

Contracting Services (Education and Skills) Limited.

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1278664

Name of lead inspector: Clifford Shaw

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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 this visit is only on the safeguarding theme below.

Contracting Services (Education and Skills) Limited is a new provider set up in 2017 to deliver apprenticeships for levy-paying employers. It has two directors. At the time of the monitoring visit, there were 19 apprentices. The vast majority of these are enrolled on level 3 team leader and supervisor apprenticeship standard, with a small number of apprentices enrolled on level 3 business administration and level 3 customer service specialist apprenticeship standards. The provider works exclusively with two large levy-paying employers who are based in Wiltshire and Devon. It employs two experienced associate tutors who work across all of the apprenticeship standards it offers. All of the apprentices are 19 years of age or older.

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

Safeguarding arrangements at Contracting Services (Education and Skills) are now effective. Directors have taken swift action to improve safeguarding and increase awareness of the 'Prevent' duty since the earlier monitoring visit in March 2019.

The director and designated safeguarding lead (DSL) are now appropriately qualified. Directors and coaches are well-trained and they all have at least the minimum safeguarding qualifications.

The DSL has received 'Prevent' duty training from the regional educational lead. Directors and coaches have reviewed and improved the organisation's 'Prevent' duty risk assessment to ensure that it incorporates the risks and priorities pertinent to the regions where their apprentices work.

Directors now monitor safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty at monthly management meetings to ensure that these themes remain a priority for the organisation. Leaders and managers have significantly improved safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty policies and procedures. It is now clear what the referral process is.

The DSL provides monthly safeguarding, 'Prevent' duty and online safety newsletter updates to employers, apprentices and coaches around topical subjects and policy developments, such as hacking concerns on social media sites.

Apprentices benefit from the new knowledge and understanding they have recently gained from the provider about safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty and how this has helped them in the workplace. For example, one apprentice is able to describe how training in these areas has helped her when marshalling at events and how it has improved her confidence and vigilance. Another apprentice comments positively on how the training has improved his awareness of mental health issues and his ability to monitor and support the wellbeing of colleagues.

Apprentices are now clear about how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they have a concern about a peer. A number of apprentices have completed online 'Prevent' duty courses to enhance their knowledge and understanding. The director ensures that progress reviews carried out with apprentices consistently cover the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding.

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