

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2674171
Name of lead inspector:	Chloe Rendall, Her Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	20 and 21 July 2022
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	Nissan Way Sunderland SR5 3QY

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 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.

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority is an employer provider that received a contract to deliver standards-based apprenticeships in November 2019 and commenced delivery in January 2021. There are currently five apprentices on the level 3 emergency service contact handling apprenticeship. All apprentices are aged over 19 and are employed by the authority at their main headquarters. The provider works with one subcontractor which delivers courses leading to functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics.

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 identified and selected the level 3 emergency service contact handling apprenticeship as a suitable educational pathway for their apprentices, who work in the emergency response sector. They ensure that the curriculum content enables apprentices to develop and acquire the necessary competencies required of full-time fire control operators. For example, leaders ensure that apprentices are trained in managing and coordinating the fire and emergency response teams once they have received an initial 999 call. As a result, apprentices acquire the core knowledge and skills that they need when handling emergency calls and coordinating rescue activity.

Leaders have recently recruited a dedicated apprenticeship coordinator who supports them to identify and understand weaknesses in the provision. This has resulted in improvements to specific areas. For example, the apprenticeship coordinator has designed and implemented new workbooks which support apprentices to identify more accurately how well they acquire and develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Leaders and managers recruit staff who have specialist emergency response knowledge and skills. Trainers teach apprentices the core and necessary competencies that they need and provide high-quality on- and off-the-job training. Leaders support staff with the development of their teaching skills, and trainers have successfully engaged with a local college to visit teaching sessions so that they are familiar with current teaching methodology and practice.

Leaders and managers have recently implemented an apprenticeship governance group to help increase their understanding of apprenticeship provision. While this is in its infancy, members of the group are clear about their roles and responsibilities in ensuring apprentices are making positive progress through their apprenticeship and as employees.

Leaders and managers ensure that arrangements for end-point assessments are in place and are communicated to apprentices and their line managers. They have taken additional steps to seek guidance about the quality of end-point assessment preparation to improve apprentices' opportunities to gain higher than a pass mark.

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 benefit from well-planned and logically sequenced on- and off-the-job training. They learn how to use complex technical information systems so they can manage emergency responses in a range of situations. They then competently and calmly apply their emergency call management training when providing fire survival guidance to members of the public. For example, apprentices handling house-fire emergency calls quickly and succinctly give vital life-saving instructions to service users trapped indoors.

Apprentices benefit from well-resourced learning environments which are used well to promote and enhance knowledge and skills development. They participate in mock scenario assessments set up by staff in the training room at headquarters to apply their new knowledge and practise their developing skills. Apprentices also benefit from external training provided by other emergency services, such as receiving training from police negotiators on how to respond effectively to calls from service users threatening suicide or from third parties reporting a potential suicide situation.

Trainers use information from assessments well to check apprentices' progress and development, and to inform training plans. Apprentices produce work of at least the expected standard. They use feedback provided by trainers carefully to ensure that they understand what they do well and know how to improve their written and practical work. For example, trainers use observations to assess apprentices' competency in dealing with emergency calls. Apprentices are then set personal targets designed to improve their speaking and listening skills. This ensures that they

can communicate effectively with members of the public and emergency services when responding to emergency calls.

After identifying a weakness in the identification of apprentices' English and mathematics skills at the start of the programme, managers and trainers have recently taken steps to ensure that skills gaps are accurately identified through appropriate assessment and that apprentices receive timely support if required. The very few apprentices who need English and mathematics qualifications receive good support from staff from the subcontractor to help them to progress and achieve their qualifications.

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

Leaders and managers create a culture of safety and protection. The designated safeguarding lead is suitably qualified to level 4, and leaders have in place suitable policies and procedures. Apprentices understand their safeguarding responsibilities to the public and know how to keep themselves and colleagues safe while at work.

Leaders are committed to meeting the requirements of the 'Prevent' duty. They risk assess the potential threats posed by extremist and terrorist groups to the authority's staff and pass on to apprentices useful information that they receive from counter-terrorist services.

Apprentices are confident that they can raise any personal safeguarding concerns about themselves to managers, including talking about their mental health and well-being, without fear of ridicule or recrimination. Managers respond positively to concerns and provide apprentices with useful information about the support services available to them, such as the support available from a dedicated trauma team for those affected by trauma-induced stress following a critical incident.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022

