

Groundwork, Oldham & Rochdale

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 2483570
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Type of provider: Not for profit organisation

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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 learnership training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by ESFA and/or the learnership 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 learnership training provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Groundwork, Oldham & Rochdale (Groundwork) was established in 1983. The company received a contract to offer directly delivered adult learning courses in October 2017. Groundwork also deliver courses for adult learners for other training organisations as a subcontractor. These courses were out of scope for this monitoring visit.

At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 11 directly funded adults. Most learners are enrolled on the Prince's Trust team programme, with a very small number enrolled on construction or youthwork traineeship programmes. Programmes are designed to develop the vocational and behavioural skills that learners need for life and work.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers ensure that adult learners are recruited onto programmes that meet their personal development skills needs. Learners often join with significant barriers to learning due to having chaotic lives or having been long-term unemployed. Trustees, senior leaders and staff are passionate about the good opportunities they provide for young disadvantaged adults.

Leaders and managers have effective working relationships with a range of partners. They use these partnerships to help learners access valuable work or volunteering experience during their course and when they leave. Consequently, the vast majority of learners stay on their course, achieve a qualification and progress into relevant and meaningful further study, volunteering or work.

Managers and team leaders effectively monitor the progress of learners and implement effective strategies to help them stay on track. As a result, the vast majority of current learners are making at least the progress expected of them. The

vast majority of learners who completed their course in 2018/19 achieved their intended outcome.

Leaders and managers rightly identify that current self-assessment arrangements are insufficiently analytical. Improvement action plans do not set specific enough priorities to enable leaders and managers to fully monitor the impact of actions taken to improve the standard of education and training for adults. Leaders have recently implemented enhanced arrangements to evaluate the quality of training and assessment. They have accurately identified that the quality of English and mathematics functional skills teaching and learning requires improvement, as do pass rates in these subjects.

Groundwork has effective governance arrangements in place. Senior leaders and trustees receive frequent reports which enable them to challenge managers, where appropriate, and monitor the effectiveness of provision over time. Leaders recognise the need to broaden the expertise of trustees to include expertise in further education in order to provide additional support and challenge.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aims and/or personal goals? Reasonable progress

Team leaders use their extensive experience of working with adults who have significant barriers to employment and learning to plan and deliver courses that help adults gain confidence and life skills. For example, learners on the Prince's Trust programme participate in a residential team-building week. They enjoy working together. They share the responsibility to prepare, cook and serve meals to the group, gaining valuable independent life skills. Learners develop their personal and social skills. They support each other to succeed when participating in new and challenging activities such as rock climbing and canoeing.

Team leaders and staff provide a caring environment and good support and guidance. They help learners develop their planning and communication skills through well-planned activities. Learners work together in teams to plan and carry out community projects such as renovating local community gardens. They develop their communication skills when writing letters and media articles for fundraising activities to support their projects. Team leaders encourage learners to work safely. For example, learners carry out thorough risk assessments for the activities they plan when working in the community.

Adult learners on traineeships develop useful practical skills that help them gain employment, apprenticeships or voluntary work. For example, construction trainees participate in extensive work experience. They develop skills in groundwork and hard landscaping, such as repairing block-paving paths. Learners enjoy their programmes. They are proud of the vocational and personal development skills they are gaining.

Team leaders and tutors frequently assess learners' work. They provide useful feedback that helps learners improve their work, including their spelling and punctuation. Learners produce work of an appropriate standard for their level of qualification.

In a very small minority of sessions, team leaders and tutors do not provide sufficiently challenging tasks for the most able learners. Consequently, they do not progress as quickly as they could.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders and managers ensure that staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and understand their roles and responsibilities to keep all learners safe. Senior managers have established clear reporting procedures to log and monitor safeguarding concerns. Leaders provide effective oversight to ensure that concerns are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

Leaders and managers carry out safe recruitment processes, including Disclosure and Barring Service checks. They ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding updates and participate in relevant training activities to maintain their knowledge of key safeguarding issues, including the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation.

Most learners have a good understanding of health and safety risks and safeguarding issues. Learners can articulate how to keep themselves and others safe and how to raise any safeguarding concerns. Team leaders and staff are proactive in signposting learners to a range of relevant local and national support agencies.

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