

Inspection of Bespoke Professional Development and Training Limited

Inspection dates: 15 to 18 March 2022

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 Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Bespoke Professional Development and Training Limited is an independent learning provider based in Stokesley, in North Yorkshire. It specialises in providing apprenticeships in people management across the country. At the time of the inspection, there were 502 apprentices enrolled on standards-based apprenticeships. Around 55% were on human resources (HR) apprenticeships at levels 3, 5 and 7, 16% were on learning and development apprenticeships at levels 3, 5 and 7 and 15% were on level 5 coaching professional. There were small numbers of apprentices studying on other apprenticeships, in areas such as business administration, team leader, operations manager and recruitment consultant. Most apprentices are over 19 years of age. Bespoke Professional Development and Training Limited does not subcontract any of its provision to other providers.

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

Apprentices benefit from an online learning environment that is calm and welcoming and encourages contributions and ideas from them. Most apprentices have their cameras turned on during online training sessions and are enthusiastic to speak in workshops and breakout rooms. Apprentices are respectful to each other when online, allowing peers time to speak and listening carefully to their contributions. They work particularly well together in group discussions. However, apprentices do not benefit from face-to-face learning alongside online learning. A few apprentices miss the richness of face-to-face delivery.

Apprentices have positive attitudes to learning and take pride in their studies. They value the development of their personal skills and the confidence that they gain as a result of their apprenticeship. Apprentices discussed 'light-bulb' moments during their programme which gave them the confidence to continue with their studies on returning to learning after several years.

Apprentices attend training sessions well, are punctual and behave professionally as a result of the high expectations of staff. They are aware that they need to display these positive traits in the industry in which they work, and do so during training and in the workplace. Apprentices are polite, articulate and organised.

Coaches and tutors support apprentices well to develop their understanding of British values, and their relevance to the workplace and their personal lives. Staff pay close attention to the rule of law, respect and tolerance as these values are relevant to the job roles that apprentices have. Level 7 HR apprentices can articulate how British values relate to their job roles in people management, such as the impact of the rule of law on HR policies in their organisation.

Apprentices feel safe. They have a good understanding of safeguarding and of the potential risks that they face at work and in the communities in which they live, such as county lines and modern slavery. However, a minority of apprentices do not have a sufficiently developed understanding of online safety and cybersecurity. Leaders and managers recognise this and are planning to deliver additional training in the near future.

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

Leaders and managers have a clear rationale for the apprenticeship programmes that they provide, which is to focus on the people management sector. They have responded proactively to demand from employers and learners, and to local and regional skills gaps in the HR sector, resulting in recent rapid growth. Leaders and managers have responded to requests from employers to enable level 7 HR apprentices to study towards Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development accreditation alongside their apprenticeship, to help them gain further promotion in the sector.

Leaders and managers work effectively with employers to ensure that programmes meet the needs of their business, providing bespoke programmes for employers. For example, coaches deliver additional sessions on assignment writing for level 5 HR apprentices in response to requests from employers.

Leaders and managers recruit industry professionals who have appropriate qualifications and expertise in their field that enable them to teach apprentices well. They provide tutors and coaches with a wide range of professional development opportunities that help them to improve their teaching and subject knowledge. These include frequent training events and the promotion of a culture of sharing best practice. However, leaders and managers have not ensured that tutors who teach English and mathematics functional skills courses have appropriate qualifications in these subjects. They plan for these teachers to acquire these qualifications in the near future.

Tutors and coaches plan and deliver the curriculum in a logical order to build incrementally on apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours. They adapt the curriculum well to ensure that apprentices have a sound understanding of core, basic skills before moving on to more complex work. For example, apprentices on the level 5 learning and development programme learn about the fundamentals of behaviour models and theories, ethics and morals first, before moving on to more complex learning around business strategy and decision-making.

Tutors and coaches identify accurately what apprentices already know and can do at the start of their course, and use this information effectively to plan individual programmes. This enables apprentices to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need in their job roles.

Most tutors and coaches use a range of assessment strategies well to check apprentices' learning and understanding. They use skilful questioning and encourage apprentices to contribute in group discussions to check their understanding of topics. Staff provide apprentices with clear feedback on their written assignments, which helps them to identify what they have done well and what they need to improve further. They challenge apprentices to expand their answers to provide fuller responses relating to the world of work.

Tutors and coaches use a wide variety of training activities and resources to help apprentices learn and then to remember what they have learned. They use discussions, scenarios, case studies, podcasts and professional discussions to help apprentices to embed their knowledge securely. Apprentices gain new skills, knowledge and behaviours, which they use in their workplace. For example, apprentices on the level 5 HR programme learn about Maslow's hierarchy of needs and use this to motivate employees.

Coaches provide useful careers information in workshops to help apprentices plan their next steps in the organisation in which they work. However, apprentices do not benefit from impartial advice and guidance when they are not sure about the career direction that they want to pursue.

Tutors have been too slow to provide appropriate support to apprentices who are studying towards functional skills English and mathematics qualifications. As a result, a few apprentices have not made the progress of which they are capable as quickly as they could. Tutors have recently introduced targeted support for individual apprentices who need it, and these apprentices are now making expected progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has appropriate training and experience to be effective in her role. She works well with a range of partners, such as regional 'Prevent' duty coordinators and local authority safeguarding boards. The DSL circulates useful information to staff and apprentices about local and national risks.

Leaders and managers have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place, with a clear reporting process. Apprentices know to whom they should report concerns. Leaders and managers implement safe recruitment practices to ensure that staff are appropriate to work with apprentices.

Staff complete effective training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. They use information from this training well to ensure that apprentices have a good understanding of safeguarding and of the potential risks of extremism and radicalisation at work and in the communities in which they live. Apprentices can confidently describe the signs of someone being radicalised.

Most apprentices aged 16 to 18 years have an appropriate understanding of sexual harassment and violence and of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Leaders and managers plan for the few who have not yet completed training on this topic to do so imminently.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that all apprentices studying towards functional skills English and mathematics qualifications receive timely support.
- Ensure that tutors who teach functional skills English and mathematics courses are appropriately qualified.
- Ensure that apprentices are able to access face-to-face teaching alongside online teaching.
- Ensure that apprentices who require impartial careers advice and guidance are able to access it.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1278637
Address	Springboard Centre Stokesley Business Park 24 Ellerbeck Way Stokesley Middlesbrough TS9 5JZ
Contact number	01642 956970
Website	https://www.beprodevelopment.co.uk
Principal/CEO	Georgina Selmi
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of quality and compliance, 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

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Vicki Locke	Ofsted Inspector
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