

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School Limited

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector:	Pat Hornsby, Ofsted Inspector
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Address:	Whitby Mission & Seafarers Centre Hagersgate House Hagersgate Whitby North Yorkshire YO21 3PP

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.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School Limited (WDFITS) is a not-for-profit private company, limited by guarantee, which was established in 2002. It provides specialist training for the maritime industry. In August 2018, it began to deliver the level 3 standard in workboat crewmember, which equips apprentices to work as deckhands on a wide variety of specialist vessels. The programme includes a range of stand-alone qualifications, including the level 2 diploma in maritime studies. External organisations deliver two short qualifications on behalf of WDFITS. Currently, eight apprentices are in learning. They attend WDFITS's centre in Whitby for blocks of off-the-job learning as part of their two-year 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 implement an effective curriculum so that apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Apprentices attend WDFITS in Whitby for off-the-job training that covers the necessary theory that they later put into practice when at sea. They also gain qualifications that are essential for working in the maritime industry.

Leaders work closely with employers to develop programmes to meet their needs. They have extensive links with specialist maritime agencies, which they use well to provide rich and varied learning experiences. For example, apprentices visit a local boat manufacturer to see the building and repair of a range of vessels, which broadens their understanding of structure and stability.

Leaders and employers provide good information, advice and guidance at the start of the programmes. Through their recruitment and interview processes, they assess apprentices' suitability for their roles, which involve spending long periods at sea.

Leaders provide good human and physical resources to support learning. Tutors have vast experience of, and have held very senior roles in, the maritime industry.

WDFITS provides high-quality resources for off-the-job learning, which include a practical engineering workshop.

Leaders do not have arrangements in place to assure the quality of courses that external organisations deliver. Two courses require very specialist equipment and, for this reason, other companies deliver them on behalf of WDFITS. WDFITS does not have formal agreements in place with these companies and does not monitor the quality of their courses.

Leaders do not identify precisely enough the actions they need to take to improve their programmes. Their improvement plans lack specific timescales and impact measures.

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 are new to their roles and they develop new technical abilities and personal skills quickly, as a result of attending training. They acquire skills such as engine maintenance and emergency repairs, as well as communication, team working and cooking skills. These are essential when working as part of a small crew at sea.

The planning of the programme is highly effective and ensures that apprentices achieve incremental milestones that prepare them for the next stage. For example, in the first few weeks, apprentices become confident in emergency first aid, firefighting and fire prevention, and personal survival techniques. By completing these initial safety courses, apprentices are able to go out to sea when they return to their employers.

Apprentices who complete functional skills qualifications improve their English, mathematics and digital skills. They use these skills in their job roles, such as when calculating net tonnage, reading charts, navigating and using on-board equipment.

Employers are closely involved in, and fully supportive of, the programmes. They understand the programme requirements and know how their apprentices are progressing. They provide apprentices with timely on-the-job learning and ensure that they have sufficient sea experience to meet requirements. Skippers provide high-quality reports on the tasks that apprentices complete at sea, such as berthing the vessel and loading and unloading cargo.

Staff do not use a broad enough range of assessment methods for the diploma in maritime studies. They rely too heavily on the use of questions with multiple-choice answers, which does not develop apprentices' English skills in preparation for producing the reports they need to complete in their work roles.

Tutors' feedback to apprentices on their written work and during progress reviews does not aid their improvement sufficiently. Tutors do not suggest how apprentices can improve, or comment on their use of English, mathematical and digital skills.

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

Leaders place a very strong emphasis on health and safety, as expected in the maritime industry, where risks are high. They ensure that apprentices fully understand employers' zero-tolerance policy regarding employees being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at work.

Apprentices feel safe and know how to raise concerns. They know how to stay safe when online, and understand the risks posed by those who hold extreme and radical views. While attending training away from home, they can access support 24 hours a day. Leaders deal with safeguarding concerns appropriately, including referral to external agencies when warranted.

Leaders follow safe recruitment practices and ensure that a range of checks is carried out on new staff before they work with apprentices.

All staff have completed training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. However, the designated safeguarding lead has not yet completed specific training for the role but is to undertake suitable training imminently.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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