

# Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

Monitoring visit report

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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.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust became an apprenticeship provider in March 2017 and started delivering apprenticeships in January 2018. At the time of the monitoring visit, 55 levy-funded apprentices are on three different standards-based apprenticeship programmes at level 3. Of these, 26 apprentices follow the senior health care worker programme, 19 are on the business administration apprenticeship and 10 are on the team leader/supervisor programme.

### Themes

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

#### **Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have a clear strategy to use apprenticeship programmes to develop their own staff to fill gaps in their workforce. They have established opportunities for their clinical staff to progress up to level 7. The senior healthcare support worker apprenticeship at level 3 provides a route into higher learning for unregistered staff without prior qualifications.

Leaders and managers recruit apprentices with integrity. They organise rigorous meetings, with prospective apprentices and their line managers, to identify the suitability of the programme and to clarify the expectations of all parties. As a result, apprentices receive their full entitlement to off-the-job training. The close alignment between apprentices, line managers and assessors enables the effective coordination of on- and off-the-job training.

Managers and teaching staff reflect effectively on their own practice and use feedback from apprentices to make changes to the programmes. For example, apprentices said that there were too many assignments, and managers responded by redesigning the programme to include other forms of assessment. Managers have introduced a more accurate system to identify apprentices' initial English and mathematical skills so as to focus on improving these at the start of the apprenticeship programme. As a result, the instances of delays in apprentices reaching their end-point assessments are fewer.

Leaders and managers are right to recognise that the current arrangements to assure the quality of the provision have not been rigorous enough. They do not focus sufficiently on the teaching practices of assessors and the impact that these have on the pace at which apprentices develop their skills and knowledge. Leaders and managers have recently reorganised the roles of their apprenticeship team to enable them to monitor the quality of the provision more effectively. It is too early to see the impact of these changes.

**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 develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours throughout their apprenticeship programmes. They use these well to make progress in their jobs and take on additional responsibilities. For example, apprentices have become able to complete more advanced risk assessments of mental health patients. A number of apprentices on the business administration programme have gained promotion as a result of the skills and knowledge they have developed through the apprenticeship.

Apprentices who do not have English and mathematics qualifications at level 2 benefit from well-delivered in-house functional skills courses. Teachers incorporate healthcare-specific examples and scenarios to make teaching relevant to the apprentices' roles at work. For example, senior healthcare worker apprentices learn about ratios through the calculation of medical dosages. Teachers develop apprentices' English skills by asking them to practise writing clinical notes on the same digital platform they use on their wards. They give helpful feedback to apprentices that enables them to improve their work more quickly.

Teachers have improved their use of information on apprentices' starting points to plan and deliver their learning. The first cohort of apprentices all followed the same programme, irrespective of their starting points. As a result, their progress was slower than expected. Current apprentices follow tailored programmes that enable them to develop skills and knowledge more quickly. Teachers adapt optional units to apprentices' roles and job descriptions.

Until recently, teachers did not provide timely support for apprentices who have additional learning needs. They have implemented new systems, at the beginning of their programmes, to identify apprentices' support needs. It is too early to judge the impact that this is having on their progress.

Teachers do not ensure that apprentices have a clear understanding of the arrangements for end-point assessment.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding Reasonable progress**

## **arrangements are in place?**

Leaders and managers ensure that staff and apprentices undertake appropriate safeguarding training and regular refreshers. The safeguarding lead is an experienced manager with a good understanding of the clinical environments in which apprentices work.

Leaders and managers ensure that they follow safe recruitment practices when appointing new staff. They carry out thorough pre-employment checks that support the safeguarding of apprentices.

Safeguarding managers have good links with the local safeguarding boards. They keep themselves informed of the issues affecting the areas in which their apprentices operate. For example, they have briefed apprentices about the recent increase in trafficking and child sexual exploitation in the locality.

Apprentices have an insufficient understanding of how to keep themselves safe from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Teachers do not reinforce effectively the information that apprentices receive on this topic at induction. As a result, they forget it quickly.

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