

Oasis Community Learning (Academy Trust)

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	2765326
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Type of provider:	Employer
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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Ofsted undertakes to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision funded 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.

Oasis Community Learning (Academy Trust) is a multi-academy trust (the trust) that was established in 2004. The trust currently consists of 54 schools across England. The trust became an employer provider in November 2022 and began training apprentices in March 2023.

At the time of the visit, there were 12 apprentices studying the level 3 teaching assistant standard. Almost all of the apprentices are over the age of 19. The trust currently works with one subcontractor partner to provide functional skills training for apprentices who need to achieve English and mathematics functional skills qualifications.

Themes

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

Reasonable progress

Leaders are ambitious for the future of apprenticeships within the trust. They are committed to the development of their teaching assistant apprentices, who they believe are key to supporting the delivery of exceptional teaching in the trust's schools.

Leaders have a clear vision to develop a structured career pathway for teaching assistants to progress to teaching roles to meet local and national skills gaps. Apprentices undergo thorough recruitment processes to ensure they are suited to the role. Almost all apprentices have remained in learning.

Leaders and managers provide apprentices with an effective structured programme with regular face-to-face tutorials and online tuition sessions. This helps apprentices feel well supported in their training. Leaders ensure that apprentices receive time away from their job role so that they can become more proficient in their roles.

Leaders have recruited appropriately qualified staff to support and train apprentices. Staff benefit from the trust's broad range of continuous professional development and teaching resources. Tutors receive training on growth mindset and trauma informed approaches to managing behaviour. They have used this training to further develop the curriculum for apprentices. Consequently, apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours they can apply in their workplace.

Leaders have recently put in place a quality assurance framework, which aligns to the trust's vision, ethos and nine habits to monitor the quality of training apprentices receive. The framework is used alongside feedback from apprentices and employers to identify areas for improvement.

Governance arrangements have recently been put in place with appropriate external membership to provide independent scrutiny and challenge. However, it is too soon to measure the impact of the governance arrangements on the quality of the apprenticeship.

Leaders and managers rightly acknowledge that the arrangements for the delivery and oversight of functional skills by the subcontractor partner needs to be strengthened quickly. They have identified the need to oversee the monitoring of the progress that apprentices are making towards timely achievement of their functional skills qualifications in preparation for their final assessment.

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
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Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum. Apprentices learn knowledge and skills that go beyond the apprenticeship, such as studying different theorists and the impact on education and behaviour. As a result, apprentices gain new knowledge, skills and behaviours they can apply in the classroom.

Staff carefully plan and sequence learning to help apprentices build their knowledge, skills and behaviours over time. Apprentices first learn the science of learning and how to support learning in the classroom. They then learn how to support children with special educational needs and disabilities and the different stages of child development.

Tutors revisit previous learning to help apprentices remember the knowledge, skills and behaviours they are being taught. For example, apprentices explore the different types of questions to use with children in the classroom early in the programme. As they progress, they revisit questioning to learn how to develop their questioning techniques to identify misconceptions in learning.

Staff coordinate on- and off-the-job training so that apprentices can quickly and frequently practise what they are learning. For example, apprentices apply social modelling theories such as rewarding positive behaviours and the use of scaffolding techniques to support learning. As a result, apprentices become more fluent and confident in applying their skills.

Tutors skilfully check apprentices' learning through effective questioning. They provide apprentices with useful and developmental feedback to help them improve their work. Apprentices know what they need to do to achieve distinction grades in their final assessment.

Too many apprentices are making slow progress towards their functional skills qualifications despite being nearly half way through their programme. This is because leaders have yet to put arrangements in place for some apprentices to receive English and mathematics sessions.

Tutors do not use the information on apprentices' starting points well enough to provide all apprentices with individual targets or learning plans to help them achieve their full potential quickly.

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

Leaders and staff create a culture where safeguarding is a priority. Staff receive regular safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training so they understand the risks in their local areas.

The designated safeguarding lead supports apprentices should they have any concerns. Apprentices benefit from the trust's wider safeguarding team. This gives them access to specialist advice and support for mental well-being if needed.

Apprentices know how to keep themselves and others safe. They understand the importance of safeguarding and their responsibilities to keep the children they work with safe. They are able to identify the types and signs of abuse and what is a safe environment for children.

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