

KMF Precision Sheet Metal Limited

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector: Bev Ramsell, Her Majesty's Inspector

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Type of provider: Employer

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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. KMF is the market leader in the supply of precision sheet metal fabrication and engineering solutions.

KMF Precision Sheet Metal Limited (KMF) provides metal-manufacturing solutions across a diverse range of industrial sectors. KMF's apprenticeship programme has been running since 2002. In July 2018, KMF received its own publicly funded contract. The company currently has 27 apprentices. These are studying the engineering operative standard at level 2, the engineering technician standard at level 3 and engineering manufacturing frameworks at level 2 and level 3.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders have a clear vision for apprenticeships within the company. They place considerable importance on the development of apprentices' knowledge, skills, understanding and behaviours to support their ambition for the business to stay competitive. Apprentices make a positive contribution to the business. As a result, they develop quickly and assume higher levels of responsibility.

Leaders have invested in high-quality training facilities to support the apprenticeship programmes. As a result, apprentices benefit from industrial-standard equipment in the training workshops. Managers recruit tutors and mentors who are highly qualified and experienced.

Tutors encourage apprentices to attend relevant external activities. For example, they attend outward-bound courses and participate in a range of community projects, such as the design and erection of a statue commemorating the end of the first Gulf War. As a result, apprentices develop a strong community ethos along with developing their technical skills.

Managers recruit apprentices with integrity. They recruit apprentices to the correct apprenticeship at the most appropriate level. All apprentices receive the offer of a permanent position when they complete their apprenticeship successfully. Managers

encourage apprentices to continue studying up to the level of which they are capable, including degree level.

Managers provide good opportunities for apprentices to experience work in all departments. Consequently, they benefit by becoming familiar with all engineering aspects within the company. In their final year, apprentices choose to develop expertise in a specialised area which informs their intended employment destination.

Apprentices receive good information, advice and guidance (IAG) about careers in KMF. However, managers do not ensure that all apprentices have access to external impartial careers IAG.

Quality assurance arrangements are not sufficiently rigorous. Managers identify areas for improvement accurately through the self-assessment processes. However, their actions to bring about improvements are not always effective. Improvement plans are not detailed enough. They do not address fully all areas of weakness identified within the self-assessment report.

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 complete appropriate initial assessments in English, mathematics and mechanical reasoning. These inform tutors accurately of apprentices' starting points.

Tutors plan learning effectively. Both on- and off-the-job learning are effective. Apprentices have a good understanding of the application of technical knowledge to the skills and behaviours they develop. Consequently, the quality of apprentices' work is good.

Apprentices become highly-skilled operatives. For example, they use lathes and prepare and use milling machines. They develop expertise in computer-aided design and computer-numerical control systems.

Apprentices take part in relevant competitions, for example 'Engineer of the Year' and 'World Skills Challenge'. Apprentices develop good teamwork skills. All apprentices take part in a wide range of charity projects through which they improve their technical skills further.

Apprentices develop and reinforce their use of mathematical knowledge and skills very effectively. All apprentices complete higher-level mathematics units alongside their vocational qualifications.

Apprentices receive highly individualised support and, as a result, they develop their technical skills rapidly. Mentors provide good additional support that enables apprentices to improve their engineering practices.

Managers monitor apprentices' attendance at off-the-job training closely. Apprentices receive their entitlement to time away from the workplace. Tutors swiftly identify apprentices who are falling behind. They provide good support to help them to catch up. Most apprentices make good progress.

Managers have been slow to implement aspects of the apprenticeship standards. Skills such as problem solving are not yet planned. Managers and tutors have also been too slow to organise preparation for the end-point assessment (EPA). As a result, apprentices are not aware of how to prepare fully for EPA and how to achieve high grades.

Tutors do not develop apprentices' written English sufficiently. They do not routinely correct spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in apprentices' written tasks. As a result, apprentices do not improve the quality of their written English.

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

Managers have created a strong health and safety culture. Apprentices have a good understanding of healthy and safe working practices. Well-considered risk assessments are in place throughout the business. As a result, learners work safely.

Leaders have appointed a designated safeguarding lead who holds appropriate safeguarding qualifications.

Managers ensure a thorough vetting process, including the completion of Disclosure and Barring Service checks for relevant employees.

Managers do not develop systematically apprentices' understanding of the 'Prevent' duty. Consequently, they do not have a deep understanding of current threats and local issues that they may face.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that the safeguarding policy gives adequate details of the local safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty agencies. As a result, the designated safeguarding lead is not always clear about which external agencies to which they should refer apprentices when the need arises.

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