

The Academy Hub Limited

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 1278662

Name of lead inspector: Victor Reid, Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspection date(s): 30 October 2019

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 the Education and Skills Funding Agency and/or the apprenticeship levy. This follow-up safeguarding monitoring visit has been carried out consequent to the provider being found to be making insufficient progress with respect to safeguarding at their previous monitoring visit. It follows the arrangements outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook'.

The Academy Hub Limited was previously inspected in May 2019. At that time, the company had 57 apprentices in learning, the vast majority being on standards-based apprenticeships. At this second monitoring visit, the number of apprentices on roll has increased to 95, with most apprentices studying towards a range of qualifications including recruitment, customer service, team leading, and operational management. The director of the company did not respond to inspectors' requests to provide evidence or contribute towards the monitoring visit until after the inspection had taken place.

The focus of this second visit is on the safeguarding theme only, as leaders and managers had made insufficient progress in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements were in place at the original monitoring visit.

Theme

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

Leaders provided no evidence that demonstrates that they have taken effective action in respect of the various safeguarding concerns raised by inspectors at the previous monitoring visit. Leaders have not ensured that apprentices routinely receive or benefit from ongoing training about different types of safeguarding matters that they may encounter either in the workplace or in their personal lives. While a minority of apprentices have very recently completed an online training course on the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism, trainers and assessors have not undertaken any checks to confirm the extent to which apprentices have a secure knowledge and understanding of such matters.

Analysis of available information such as the company's safeguarding policy indicates that it contains out-of-date information. Most apprentices spoken to by inspectors do not know who the designated safeguarding officer is, or how to contact them.

Leaders and managers do not use local intelligence to identify particular risks in relation to safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, or to inform company policies and procedures designed to keep apprentices safe. Leaders and managers provided no evidence that demonstrated effective links with relevant local safeguarding partners.

Apprentices feel safe. Apprentices confirmed to inspectors that they have access to relevant health and safety and welfare support. Their employers provide this directly. Apprentices are supported effectively by their employers' arrangements for safeguarding. These include workplace health and safety checks, employee assistance programmes, and access to qualified first aiders.

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