

Inspection of Bespoke Consultancy & Education Limited

Inspection dates:

11 to 13 September 2024

Overall effectiveness**Good**

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Apprenticeships

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Information about this provider

Bespoke Consultancy and Education Limited (BCE) is an independent learning provider based in Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset. Established in 2013, BCE specialises in training staff working in the social care sector. In January 2018, BCE began offering apprenticeships to levy-paying employers.

Around 200 apprentices study standards-based apprenticeships, primarily the lead adult care worker at level 3 and the adult care worker at level 2. A few apprentices study the lead practitioner in adult care at level 4 and the leader in adult care at level 5. BCE also trains a few apprentices who study business administration at level 2. Nearly all apprentices are aged 18 and over. The majority work in various social care settings, all in the South West and South East regions.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Apprentices are motivated, have positive attitudes and enjoy their training. This is because lecturers and staff create a respectful and productive learning environment. Lecturers tailor apprentices' training plans well, using information about their prior knowledge and skills. This helps to provide apprentices with a learning experience that is personalised and meaningful.

Apprentices develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to be successful in their roles at work. Most produce a high standard of work. Leaders and staff collaborate effectively with employers to design a curriculum that meets their needs. This helps apprentices to build confidence and resilience as they recognise the value of their learning. Many apprentices move into higher-level positions or take on more responsibility at work. Apprentices are prepared well for their next steps.

Leaders work well with employers and community groups, such as nursing homes and providers of domiciliary care, to help shape the training opportunities that apprentices receive. This helps apprentices to develop their practical skills, such as providing effective personal care, and increase their confidence in knowing how to safeguard their clients.

Apprentices feel safe in training and at work. They know who to speak to if they are worried about their safety and well-being or have concerns about the clients they care for.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have taken effective remedial actions and received helpful support from external specialists. They have enhanced and improved the apprenticeship induction process, provided apprentices with more personalised support, and strengthened the governance arrangements. As a result of these improvements to the quality of provision, the proportion of apprentices who successfully complete their apprenticeship has increased from around a third to just over half.

Leaders have worked closely with employers to ensure apprentices receive high-quality training at work, without it extending into their personal time. This has provided most apprentices with sufficient time to complete their work, and reduced significantly the number who need to extend their training beyond the planned end date. The majority of apprentices achieve their apprenticeship with a merit or distinction grade. Employers recognise and value the skills that apprentices develop.

Leaders and managers ensure that apprentices receive high-quality education and training by studying a well-designed, structured curriculum that aligns well with industry standards. Leaders collaborate closely with employers to help tailor the content of the apprenticeship to meet the demands of the workplace. This helps to ensure that apprentices learn essential knowledge and skills early on in their

training, such as safeguarding, GDPR, and the professional responsibilities expected in their roles.

Most teaching is effective and uses a range of methods to teach and present information. Most lecturers provide apprentices with structured, well-paced lessons that build on their prior knowledge and help them to connect new concepts with existing skills. Lecturers reinforce key knowledge, supporting apprentices to retain new information by providing them with regular opportunities to review and apply their learning.

Lecturers and assessors work effectively to support apprentices in developing the new knowledge, skills and behaviours required to succeed at work. They take part in regular tri-partite meetings with employers to review the progress made by the apprentice in their learning. Lecturers provide apprentices with detailed feedback to help refine their skills and encourage them to apply the knowledge taught in training to workplace scenarios.

Leaders, managers and lecturers meet the diverse needs of apprentices well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff identify apprentices with additional needs early in the programme and provide them with appropriate support. Staff provide apprentices with tailored resources and targeted interventions, such as communication and teamwork support for apprentices who speak English as an additional language. This approach supports apprentices with additional needs to make expected progress and achieve qualifications in line with their peers.

Lecturers and assessors skilfully assess apprentices' progress in developing new skills and knowledge. While most provide helpful developmental targets, a minority set goals focused more on task completion rather than broader curriculum aims. This limits apprentices' opportunities to extend their knowledge by taking part in more advanced learning and further enhancing their professional growth and readiness for future roles.

Lecturers provide apprentices with useful careers advice and guidance throughout their programme. During the regular progress review meetings, lecturers discuss with apprentices potential career pathways and further education options. This helps apprentices make informed decisions about their future.

Leaders and managers have significantly improved the English and mathematics support they provide to apprentices studying functional skills. This includes well targeted one-to-one teaching sessions that promote improvements in apprentices' English and mathematics skills. Around three quarters of apprentices pass their English examination on the first attempt and approximately half do so in mathematics. However, vocational lecturers and assessors do not consistently provide apprentices who are not studying functional skills with helpful feedback on how to recognise and correct spelling and grammatical errors. They do not set them ambitious developmental targets. This limits their ability to improve these important skills.

Governance arrangements are effective. Governors use their specialist knowledge and relevant data to monitor the quality of provision, provide leaders with appropriate support and challenge, and make informed decisions. This helps to continually improve the apprenticeship experience. However, leaders' and governors' analysis of apprentices' destinations and achievement data, for apprentices with SEND, is not timely or detailed enough. This limits leaders' and governors' ability to assess the long-term impact of training on apprentices' ambitions and goals, and on their progression into sustained employment or further education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Increase the proportion of apprentices that stay on their programme and achieve their apprenticeship.
- Ensure all apprentices receive high-quality training to effectively develop their English and mathematics skills.
- Ensure lecturers and assessors provide apprentices with meaningful and ambitious developmental targets.
- Ensure leaders use timely and relevant data on the achievement and destinations of apprentices with SEND, to inform continual improvements to the quality of training.

Provider details

Unique reference number	2556369
Address	The Hive 6 Beaufighter Road Weston-Super-Mare BS24 8EE
Contact number	01275 876733
Website	www.bcelearn.co.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Kerry Dunnett
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	26 to 28 July 2022
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the CEO, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Paul James, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Hilary Yuille	Ofsted Inspector
Matt Hann	His Majesty's Inspector

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