

# Showcase Training Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 10091790

**Name of lead inspector:** Carolyn Brownsea/, Ofsted Inspector

**Inspection dates:** 21–22 May 2019

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by ESFA and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Providers newly directly funded to deliver apprenticeship training provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Showcase Training was formed in 2015 and is based in Gosport. The company supplied education and training as a subcontractor before receiving a contract to deliver apprenticeships in 2017. Through levy funding, the provider has enrolled 11 apprentices as a prime contractor. It continues to deliver apprenticeships as a subcontractor. At the time of the monitoring visit, seven levy-funded apprentices followed a framework programme in childcare at levels 2 or 3.

### Themes

#### **How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?**

#### **Significant progress**

Senior managers, led by the managing director, have carefully planned the pace of business growth. Leaders have prioritised the quality of training and maintaining the confidence of employers. Leaders and managers have a clear strategy and vision for the organisation in the childcare sector.

Leaders and managers have established strong and effective relationships with local employers to design programmes that meet their needs. They equip apprentices with skills that support their employers' businesses. Provider staff are highly responsive and provide good levels of assistance to employers. The employers value such service. Managers are clear about their expectations of employers and apprentices, at the point of recruitment. When employers' or apprentices' expectations do not align with these, managers do not pursue the relationship.

Managers ensure that apprentices receive appropriate initial advice and guidance that help to place them on programmes that meet their needs and aspirations. Leaders require all staff to achieve relevant qualifications in information advice and guidance. This enables staff to provide applicants with informed and impartial guidance when they choose an apprenticeship. Tutors encourage apprentices to research wider career options in the childcare sector. For example, an apprentice now aspires to gain a job on Disney cruise ships on completion of her apprenticeship.

Tutors carefully assess apprentices' job roles and existing skills to make sure that they are likely to benefit from the training planned. They use this information well to match apprenticeship opportunities to applicants' interests and abilities. They also use the information to design tailored learning programmes. As a result, most apprentices remain on programme and make good progress, often exceeding expectations.

Managers communicate effectively with employers, providing clarity about the purpose of the apprenticeships and the employers' responsibilities to apprentices. As a result, apprentices receive their full entitlement to training, so they can develop their knowledge and skills rapidly. Tutors and employers monitor accurately the progress that apprentices make in developing their knowledge, skills and behaviours during the programme.

Senior managers demonstrate an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of provision and record these accurately in their self-assessment report. Managers work collaboratively to deal with areas for improvement for the benefit of apprentices and employers.

Senior managers have developed rigorous internal quality assurance systems that help apprentices to produce consistently high standards of work across all apprenticeships. Senior managers monitor achievement, retention, attendance and progress frequently and diligently. Apprentices all make at least good progress; many make very rapid progress. They produce work of a very high standard, particularly at level 3. Managers intervene quickly and effectively when they identify apprentices who are making slow progress.

All training staff are highly qualified and have considerable sector-specific experience. All members of the training team hold teaching qualifications or are working towards them. Tutors ensure that they keep their knowledge and practice in childcare up to date. This helps them to develop apprentices' skills, knowledge and behaviours relevant to the specific settings and ages of the children in their care.

Leaders and managers accurately assess the quality of teaching and learning. They plan a good programme of activities that provide leaders with an informed oversight of the quality and standards of the apprenticeship programme. Leaders use the findings to inform staff training and development programmes, reinforcing continual quality improvement.

**What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices?**

**Significant progress**

Staff select apprentices carefully to ensure that they have the capacity, enthusiasm and desire to develop the new skills and knowledge to complete an apprenticeship in childcare. The majority of apprentices move directly from school or college or from level 2 to level 3 childcare.

Tutors make good use of information about the starting points of their apprentices to plan customised programmes. These focus on each apprentice's development and support needs. Tutors use the results of vocational skills scans and baseline assessments to make sure that apprentices start the programme at the most appropriate point. They ensure that apprentices complete learning and work that promotes the development of new and relevant skills, and which prepare them well for their next steps and careers.

Tutors guide, assess and monitor apprentices' progress thoroughly. Apprentices are right to value the support and guidance they receive from their tutors. Tutors meet with apprentices and employers frequently to review progress. They monitor closely the completion and setting of assignments and the development of behaviours and skills.

Apprentices describe confidently how they apply their off-the-job learning at work. Such learning improves their effectiveness in completing tasks. For example, an apprentice shadowed a colleague delivering an activity on healthy eating to children and used this experience to successfully deliver a similar activity with the children.

Apprentices develop substantial new knowledge and skills. These include theories of childhood development, behaviour management strategies, promoting healthy eating, and understanding how to keep children safe from harm.

Apprentices have a strong understanding of safeguarding. They know how to correctly apply policies and procedures in the workplace. For example, an apprentice identified concerns about the behaviour of a child in the nursery in which she worked. The apprentice reported her concerns appropriately following the nursery safeguarding procedure. The designated safeguarding lead then made a referral to children's social care.

The small number of apprentices who have now completed their apprenticeship did so in the expected time. Most apprentices remain with their employers when they have completed their qualification, or they move on to further education courses.

Managers evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment frequently and accurately. They use their findings to plan focused professional development activities for tutors. For example, tutors develop their knowledge and skills to teach topics such as equality and diversity and British values. However, managers do not set development targets for staff that are sufficiently specific. Consequently, a small minority of the actions do not result in improvements in trainers' teaching.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place?**

**Significant progress**

Senior leaders and managers ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff understand how to identify and report any concerns they have. Staff report

general welfare concerns about apprentices, in addition to any serious safeguarding issues. This reinforces the high standards required of staff working in childcare.

Senior leaders and managers carry out safe recruitment and selection procedures. Leaders confirm apprentices' right to work and assure their suitability to work with children. All staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and British values. Managers make sure all staff update their training annually.

The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) is suitably trained and qualified for the role. She has taken additional training to enhance her knowledge about matters such as female genital mutilation (FGM), online safety and child sexual exploitation. The DSO maintains a good range of links with specialist bodies and external agencies.

Managers and tutors use good resources to develop apprentices' knowledge and understanding of the 'Prevent' duty, British values and safeguarding. They provide apprentices with details of current relevant news topics. For example, articles on child poverty and trafficking raise apprentices' awareness of using safeguarding procedures to report any concerns.

Tutors discuss British values and the threats presented by radicalisation and extremism with apprentices during progress reviews. Apprentices are aware of the key risks of extremism as they relate to their own communities. Tutors use local current affairs, such as a recent case involving county lines dealers in modern-day slavery, to increase apprentices' awareness. However, not all apprentices have sufficient understanding of 'Prevent' duties.

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