates a rapid response whenever performance falls short of the demanding levels expected.
- Board members have made a decisive contribution to the company's performance since the monitoring visit. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the company well. They receive an appropriate range and variety of data to help them evaluate the quality of provision.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and managers use appropriate systems to safeguard the welfare of learners and staff. All relevant staff receive appropriate checks to ensure that they are suitable to work with adults and young people. They receive helpful initial and refresher training on how to protect apprentices and adult learners. Apprentices and adult learners report feeling safe, and they are safe.
- The designated safeguarding officer has appropriate skills and experience for the role. Staff place a high emphasis on promoting good mental health and well-being. All staff and learners know how to report any concerns they may have about themselves or their colleagues. The designated safeguarding officer deals swiftly and correctly with the few concerns reported.
- Apprentices and adult learners develop their knowledge of safeguarding and British values well. They know how to apply this awareness to a range of situations they may come across at work or in their personal lives. All learners explain how to stay safe when using the internet and social media. Apprentices' understanding and use of health and safety practices in sports settings are good.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Mitre's tutors and managers have suitably high expectations of what learners and apprentices can achieve, regardless of their social background or their previous educational attainment. This helps to ensure that learners and apprentices make good progress from their diverse starting points towards achieving their educational and career goals.
- Tutors are well qualified and experienced in the sports and sports-related industries. They use their knowledge and experience to motivate and enthuse apprentices and learners to work hard and achieve.
- Tutors make suitable use of the available information on apprentices' and learners' previous educational attainment to guide them on to a suitable programme. They identify swiftly those who require additional help and support and implement suitable

arrangements to help them progress as well as their peers. As a result, few learners or apprentices leave their programme early, and most go on to achieve.

- Learners and apprentices produce work of at least the required standard. A few produce work of a high standard. Apprentices become confident and skilled in all aspects of coaching, sports leadership and working with a wide range of clients. Employers value the enthusiasm and commitment that apprentices bring to their business.
- Apprentices receive detailed feedback on their work and they are clear about what they must do to improve their work. However, tutors' feedback on adult courses is often cursory and learners remain unclear about how they can improve.
- Tutors provide employers with regular and clear feedback on the progress that apprentices are making. Employers work well with Mitre staff to ensure that apprentices gain the skills and behaviours that they need to achieve their apprenticeship goals.
- Most learners and apprentices make reasonable progress in improving their English and mathematical skills, because tutors work hard to integrate skills in these subjects with the main subject being taught.
- Learners and apprentices develop a good understanding of equality of opportunity and of British values and the relevance of these topics in the workplace.
- Apprentices are on programmes that are appropriate to their career aspirations. They develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours that support them to be effective employees in the workplace. A very few apprentices, however, have already achieved a qualification related to their job role and, as a result, these apprentices do not develop enough new skills.
- Tutors lack the confidence and ability to prepare apprentices and adult learners well for functional skills tests in English and mathematics. Too many learners, and a few apprentices, fail to pass at the first attempt, which they find demotivating. Mitre's leaders are correct to acknowledge that they need to upskill existing staff. This would enable them to support learners and apprentices more effectively in preparation for external tests in these subjects. However, they have not yet achieved this objective.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

- Learners and apprentices are highly motivated to progress and achieve. Most aspire to a career in the sports or sports-related industries. They have very clear personal goals and targets about how they will achieve their ambition. They gain valuable skills in customer service, employability skills, coaching, and exercise and nutrition, which equip them well for employment.
- Apprentices apply the knowledge and skills they learn to their job role well. One apprentice, studying sports development at advanced level and based in a premier league football club, progressed from an intermediate-level apprenticeship in activity leadership. The individual now works on delivering coaching sessions to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Adult learners benefit from highly effective work-related learning that increases their chances of employment. They learn how to write reports, deliver presentations, compose a job application and work effectively in a team to solve problems. Learners value these skills. They develop increasingly positive attitudes to learning and work, as a result of

their studies.

- Tutors support learners and apprentices to develop the personal, social and communication skills they need to work effectively in the sports and sports-related industries. Most learners and apprentices interact professionally and courteously with customers and clients.
- Learners' and apprentices' attendance and punctuality are good. They value the opportunity to attend face-to-face learning sessions with their tutors. Mitre's tutors provide suitable information and advice about the courses the company offers. Learners and apprentices enrol on courses that meet their needs and aspirations, and, as a result, most stay on programme and achieve the qualification.
- Learners and apprentices have a good understanding of safeguarding and know how to report any concerns about their welfare. They know how to keep themselves safe online. Most apprentices demonstrate a good understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism and can discuss these topics well. However, too few adult learners understand the risks posed by extremist groups, or how to spot signs of potential radicalisation.
- Apprentices and adult learners receive adequate support to help them formulate their career goals. Tutors use their knowledge of local job vacancies in the sports sector to help adult learners find work. As a result, many go on to find work in local community sports venues. However, tutors do not provide learners with information about the full range of careers and training opportunities that may be available further afield. This limits learners' awareness of jobs and careers in areas other than where they live.

## Outcomes for learners

**Good**

- Achievement rates for adult learners in 2017/18 were high and well above the rate for similar providers. Provisional in-year provider data suggests that these achievement rates will be high in 2018/19.
- Adult learners make good progress from low starting points. All are unemployed when they start, and few have any previous qualifications. The large majority develop their knowledge and skills well, despite very significant challenges in their personal lives.
- Most current apprentices are progressing very well and are on target to achieve within their planned timescales. A large proportion of apprentices make very good progress from their starting points and are well prepared to continue their employment as a school sports coach, physical education teaching assistant or sports development coach.
- Most adult learners move on to worthwhile next steps in further study, voluntary work or employment. Many go on to work as catering, retail or customer experience assistants or as office administrators. All apprentices continue in employment with their employer, after they complete their studies. A few gain promotion or enhanced responsibilities. Several progress from an intermediate-level apprenticeship to an advanced level.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that no substantial gaps exist between the achievements of different groups of learners. Most learners on adult programmes achieve their employability qualification. However, the proportion who achieve functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics is too low.
- Of the 61 learners who joined an apprenticeship programme in 2017/18, 33 had to withdraw from their studies for commercial reasons beyond the control of Mitre's leaders.

As a result, qualification achievement rates for apprentices in 2017/18 are low. Only nine of the remaining learners have achieved, and the others are still in learning. Tutors are working well with these learners to help them achieve within the next three months.

## Types of provision

### Adult learning programmes

**Good**

- Mitre provides adult learning programmes for 50 learners. Local Job Centres refer unemployed adults to Mitre's employability training courses. Programmes are available up to and including level 2, in sports clubs or community organisations linked to the sports industry. All courses cover basic employability skills, with introductory units in vocational areas such as customer service, business and retail.
- Learners benefit greatly from well-chosen, appropriate employability-related courses that meet local skills needs well. Most learners gain a qualification, followed by employment or further training in their local community.
- Tutors use their skills and knowledge of employability skills and of local job opportunities to help learners gain useful skills to help them find work. During learning sessions, tutors use real-life examples to illustrate the skills and behaviours required in the workplace.
- Learners are well motivated, as demonstrated by the good quality of work they produce. They take pride in their work and present it well. Learners benefit greatly from high-quality work experience, which often leads to work trials and employment. Former learners work as receptionists in a club shop, in local cafes or with major construction companies.
- Learners gain a good understanding of employment law and equalities legislation and how these apply in the workplace. They deepen their knowledge of working with customers who have disabilities, and how they can respond to their individual needs in the best ways.
- Learners develop their English and mathematical skills well during their studies. Tutors encourage learners to practise their speaking and reading skills. As a result, a few decide to take functional skills tests in English and mathematics. However, very few pass.
- Learners work well together. They listen carefully to each other during discussions, often providing additional information or clarification when answering a question. During discussions, learners respect each other's views, even when they disagree with their peers.
- Pre-course advice and guidance arrangements are suitable. The Job Centre refers learners to Mitre's well-regarded community-based employability courses. Mitre staff then carry out initial assessments to ensure that learners have the necessary basic skills in English and mathematics to benefit from the programme.
- Effective initial assessment ensures that learners are on a suitable course and, because of this, course completion rates are high, and the proportion who go on to paid work is good. However, the careers advice that tutors provide is restricted to a relatively narrow range of local opportunities. These relate mostly to what is available at partner sports organisations and clubs. As a result, most learners have an insufficient awareness of jobs and career opportunities outside the area where they live.

- Feedback to learners following completion of their course workbooks lacks sufficient detail to help learners understand how to improve their work or develop their knowledge. Feedback is too often restricted to brief comments such as 'good work' or 'standards met'.
- Learners know how to stay safe, including when online. However, they do not have a well-developed awareness of risks related to radicalisation and extremism.

## Apprenticeships

**Good**

- Mitre provides a mix of apprenticeship frameworks and standards at intermediate and advanced levels. It has 35 apprentices, around half of whom are on intermediate-level apprenticeships. The main sectors for apprenticeship provision are community coaching, school sports coaching, physical education teaching assistant and sports development coaching.
- Mitre's apprenticeship provision meets the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship. Employers in particular understand the requirements of a good apprenticeship. They ensure that apprentices receive their full entitlement to high-quality off-the-job training. Employers arrange for apprentices to work alongside sport specialists, who help them develop good technical skills. They then apply these when working in their job roles.
- Most apprentices make good progress towards gaining the skills and knowledge required to achieve their qualification within the planned period. They enjoy their learning and are keen and enthusiastic to succeed.
- Trainers plan thoroughly for learning sessions. They use effective coaching skills to promote independence in apprentices' thinking and responses. As a result, apprentices apply theory to their practice. They also deepen their knowledge and understanding of the behaviours and skills required to be a successful sports coach. Those based in a school setting gain a working knowledge of the school sector and how the national curriculum is implemented and delivered.
- Trainers are well qualified and experienced and have appropriate backgrounds in the sports industry. They use their good knowledge and experience of the sector to help apprentices understand sports coaching in a wide range of settings. This helps broaden their understanding.
- Apprentices quickly develop maturity and take responsibility for their actions and behaviours. They interact well at work with others, both socially and professionally, and at all levels. They assume high levels of responsibility early in their programme and plan and deliver coaching sessions with minimum supervision.
- Apprentices develop a wide range of sports coaching and training skills and apply these proficiently within schools and community settings. They practise their new skills, as they plan and deliver physical education and sport activities and health and well-being lessons to children in schools. They also run sessions to support pupils' English and mathematics development and after-school sporting activities.
- Employers support apprentices well and help them to make swift progress in their apprenticeship studies. They are right to acknowledge that the new skills and knowledge apprentices gain have a positive impact on the quality of the sport sessions they deliver. For example, one apprentice working in a primary school plans and delivers a morning

'Wake and Shake' session to energise and prepare children for the start of the school day.

- Off-the-job training enhances the development of apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours well. Apprentices benefit from work-role shadowing, visits to sports businesses and sports-related community enterprises, and attending sporting events. Apprentices also participate in employer-led and external training courses. They attend inspirational talks by visiting high-profile sporting personalities.
- Trainers track and monitor apprentices' progress very closely and, as a result, apprentices receive additional support swiftly if they fall behind. They communicate frequently with employers to ensure that apprentices make the required progress.
- Trainers visit apprentices frequently to assess their progress and set assignments for further learning, and they make additional visits if required. They provide detailed feedback to apprentices on their work, which tells them how they can improve.
- Apprentices have a good awareness of health and safety at work and when working with children in school environments and community settings. They are aware of the potential for frequent collisions when working with children in sports sessions. They plan for the most appropriate activity within the available space at each venue. They are aware of the limitations of certain types of equipment when working with children who have special needs.
- Apprentices are sensitive to equality and diversity when planning and delivering sports coaching sessions. One advanced apprentice, delivering fitness sessions to a group of older people, planned specific activities designed to be challenging but achievable for them. This helped participants to flex muscles and limbs and to build strength.
- Apprentices have a sound knowledge and understanding of how to recognise concerns relating to bullying and harassment and radicalisation and extremism, and how to report concerns.
- Tutors promote effectively the development of appropriate skills in English and mathematics. Apprentices communicate well verbally and in writing. They are confident when working on mathematical problems. However, tutors lack the confidence and expertise to prepare apprentices thoroughly for functional skills tests in English and mathematics. As a result, a few fail at their first attempt, though all subsequently go on to pass.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	53403
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	234
Principal/CEO	Jennie Bowmer
Telephone number	01773 525406
Website	

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	-	37	-	13	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	8	1	4	18	-	4		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	0							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Babington Business College Limited Nottingham College							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of operations, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans and the monitoring visit report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

### Inspection team

Jai Sharda, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Nigel Bragg	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christine Blowman	Ofsted Inspector
Tricia Collis	Ofsted Inspector

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