

# YMCA George Williams College

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 2494970

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

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**Type of provider:** Not for profit organisation

**Address:** George Williams College  
179 Whitechapel Road  
London  
E1 1DN



## 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.

YMCA George Williams College is a not for profit organisation based in London. The college was established in 1970, specialising in youth work qualifications. The college is one of 116 independent local YMCAs spread across England and Wales. It began offering levy-funded apprenticeships in 2017. It currently provides standards-based apprenticeships in housing and property maintenance at level 3 to four apprentices and a framework apprenticeship at level 3 in youth work to six apprentices.

### Themes

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

#### **Insufficient progress**

Trustees and leaders have not ensured that the apprenticeships they offer meet the requirements of apprentices or their employers. Staff do not have sufficient knowledge and skills of the requirements of apprenticeships to plan and deliver programmes that meet all apprentices' needs. Leaders do not assess the quality of provision in sufficient detail to promote improvement in teaching and assessment.

Governance is weak. Trustees do not provide leaders with the necessary support and challenge they need to be effective. Trustees have not ensured that leaders rapidly implement effective arrangements to improve the quality of apprenticeships. The significant turnover of senior staff has meant that leaders and managers have only recently begun to address the weaknesses in the apprenticeship programmes. As a result, too many apprentices make slow progress.

Trustees and leaders have insufficient oversight of the progress of apprentices, relying on contracted tutors to monitor their progress. Leaders have recognised the need for an improved reporting structure but have been too slow to implement this. Leaders and managers do not accurately record decisions and agreed actions to support improvements in implementing a successful apprenticeship programme. Consequently, current programmes do not meet the needs of employers and the development of apprentices' workplace knowledge and skills.

Leaders have not put in place appropriate strategies to develop apprentices' English and mathematical skills. Tutors do not routinely develop apprentices' skills in these subjects or set them specific targets to improve any weaknesses. As a result, apprentices do not develop the necessary skills to prepare them for their functional skills qualifications and vocational application.

Managers do not ensure that apprentices experience well-planned on- and off-the-job training. Employers are not routinely involved in planning apprentices' training, and too many employers are not clear enough about the requirements of an apprenticeship. Consequently, most apprentices make slow progress.

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

The majority of apprentices do not develop substantial new skills, knowledge and behaviours. Apprentices start their programmes with considerable experience in their job roles, and the apprenticeship overly focuses on accrediting prior knowledge and skills. Apprentices' attendance at training sessions is poor. Too few apprentices are retained on their programme. Those who do continue make slow progress as a result of poor employer support.

Apprentices and employers do not receive clear advice and guidance about the requirements and demands of the apprenticeship programme. They are also insufficiently informed about the functional skills. As a result, too many apprentices leave the programme.

Tutors do not assess and record which new knowledge, skills and behaviours apprentices gain. They set targets that are not sufficiently challenging, and they do not address slow progress quickly enough. Tutors follow the same delivery and assessment approach for apprentices who are on framework apprenticeships as for those who are on new standards. As a result, apprentices' training, learning and assessment are not linked or mapped to the distinct requirements of the apprenticeship programme that they are following.

Apprentices do not always receive timely feedback on their assignments. For example, a few apprentices waited too long for written feedback on a unit assessment. This slows progress and makes it difficult for apprentices to act on the feedback to improve future assignments.

Apprentices with additional support needs do not receive appropriate support as part of their learning programme, other than being given extra time to complete work. Tutors do not have the skills and expertise required to fully meet apprentices' support needs.

Tutors have relevant qualifications and experience in their vocational subject areas. Leaders have not ensured that tutors have the skills to teach functional skills English and mathematics to ensure that apprentices achieve their qualifications. As a result, apprentices make slow progress in these subjects.

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

Leaders implement appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff understand their responsibilities and duties and how to identify and report any concerns they have. Apprentices have a reasonable understanding of safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty and how it applies within their job roles and they fully understand how to keep themselves safe.

The designated safeguarding lead and tutors have completed appropriate training. Essential training for the deputy safeguarding officer is due to be completed shortly. Trustees have not taken enough responsibility for monitoring safeguarding or identifying any trends or regional or local issues.

Leaders recently implemented checks to ensure that all staff are safe to work with their learners. These are complete for all new appointments and are being retrospectively completed for existing substantive and contracted staff.

Leaders have been slow to implement a 'Prevent' duty risk assessment and training for tutors and apprentices. However, all apprentices are aware of their employers' 'Prevent' duty reporting procedures.

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