

# N&B Training Company Limited

Independent learning provider

**Inspection dates**

20–23 August 2019

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Adult learning programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Apprenticeships	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Good	

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders do not identify accurately all weaknesses of the provision. As a result, they have made slow progress in dealing with the recommendations from the previous inspection report.
- Too few adult learners achieve their qualifications in a timely fashion.
- Leaders do not ensure that learners broaden their understanding of how to keep themselves safe from local risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Apprentices studying business courses make slow progress with their apprenticeship.
- Too many apprentices make slow progress with their functional skills qualifications. Training coordinators lack the skills to teach these subjects effectively.
- Leaders and managers do not analyse the next steps of adult learners or apprentices sufficiently to help them understand fully the impact of their courses.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Adult learners value the online courses they study. Their learning improves their confidence and helps them be more effective in their jobs.
- Apprentices on most childcare courses develop their skills and knowledge effectively. They benefit from skilful and experienced staff.
- Leaders design adult learning and apprenticeship programmes that meet the needs of employers effectively.
- The timely achievement of apprentices in 2017/18 was high. Female apprentices achieved particularly well.
- Employers value the frequent contact with staff at N&B Training, which keeps them informed about learners' progress.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- N&B Training Company Limited (N&B Training) is a regional independent learning provider based in Farnham in Surrey. The company is owned and run by a managing director, supported by a senior management team. It has learners throughout the country, with the large majority in the south east.
- In 2017, the company introduced short, online level 2 courses for adult learners, funded through the adult education budget. N&B Training offers apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3. The largest apprenticeship subject areas include early years, children and young people's workforce, and business. Just under a quarter of apprentices study on new standards apprenticeships. Just over 440 adults and apprentices were enrolled in 2018/19. During the inspection, there were 88 adult learners and 53 apprentices in learning.

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should:
  - analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the provision in detail and take actions to improve weaknesses
  - continue to improve the timely achievement of adult learners
  - identify those apprentices making slow progress and intervene quickly to get them back on track
  - analyse their data from adult learners and apprentices in detail to understand the impact of their courses on learners' progress and progression
  - improve apprentices' knowledge of safeguarding and local risks to make sure they understand how to keep themselves safe from harm
  - implement strategies to help apprentices to make faster progress with achieving their functional skills qualifications.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers do not identify accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Their assessment of the quality of education is overly positive. Although leaders and managers have started to plan improvements, progress has been slow.
- Leaders' improvement plans are overly long and complex. They do not identify all the weaknesses of the provision. Where they do identify weaknesses, leaders have not developed clear actions or specific or measurable targets for improvement. This makes it difficult for them to measure any progress.
- Leaders and managers do not use data effectively to check the progress of learners. While managers complete monthly meetings with training coordinators and assessors to monitor the progress of current learners, they are unrealistic about what learners have achieved. As a result, staff do not intervene swiftly to improve learners' progress.
- Not all staff members are suitably skilled to support apprentices at the correct level of study. Training coordinators lack the necessary skills and training to teach functional skills subjects effectively. Consequently, they are not always able to develop apprentices' skills well enough.
- Leaders and managers have not yet addressed all of the recommendations from the previous inspection. Learners' progress in developing mathematical and English skills remains too slow. Too few apprentices benefit from high-quality feedback to help them improve their work. Staff lack confidence in developing learners' knowledge of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders have not yet sufficiently improved the quality of teaching and learning for all learners. Leaders' and managers' observations of taught sessions concentrate too much on what the teacher is doing and not enough on the progress that learners make. Their reports do not identify clearly all weaknesses. Where weaknesses are identified, leaders do not make sure that staff improve their skills quickly.
- Leaders have devised a sensible and effective process for improving the performance of staff. They use frequent meetings to check staff performance. They hold staff to account for the achievement of their learners during annual appraisals.
- Leaders and managers have a clear rationale for their adult learning courses and apprenticeship programmes. They work closely with local and regional employers to make sure that their learning programmes meet employers' needs. Employers value the skills that adults and apprentices gain through their learning.

### The governance of the provider

- The company has no governors or trustees. Governance is provided through the senior management team, which meets frequently. However, leaders do not benefit from independent scrutiny of the quality of training that adults and apprentices receive. Leaders do not receive the necessary support and challenge from impartial external bodies to ensure that the quality of education improves quickly.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have detailed policies and procedures in place so that learners and staff know what to do if they have any concerns. They make sure that all learners complete safeguarding training during their induction. Managers respond quickly and effectively to the very small number of safeguarding incidents and involve external agencies if needed.
- Leaders ensure that all staff that have contact with learners are subject to suitable pre-employment checks. Staff complete detailed health and safety checks in the workplace before apprentices start their training programmes. Staff complete appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training so that they know how to keep learners safe. Leaders recognise that new employees do not complete sufficiently detailed safeguarding training as part of their induction.
- Although leaders and managers have a suitable 'Prevent' duty action plan, they do not review this frequently. Consequently, they are not sure how much progress they have made and what actions are still outstanding. Although adult learners and apprentices know how to keep themselves safe, too few have anything beyond a basic understanding of the risks from radicalisation and extremism.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good for all learners. Although leaders and managers have planned carefully to improve teaching and learning for adults and apprentices, high staff turnover has, until recently, had a negative impact on learners' progress.
- Training coordinators do not routinely use the results of initial assessment to plan effectively for teaching business apprentices. Staff check carefully all apprentices' knowledge and skills before they start their apprenticeships. However, training coordinators do not use these results to individualise learning in their one-to-one taught lessons. Consequently, too many business apprentices make slow progress in developing their practical and theoretical knowledge.
- Adult learners and apprentices do not receive consistently useful feedback from assessors and training coordinators. Those on early years apprenticeships benefit from detailed comments which help them improve their work. Feedback to other learners is too often brief, overly positive and superficial. As a result, these learners are unclear about how to correct their work.
- Assessors and training coordinators do not always ensure that learners understand their work. For example, they do not question them carefully to check their understanding. A few learners struggle with the complexity of the language and terminology of their assignments. This hinders their ability to meet deadlines and produce high-quality work, and impedes their development as independent and autonomous learners.
- Apprentices studying childcare courses on standards apprenticeships understand their end-point assessments. Apprentices and training coordinators on these courses know the grade they are aiming for and how to achieve this. However, those on standards apprenticeships on other courses are unclear about assessment requirements and what to

do to gain the highest grades.

- Most adult learners and apprentices develop their written English skills effectively. Staff help them understand the importance of spelling and how to use language correctly. Learners develop their knowledge of new terminology and improve their subject-specific vocabulary during their courses.
- Training coordinators with new cohorts of childcare apprentices identify quickly apprentices' gaps in knowledge. They work closely and successfully with apprentices to motivate them in their apprenticeship programme and to improve their progress.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

### Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers do not help adult learners or apprentices sufficiently to develop their personal, social and ethical knowledge and skills. Apart from the very small numbers who complete the online British values course, apprentices do not have access to any further learning outside their main qualification. As a result, too few apprentices improve their knowledge of topics such as staying safe from radicalisation and extremism, keeping themselves fit and healthy, and their rights and responsibilities as a learner.
- Apprentices discuss career options with training coordinators during their monthly taught lessons. Most level 3 childcare apprentices understand the importance of their qualification as a stepping stone to their future careers. However, leaders do not make sure that all apprentices receive sufficiently detailed information to enable them all to plan their next steps in detail.
- Too few apprentices with prior qualifications in English and mathematics receive effective support that helps them to maintain and develop their functional skills.
- Leaders and managers encourage training coordinators to discuss news items with apprentices to improve their understanding of safeguarding. However, managers do not plan the content of these conversations and consequently not all apprentices benefit fully from these discussions.
- Most adult learners and apprentices enjoy their learning. Apprentices behave respectfully and most develop positive attitudes to learning. Apprentices on childcare courses are confident and assured in their job roles. Adults who complete their online courses develop their confidence well.
- Training coordinators reinforce the importance of punctuality for apprentices in taught lessons. Leaders and managers identify quickly apprentices causing concern with poor timekeeping. They act promptly and successfully to improve their punctuality.
- Training coordinators deal quickly and sensitively with apprentices' personal issues. Apprentices value the effective support and guidance that training coordinators provide.

### Outcomes for learners

### Requires improvement

- Not enough current apprentices make sufficiently rapid progress with completing their apprenticeships. In particular, those on business apprenticeships make less than expected progress. Although leaders have started to improve apprentices' rates of progress, it is too early to judge the success of these actions.

- Male adult learners and apprentices achieve substantially less well than females. While staff support male learners who struggle, leaders do not have a clear strategy to improve male achievement in either apprenticeships or adult provision.
- Achievement rates for adult learners are low. Too many do not achieve by their planned end dates. Around two thirds of adults currently on courses make slow or very slow progress with completing their online qualifications. Recent improvements by leaders and managers have started to reduce the rates of those not completing in a timely fashion, but it is too early to judge the full impact of these actions.
- Too many current apprentices make slow progress in achieving their functional skills qualifications while on programme.
- Leaders do not record and analyse the destinations of all adult learners. Although they record apprentices' next steps after completing their apprenticeships, they do not examine and interpret this data. They are unclear about the numbers of apprentices who progress to higher learning. As a result, leaders are unable to evaluate fully the impact of their programmes.
- In 2017/18, high numbers of apprentices achieved in a timely manner. Apprentices achieved particularly well in children and young people's workforce, business administration and customer services apprenticeship. Very few apprentices who started their programmes this year leave their courses early.
- Adult learners benefit from the online courses that they achieve. They value the impact of their learning, which helps them be more effective in their job roles, start new jobs and progress to higher level qualifications. In 2017/18, all adults who took qualifications passed them.
- Most apprentices on childcare courses produce work of good quality. Two thirds of the very small numbers of apprentices who have completed their standards apprenticeships achieved a distinction grade. Adult learners' work meets the standards of the qualifications.

## Types of provision

### Adult learning programmes

### Requires improvement

- Just under 90 adults are currently taking a wide range of online courses at level 2. Courses last between eight and 10 weeks. As most learners are based throughout the south east, assessors mark adults' work and feed back to them remotely. The most popular courses for online learning for adults with N&B Training lead to qualifications in awareness of mental health problems and understanding children's and young people's mental health.
- Leaders, managers and assessors do not ensure that adults understand the expected timescales for them to complete their qualifications. They do not intervene quickly to help adults falling behind to get back on track. Until very recently they have not taken successful actions to improve this. A substantial number of adults currently enrolled are well beyond their planned completion dates.
- The quality of feedback that adult learners receive from assessors is too variable. While a

few adults benefit from detailed information on how to complete better work, not enough adults know how to improve their assignments. Consequently, too many produce work that only just satisfies the demands of their qualification.

- Most adults value the information they gain from their courses and understand how their new knowledge helps them in their job roles. However, adult learners receive little information from managers or assessors to help them with their next steps. Only a very small number of adults complete further qualifications with N&B Training.
- Most adults enjoy their online learning. They benefit from the comprehensive and useful information they gain from their weekly meetings with assessors. They appreciate the support they receive from assessors and staff at N&B Training.
- Employers value the short courses that adults take, most of which support their work in care organisations. They appreciate the way that online learning meets the needs of their employees.
- Adult learners benefit from the carefully chosen range of qualifications that are available to them. They recognise the value of the good-quality resources and sensibly designed online learning courses.
- Adults learners feel safe and know whom to go to if they have a concern. They understand how to keep safe when online. Although staff discuss safeguarding with learners during induction, a few learners struggle to recall the content of these sessions.

## Apprenticeships

## Requires improvement

- Just over 50 apprentices are currently on programme, with equal numbers studying at levels 2 and 3. Around three quarters of apprentices study on childcare apprenticeships with the others studying business apprenticeships. Around a quarter of apprentices currently on programme are on standards apprenticeships.
- Leaders, managers and training coordinators do not track apprentices' progress in enough detail. As a result, they are not able to identify quickly those not on track to complete their apprenticeship within the planned timescale. They are unclear about the number of apprentices on business courses who have a substantial amount of work to complete to achieve their apprenticeship. Not all apprentices who are behind with their work receive timely support to get back on track.
- Training coordinators do not set targets that challenge most apprentices sufficiently. They concentrate too often on apprentices' unit completion rather than consolidating and developing skills and knowledge. They do not set apprentices clear milestones that enable them, their employers and N&B Training staff to check and track their progress in developing their skills.
- Too many apprentices on business courses are unclear about the skills they gain from off-the-job training sessions. Apprentices, employers and training coordinators do not record off-the-job training in detail. Accordingly, employers are not always aware of how best to help apprentices develop the skills they gain in taught lessons when at work.
- Managers do not ensure that apprentices achieve their functional skills qualifications quickly. Training coordinators lack the skills that enable them to be effective functional skills teachers. They rely too heavily on requiring apprentices to complete past

examination papers rather than identifying and improving weaknesses. As a result, apprentices make slow progress in achieving these qualifications.

- Training coordinators do not help all apprentices improve their knowledge of safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty and British values. Although staff inform apprentices about safeguarding during induction, leaders have not developed a comprehensive and clear programme to help apprentices to develop their knowledge. For example, few apprentices complete the online learning module to improve their knowledge of British values.
- Most apprentices on childcare qualifications make good progress. They benefit from well-planned teaching which helps them to develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours. They speak confidently about the new skills they have gained and how they apply them in the workplace.
- Childcare training coordinators use their expert subject knowledge to engage their apprentices in discussions which challenge successfully their views and preconceptions. They discuss, for example, the expected ages of people who become parents. They use the safeguarding units of the qualification to contextualise safeguarding in the workplace effectively. This helps apprentices develop their knowledge of staying safe when working with children and whistle-blowing procedures.
- Leaders plan apprenticeships that meet the needs of employers. They involve employers successfully in apprentices' recruitment. They make sure that training coordinators inform employers of apprentices' progress. Employers value the effective communication with staff at N&B Training.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	53446
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	441
CEO	Samantha Clark
Telephone number	01932 252599
Website	<a href="http://www.nandbtraining.com">www.nandbtraining.com</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	0	0	0	88	0	0	0	0
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	19	7	5	22	0	0		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	0							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	None							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the operations manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

## Inspection team

Andy Fitt, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kate Hill	Her Majesty's Inspector
Carolyn Brownsea	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Monaghan	Her Majesty's Inspector
Pauline Dixey	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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