

Seymour Davies Ltd

Progress monitoring report

Unique reference number:	1270749
Name of lead inspector:	Penny Fawcus, Her Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	28–29 January 2021
Type of provider:	Independent learning provider
Address:	12 Ramsay Court Hinchingsbrooke Business Park Huntingdon PE29 6FY

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

Seymour Davies Ltd was last inspected in November 2019. At that time, inspectors judged the overall effectiveness of the provision to require improvement.

This monitoring visit focused on the extent to which leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances. It was undertaken as outlined in the [operational note on visits carried out from January 2021](#) and with reference to the further education and skills handbook.

These visits are to help apprentices, parents, employers and government understand how providers are meeting the needs of learners in this period, including those with high needs and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, inspectors carried out this monitoring activity remotely. As a result, the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would be the case during an on-site inspection. Therefore, this report provides a more limited level of assurance.

The impact of COVID-19 has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgement below. Inspectors did not evaluate leaders' response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer of 2020, when the provider was not open to all learners and there were no national expectations regarding remote education.

Theme

What progress are leaders and those responsible for governance making to ensure that staff teach a curriculum and provide support to meet learners' needs, including the provision of remote/online learning?

Reasonable progress

This provider offers adult learning programmes for the care sector and standard-based apprenticeships in business administration and health and social care.

Leaders, staff and governors have made reasonable progress in their actions to remedy the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. For example, leaders have focused on trainers providing better quality off-the-job training and prompt feedback on the quality of apprentices' work. To achieve this, they have focused on improving trainers' teaching skills. Trainers are now working towards level 4

certificates in education and training, and each has a suitable development plan to bring about the required improvement.

Leaders have implemented an appropriate online curriculum through the use of telephone and online platforms. This has included the production of new learning resources. All learning remains online. Leaders provide much ongoing training for staff and apprentices to enable them to use these systems effectively.

The quality of most apprentices' assignment work meets, or exceeds, the standard expected of them. Health and social care apprentices demonstrate good digital skills in their use of word processing to complete their assessments, workplace reports and related documents. Apprentices in business administration often use digital imagery and video recordings of their workplace evidence to show how they are developing and improving their skills. Trainers are prompt to mark work submitted by apprentices.

Leaders place greater emphasis on apprentices developing good skills in English. Trainers pay attention to apprentices' English skills when marking and giving feedback on assignments. Trainers have yet to routinely record or reflect on the English skills that apprentices have acquired over time.

Trainers do not revisit the tasks and learning activities that they set apprentices. They often do not check that apprentices have completed these tasks or reflected on the new skills and learning they have gained.

Leaders monitor apprentices' progress accurately. They promptly identify those apprentices who are falling behind in their learning and/or skills development. Leaders ensure that staff provides enough support and advice to help these apprentices catch up and remain in learning.

Trainers have improved the planning for apprentices' self-guided learning. This planned activity helps apprentices make better progress. As a result, the few apprentices who had previously fallen behind in their learning now show accelerated progress over recent months.

Leaders and trainers communicate effectively with their subcontractor partner. They work together to provide the same quality of apprenticeship learning that their directly taught apprentices receive. They frequently co-observe teaching, and share good practice and programme documentation.

Apprentices have a career plan that trainers and apprentices update on a frequent basis. Apprentices receive advice and guidance for their next steps and most have clear progression routes in mind. Trainers have helped health and social care apprentices gain promotion in the workplace. They do this by helping apprentices to identify what additional skills and experience they could acquire through their everyday work with senior colleagues, for example by assisting on medication rounds and learning how to give patients insulin injections.

A small proportion of apprentices are not receiving their full training entitlement. A few apprentices on health and social care qualifications have needed to cover staff absence at work due to the ongoing pandemic. As a result, they have not been accessing their off-the-job-training. Leaders recognise that they have further work to do to involve employers in the development and training of their apprentices. While employers take part in the initial planning of the programme, their involvement does not always continue throughout the duration of the apprentices' programme.

The new governing body does not yet have effective oversight of the quality of learning that apprentices receive. Governors' previous experience of education and the further education sector is appropriate. To date, they have made helpful suggestions for improving the provider's business operations and business continuity.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- ensure that employers enable apprentices to receive their full entitlement to training by providing sufficient opportunity for off-the-job-learning
- check that trainers and apprentices frequently reflect on the learning and new skills, including the English skills, that apprentices have gained, using this information to inform apprentices' ongoing targets for improvement
- ensure that governors have effective oversight of the quality of education, enabling them to provide appropriate support and challenge for rapid improvement.

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