

Riverside Training (Spalding) Ltd

Monitoring visit report

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Monitoring visit: main findings

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.

Riverside Training (Spalding) Ltd (Riverside) was established in May 2009 to provide apprenticeships and work-based learning in the early years care and business sectors in south Lincolnshire. A direct contract from the Education and Skills Funding Agency was awarded in May 2017 for apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3.

Riverside has 16 levy-funded apprentices. All are female and studying on frameworks. The large majority study at level 3 supporting teaching and learning in schools, and the remainder are on children and young people's workforce at levels 2 and 3.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

The managing director has recently restructured her management team to accommodate growth and the delivery of apprenticeship standards. As a result, managers have more responsibility for ensuring and improving quality, and are committed to ensuring that apprentices benefit from well-planned and well-organised training programmes. Early indications suggest that apprentices are making at least their expected progress.

Managers have close working relationships with local schools and nurseries, particularly in south Lincolnshire. They ensure that programmes meet individual and business needs well and that they recruit apprentices with integrity.

Communications with employers are good. Employers are very positive about the quality of the training and support that their apprentices receive. Apprentices have a thorough induction and most have a good understanding of their qualifications and how this helps them in their workplaces.

Apprenticeships meet the Institute for Apprenticeships requirements. Employers provide enough off-the-job time for apprentices to work on their studies. The managing director and managers work well with the end-point assessment organisations to prepare apprentices for the introduction of standards. They ensure

that tutors have the expertise to provide apprentices with high-quality training that delivers the skills, knowledge and behaviours expected in the workplace. Most training resources are of a good quality.

Quality assurance of the provision is effective and identifies improvement actions that managers monitor through their quality improvement plan. Observations of teaching, learning and assessment result in suitable action planning that leads to improvements and relevant continuous professional development for trainers.

Governance arrangements provide suitable oversight of the business. Monthly management and standardisation meetings give detailed performance data. As a result, governors and managers have a good understanding of the quality of provision and the progress apprentices make.

Managers make good use of feedback from staff, apprentices and employers in their evaluation of the quality of the apprenticeship programme. Their self-assessment report is an accurate representation of the provision and focuses on delivery of the apprenticeship programmes.

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

Apprentices access a wide range of off-the-job learning, including significant workplace training, work shadowing, e-learning, classroom teaching and one-to-one sessions with trainers. This supports them to develop quickly new skills and knowledge that enable them to become valued members of their teams.

Apprentices receive effective information and advice at the start of their programme and have a clear understanding of its requirements, and career options. Apprentices are right to value their classroom sessions, where they share their experiences and gain an insight into different career paths.

Managers plan apprenticeships carefully, so that they meet employers' and apprentices' needs well. Employers are involved in planning learning and receive good information about the progress of their apprentices. In the rare instances when apprentices fall behind, assessors are quick to act and support apprentices to get back on track. As a result, almost all apprentices are making the progress required to achieve on time.

Apprentices receive frequent and detailed feedback. This enables them to develop their professional skills and behaviours quickly.

Apprentices make effective links between theory and workplace practice. For example, apprentices explain the legislation and behaviour management theory they

have applied at work. They are very clear about the limits of their roles, and are careful not to take actions outside their responsibilities.

Assessments of English, mathematical and digital skills take place prior to starting an apprenticeship. Apprentices develop these skills early in their programmes. However, managers do not use the results of these assessments to plan English and mathematical skills development in order to support apprentices' current roles.

Assessors do not always consider apprentices' prior qualifications and experience fully when planning learning. For example, an apprentice who has extensive childminding experience finds her work easy, because assessors did not take her prior knowledge into account.

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

The managing director and managers ensure that appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place. The designated safeguarding officer is suitably qualified. Managers follow safe recruiting practices. They maintain an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service register. No recent incidents have occurred that require reporting and monitoring.

A suitable safeguarding and risk assessment action plan is in place. Directors and managers ensure that all members of staff complete frequent training to refresh their understanding of safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, British values, and equality and diversity. As a result, apprentices have an adequate awareness of these issues and the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Safeguarding has a high priority in most settings, particularly in the care sector. As a result, trainers reinforce apprentices' understanding of safeguarding issues throughout the apprenticeship programme. Apprentices feel safe and have a good understanding of what to do if they have concerns, and they know how to stay safe online.

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