

# Beats Learning Limited

Monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 2510871

**Name of lead inspector:** Penelope Horner, Ofsted Inspector

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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 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Beats Learning Limited was awarded a contract to provide levy-funded apprenticeships in April 2017 and began enrolling apprentices in February 2018. It currently has 66 apprentices in health and social care at levels 2, 3 and 5. Almost all of these are standards-based apprenticeships.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable progress**

The chief executive officer (CEO) has established a clear ethos and commitment to using education and training to enable people, and particularly those who are disadvantaged, to engage and succeed in learning. He has made effective use of Beats' other work on non-accredited provision for disadvantaged adults. This enables him to help develop the apprenticeships he offers to carers of these and other vulnerable adults.

The employer engagement manager works productively with a large employer to recruit candidates for the apprenticeship. He carries out suitable assessments to identify candidates' knowledge and their skills needs at the start of the programme. Assessors plan and sequence learning flexibly so that apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours and are able to perform their jobs more effectively.

A quality lead manager carries out thorough observations of assessors' performance in coaching apprentices, reviewing their progress and assessing their work. She monitors apprentices' progress carefully to identify those who are struggling or falling behind in their studies. Managers take suitable action to improve assessors' performance or provide additional support for apprentices, if necessary.

Many of the quality monitoring and management information systems are new and not yet fully developed or established. They do not provide sufficiently detailed information to prompt managers to intervene if things are going wrong. The CEO correctly identifies the need to improve Beats' quality monitoring systems and has suitable plans to rectify this weakness.

Managers do not do enough to check that apprentices receive their entitlement to paid time off the job for work on their apprenticeships. They are careful to record the time that apprentices spend on their apprenticeships, but do not ensure that this fulfils the entitlement. A minority of apprentices are not aware that they should have paid time for their studies.

**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**

Most apprentices are new to their roles or the employer. They develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to become effective in their jobs. Apprentices learn, for example, how to administer medication and to support clients with mental health conditions, or those suffering from degenerative illnesses. As a result, apprentices learn how to care for clients with a wide range of different needs.

Assessors are suitably qualified and experienced in working in care settings. They carry out fortnightly reviews with apprentices and make effective use of these sessions to train and coach apprentices in the knowledge and skills they need for their apprenticeships. They help develop apprentices' behaviours so that, for example, apprentices communicate more effectively with their clients. Assessors provide suitable guidance to apprentices on the standards required to pass their apprenticeships.

Assessors are approachable and flexible in their work with apprentices and carry out reviews to fit in with apprentices' work and family commitments. They help apprentices choose study units that match their job requirements, interests and career aspirations. Assessors and managers give apprentices beneficial pastoral support or guidance if they are struggling in their studies or falling behind.

Although assessors pay careful attention to developing apprentices' use of English in communicating with clients, they do not do enough to improve apprentices' grammar in their written work. Apprentices' answers to questions at level 3 are often too brief or provide insufficient detail. The CEO correctly identifies that provision for English and mathematics requires improvement.

In their feedback following assessments, assessors do not give apprentices sufficient information on how they could gain merits or distinctions in their qualifications or what they should do to improve. Assessors do not give apprentices enough information on the end-point assessment at an early enough stage in the apprenticeship.

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

Leaders and managers have well-established systems for ensuring that staff are suitable to work with young people and vulnerable adults. They carry out appropriate checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service and provide annual training for staff in safeguarding and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Leaders fulfil their duties under the 'Prevent' duty and liaise closely with local safeguarding boards.

The designated lead manager for safeguarding is trained and accredited at level 2 and is registered for training at level 3. He has extensive experience of working with vulnerable young people and adults and brings this useful experience to the apprenticeship programme. He takes appropriate action if safeguarding concerns arise.

Apprentices have a suitable understanding of safeguarding, particularly in relation to their work with vulnerable adults. They know what to do if they have a safeguarding concern. However, a minority of apprentices do not have sufficient understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Managers' arrangements for developing apprentices' knowledge and understanding of safeguarding are insufficiently clear.

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