

Quality Assurance Assessment 2019-20

Provider Name: Barnardo's

Visit Date: 30th July – 1st August 2019

Contents

Executive Summary, Provider Scoring and Overall Conclusion..... 3

Provider Description..... 5

Visit Approach and Team Details 6

Service Delivery 6

 Effective practice – this is an area that we believe is working well for the provider 8

Leadership and Quality Culture 8

 Effective practice– this is an area that we believe is working well for the provider 10

Outcomes and Impacts (Results)..... 11

Overall Rating Definitions..... 13

Executive Summary, Provider Scoring and Overall Conclusion

This visit was based upon Skills Development Scotland's formal review process which is set out in our Quality Management Framework¹ document and is scored against our quality indicators according to the RADAR methodology. This report identifies the main findings of the review team from their 3-day visit. It sets out areas for improvement which the provider should place within its Quality Action Plan.

Standard	Quality Indicator	BRAG Rating
Service Delivery	1.1 Providers develop and prepare work-based learning provision	
	1.2 Providers plan resources for effective delivery of work-based learning provision	
	1.3 Providers deliver and manage work-based learning provision and ensure quality of delivery (including sub contracted provision)	
	1.4 Providers manager partners and stakeholders to deliver outcomes for learners and employers	
Leadership and Quality Culture	2.1 The provider's work-based learning strategy is based on the needs and expectations of stakeholders, employers and learners	
	2.2 Leaders ensure appropriate resources are in place to deliver the work-based learning strategy	
	2.3 Leaders ensure staff are appropriately skilled and motivated to deliver work-based learning provision	
	2.4 Leaders take ownership for the continuous improvement of quality and performance of work-based learning provision	
Outcomes and Impacts (Results)	3.1 Providers achieve and maintain high levels of service delivery and outcomes for all WBL provision	
	3.2 Work based learning provision meets the needs of employers	
	3.3 Work based learning meets the needs of learners	
	3.4 Providers meet all statutory, equality and funding body requirements	
Equalities	This is an indication across all of the quality indicators how well the provider has engaged with the equality agenda overall	

¹ <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/45243/qualityassuranceplusimprovement-framework-arrangements-19-20.pdf>

The provider has achieved the score of 554 which is a grade 2, Very Good, meaning that the provider has fully demonstrated meeting the standards at a high level with major strengths and a few areas of enhancement to demonstrate continuous improvement.

The visit was positive, and a number of strengths and areas of effective practice were identified as well as a small number of areas of enhancement which are detailed in the main body of the report below.

As one of the country's largest children's charities, Barnardo's are in a unique position to be able to consult with government and influence policy in relation to children and young people to ensure that they give a voice to young people who are disadvantaged. The employability services that they offer target young people from Stage 1 to Stage 4 of the employability pipeline. Barnardo's are recognised for the work that they do with young people who may need more support and they are able to make good use of progression through the different stages of the pipeline to ensure that learners are well supported on their journey.

The provider is invested in ensuring that the learning and assessment that is delivered in the centre-based stage is well planned. This phase of the programme has time-tabled activities with detailed session plans. Project Workers who are delivering the programmes have the flexibility within the timetabling to make adjustments to ensure that the programme meets the needs of specific groups of learners, with the option to utilise the services of external partners where this is appropriate. Learners are supported to build a portfolio during this stage of the programme, which is used as evidence towards the Skills for Work and Certificate of Work Readiness awards. With a commitment to supporting learners to work towards a formal qualification, more than 60% of learners complete their award over a 3-year period.

Barnardo's are invested in ensuring that, where possible, the employability programmes that they run respond to specific identified local need, making good use of their own employer engagement plans to target upskilling of learners and utilising placement opportunities in order to maximise the chances of learners progressing into employment. Barnardo's also have a long-term partnership with SSE, working with them to offer placement and job opportunities to learners. They deliver a successful Stage 4 programme for SSE to support learners to progress into jobs in the SSE call centre in Perth.

In response to an identified need within the organisation, Barnardo's have committed to the creation of two new posts which have a focus on ensuring consistency of quality of delivery and assessment across the service. These posts are managed independently from the team of staff and management involved in the delivery of the programmes, meaning that they are able to take an impartial overview of the service when identifying and implementing continuous improvement actions.

Barnardo's as an organisation invests in staff development, ensuring that all staff have access to at least 3 days learning every year. The CPD that is available is not prescriptive and is designed to meet the needs of individual staff and specific teams. There is a focus on ensuring that their service is responsive to the needs of their learners, and in recognition to high levels of young people disclosing mental health issues, the provider has committed to becoming a Trauma-responsive organisation.

The management team of the service are inspiring and innovative, embodying the Barnardo's values and supporting the staff to do the same. Staff are motivated, dedicated and committed to the organisation. Although the teams are spread over Scotland, local teams work closely together, with a commitment to helping young people to make positive changes to their lives.

The provider is committed to the process of continuous improvement in relation to the quality assurance of their provision, ensuring that all staff members have been able to input into their quality action plan, and using formal and informal processes well to ensure that the implementation of improvements is an organic process.

Provider Description

Barnardo's Scotland is one of the country's largest children's charities, and has been working to support children, young people, parents, carers and communities for more than a century. Their purpose as an organisation is to help the most vulnerable children and young people transform their lives and fulfil their potential. Barnardo's run more than 140 diverse community-based services across Scotland, working with and supporting over 26,500 vulnerable children, young people and families. Barnardo's also regularly run campaigns to involve supporters in influencing national policy. Among the services that they offer, Barnardo's support young people to transition into the world of work, offering a range of locally based employability services aimed at stages 1 – 4 of the employability pipeline. This service is delivered by Barnardo's Works.

Barnardo's, originally known as Dr Barnardo's, was incorporated in 1899 and has a Chief Executive Officer who is appointed by the board of 8 Trustees who are responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the organisation. Barnardo's also have presidents, patrons and ambassadors who support fundraising activities. The Duchess of Cornwall is Barnardo's current Patron, and Natasha Kaplinsky has recently been announced as their new President.

With offices and training bases across Scotland where they are able to deliver their employability programmes, Barnardo's have had a contract with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) for the delivery of work-based learning for many years.

Barnardo's offer the Employability Fund (EF) in the following 11 Local Employability Partnership (LEP) areas:

Aberdeen City – Stages 2,3 & 4

Aberdeenshire – Stages 2,3 & 4

Angus – Stage 2 & 3

Dundee City – Stages 2 & 3

East Lothian – Stage 2

Edinburgh – Stages 2 & 3

Glasgow City – Stages 2 & 3

Highland – Stages 2 & 3

Moray – Stages 2 & 3

Perth and Kinross – Stages 2, 3 & 4

Renfrewshire – Stages 2 & 3

They have 194 learners in training at 28th June 2019.

Learners on all stages attend a training centre for an induction, the length of which can vary according to stage and LEP area, from 2 – 4 weeks. During this phase, learners are able to complete Steps to Work at Stage 2, units from the Certificate of Work Readiness at Stage 3 and industry specific training at Stage 4. Learners at Stages 2 and 3 then complete a work placement of approximately 10 weeks, during which time they also work towards units related to work experience. Stage 4 provision is sector specific, with care being offered in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and call centre provision being offered in Perth and Kinross.

Barnardo's Works has an Assistant Director / Head of Service who has overall responsibility for employment training and skills. Three regionally based Service Managers have responsibility for managing the delivery of the provider's SDS funded provision across 3 defined areas. The provider also has a Quality and Compliance Officer who is responsible for this side of the business. There are 4 Team Managers who are responsible for managing the teams of Project Workers. There are 5 Finance and Admin Officers, with at least 1 based in each area, and they are responsible for the administration of SDS funded provision. There are also 6 Employer Liaison Officers, with at least one based in each of the 3 areas. They have responsibility for liaising with the employers and

arranging work experience placements. There are also 9 Project Worker 2s and 11.5 Project Worker 1s who have responsibility for the direct delivery of the SDS funded provision.

Visit Approach and Team Details

This is the second formal assessment that has been undertaken by SDS of the provider's EF delivery, the most recent assessment being carried out in 2015. The provider submitted a self-assessment in April 2019 and evidence has been considered according to this. The assessment team also considered additional evidence presented by the provider during the visit.

The visit team had 5 members, 2 Quality Assessors and 3 Associate Assessors. The visit was based at the provider's premises in Paisley, with visits to the Inverness, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen offices being undertaken during the visit. The visit team were able to see various provider premises including training rooms, office space, private meeting rooms and communal areas. The provider was well prepared for the visit and all the evidence identified within the self-assessment, along with additional evidence identified by the provider was readily available in well organised paper or electronic format. Arrangements for learner employer and staff monitoring were facilitated well by the provider, and this was both helpful and appreciated.

The members of staff who were involved in the interviews and who provided evidence were the Head of Service / Assistant Director, 3 Service Managers, the Quality and Compliance Officer, 4 Team Managers, 2 Employment Liaison Officers, 3 Project Workers and 2 Administrators. The 15 learners and 9 employers sampled during the visit are based across the 11 LEP areas and were undertaking a range of EF Stage 2 and Stage 3. Stage 4 provision was not included in the sample as there were no learners on this programme at the time of the assessment. Most of the interviews were carried out face-to-face, with a small number being carried out by telephone due to geographical location.

Service Delivery

Strengths – These are the things that are working well for the provider

- The provider makes good use of their partner links to inform their initial assessment decisions. Information gathered from referral agencies is used to support an informal interview which is carried out with all prospective learners, during which the provider completes a pre-start questionnaire. This process helps to identify individual learning needs and determines the prospective learner's suitability for the programme.
- The provider makes good use of a skills wheel as a way of encouraging learners to reflect on their current skills levels. Learners rate themselves against a range of skills, with Project Workers also completing this exercise, allowing a comparison to be made between the learner's perception of their skills level and the Project Workers. The information from this useful self-assessment exercise is used to inform goal setting exercises. The wheel is revisited at regular intervals using the same process, and this allows the learner and the provider to clearly identify distance travelled.
- The provider delivers provision to meet the requirements of Stage 1 of the Employability Pipeline, and where appropriate uses their Stage 1 provision as a feeder for their EF Stage 2 programmes. In most cases this in-depth knowledge of learners developed during their work with them at Stage 1 is used to good effect to support them to progress on to the next stage of the employability pipeline.
- All learners receive a robust and well planned in-centre induction to their programme. Learners are generally inducted in a group and the induction gives the learner the chance to become familiar with the expectations of the programme. This robust process is supported by a comprehensive induction pack which is signed by the learner. This effective induction

process ensures that learners are well prepared for the programme and are clear about the programme objectives and the support available to them.

- Formal learning that is carried out in the training centre is well planned, resourced and executed. All learners have the opportunity to work towards formal qualifications, and this is valued by learners, some of whom have not achieved qualifications previously. Depending on EF stage and geographical location, learners spend between 2-4 weeks in centre. During this time, learners work in groups on well planned, timetabled sessions including but not limited to work-place behaviours, customer service, CV building and interview techniques. Project Workers have the scope to vary the content of the timetable in order to meet the needs of each group. They use this flexibility well to make good use of internal and external partnerships to support the in-centre delivery from a range of diverse organisations such as CITB and SECTT to give information on sector specific employability, and Barnardo's Threads who can offer input on areas such as sexual health. The work produced during these sessions is used to build a portfolio of evidence for the qualifications that learners can work towards; at Stage 2 this is a Steps to Work award, and at Stage 3, learners work towards the Certificate of Work Readiness. Sessions are engaging and relevant to the learners and as a result of this well-planned approach, more than 60% of the learners complete a qualification.
- Work placements are in the main valuable and relevant to the learners, allowing them to develop workplace skills and provide evidence for the work experience elements of the qualifications. Individuals are well matched to the placement opportunities and this is valued by learners and employers alike.
- The provider recognises some of the key personal and social issues that learners may be dealing with. One of these areas is the work that they do with LGBTQ learners. In order to support learners from this group, the provider has introduced gender neutral toilet facilities in some of their centres.
- Barnardo's have a reputation for supporting learners who may benefit from more focussed mentoring to help them to progress into employment. The staff team are supported by the management to develop and sustain an inclusive culture which fits well with the organisation's vision of a world in which no child is turned away from the help that they need. This means that learners receive the tailored individual support that they require to give them the best chance of success.
- The provider has their own internal discretionary budget which they are able to use to support learners on all of their programmes, including EF. If the provider identifies a learner need, applications can be made for funding for products and services such as travel, qualifications and equipment. This budget has been successfully used to support more than a few of their learners to progress to a positive destination, and to sustain the progression.
- Career management skills are embedded in the design of the provision and the provider uses the programme well to address the skills and behaviours that are needed for success. Employers are encouraged to input to training sessions to offer their expertise and advice in order to help to equip learners with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to sustain work experience placements.
- Resources that are available for learners to use during centre delivery and for the completion of modules are of good quality. These are uploaded to the Project Worker Hub, which is used to store a bank of resources which Project Workers can draw on and add to as required. This useful resource is valued by the delivery staff.
- Almost all of the centres are well resourced and well planned with communal areas to encourage learners to feel part of a team through informal interactions. Centres are accessible, and learners have access to excellent facilities such as interactive whiteboards, computers and I-pads. The provider has acknowledged themselves the requirement for new premises in one of the geographical areas, and where the centre is not in the best location to meet the needs of the learners, they make good use of facilities in local libraries, SDS offices or commercial premises. This range of resources enables the provider to deliver in diverse ways and ensures that learners have a varied learning experience.

- The provider makes good use of the feedback from awarding bodies, disseminating this at team meetings and using this feedback well to improve the quality of service delivery and assessment.
- The provider shows a commitment to sharing good practice. All staff are encouraged to share good practice, formally through the Project Worker Hub, team meetings, and informal team conversations. This range of activity means that the provider makes good use of strategies that have worked well previously.
- The provider has good partnerships in place with other providers, colleges and employers which enable them to support learners to progress from their programmes into employment. The provider invites employers into the centre to give talks to learners and will also accompany learners on visits to employers. This is useful for learners who don't have a clear idea of the type of job that they would like to do as it enables them to see a workplace first-hand.

Areas for Improvement or Development

- Learners are reviewed every 4 weeks, and this process is used by the provider to set goals with the learner. However, there are geographical inconsistencies in the review process. In some cases, reviews are completed with learners and employers separately, with no opportunity for 360° feedback. The provider also does not always revisit the ITP to inform review conversations and to help learners to track progress towards their goals.
- There is some inconsistency with employer's understanding of the learner's aims and objectives and the qualification that they are working towards resulting in inconsistent employer support of learners.
- Although they hold some standardisation meetings, these do not currently involve all of the staff who are carrying out assessments meaning standardisation isn't as effective as it could be.

Effective practice – this is an area that we believe is working well for the provider

Employer involvement

The provider has a long-standing partnership with SSE, for over 10 years, supporting over 230 young people through work placements and employment. One aspect of the partnership is their successful stage 4 EF programme. The programme is based in Perth and aims at supporting young people into employment in the SSE call centre. SSE offer a number of fixed term posts every year to Barnardo's learners. Learners on the programme work with Barnardo's for 2-3 weeks, during which time the provider ensures that they are well prepared for employment in the sector. Learners are then interviewed for the fixed term posts, and if successful are employed with SSE for a 6-month period. During this time the provider continues to support the individuals, completing monthly reviews and supporting them to sustain the employment. They are able to access and apply for internal permanent SSE vacancies during this period. This programme is run twice yearly. The programme has high achievement rates ranging from 80% in 2016-17; 109.1% in 2017-18 and 83.3% in 2018-19. In addition, in 2016 SSE completed a review of the work that they do with Barnardo's. Focussing on 113 learners who joined SSE through Barnardo's between April 2012 and October 2015, SSE found that for every £1 that they invested in the programme, providing things like travel and uniforms, there was an economic return of investment of £7.67.

Leadership and Quality Culture

Strengths - These are the things that are working well for the provide

- The provider has good links with DYW groups in local areas and is able to use these to good effect to understand the local employability landscape. They promote their EF programme widely within all of the local delivery areas, ensuring that they meet local economic demand and fulfil their SDS contracted starts.
- The provider makes good use of their internal links with other parts of Barnardo's such as Barnardo's Threads and Springboard to ensure that they have the skills to effectively support all young people, including those who are care experienced, into employment and training.
- The provider makes good use of local labour market information to inform the design and delivery of their provision. They have in place 4 employer engagement plans in which the provider analyses the local employability landscape to identify sectors where there is likely to be a high number of vacancies due to growth or expansion. For example, in the Edinburgh plan it is identified that there are likely to be vacancies in the construction industry due to a number of projects. Barnardo's response is to support appropriate learners to gain their CSCS card to enable them to apply for these vacancies. These plans are used by the Employer Liaison Officers to inform some of their practice when they are approaching employers and supporting learners to make potential career choices, ensuring that advice is tailored to industry demand.
- The Assistant Director and Head of Service is able to make good use of regular meetings with Scottish Government, using these opportunities as a vehicle to influence policy and instigate change in relation to how best to support young people and under-represented groups into positive destinations.
- The Assistant Director and Head of Service uses large networking events effectively to promote the work that Barnardo's do in supporting young people into employment. This approach leads to many larger employers wanting to be involved by offering potential job vacancies and work placements.
- There is a real commitment from all of the management and staff to ensure that each individual young person is the most important aspect of their programme. Staff are dedicated to supporting young people to achieve their full potential and have a very clear knowledge of how to support young people to overcome some of the issues that they may face.
- The provider has shown that they are committed to enhancing the consistency of the quality of their provision. In order to ensure that there is more consistency in the quality of the delivery and assessment, the provider has invested in the creation of two key roles: Quality and Compliance Officer and more recently, SQA Co-ordinator. These roles are directly managed by the Head of Service, meaning that they are independent of the day-to-day management and delivery of the SDS funded provision, ensuring a level of impartiality when identifying continuous improvement actions. This management structure also ensures that the Quality and Compliance Officer and the SQA Co-ordinator are able to consider the quality of delivery across the 3 regions in order to enhance the quality of the provision and to ensure consistency across the various geographical areas. Although the roles are relatively new and at the time of the visit, the impact was not able to be measured, this pro-active approach to quality improvement is acknowledged.
- The management team are inspiring and innovative, embodying the Barnardo's values and supporting the staff to do the same. Staff are committed to the organisation and get a real sense of satisfaction from the work that they do. All staff are motivated, and the local teams work closely together, to the benefit of the organisation and the learner. The staff team are empowered to contribute suggestions for improvements to programme delivery, and their contribution is valued.
- All new staff are given the tools to understand and deliver in their job role when they commence employment with the organisation. The provider has an excellent induction in place for the staff, which includes a detailed 2-week induction to the organisation, followed by a local induction into the job role and the programmes delivered, including the SDS funded provision. New staff are then given the opportunity to observe sessional delivery for a period of time before they are asked to do this themselves. All staff feel well supported and prepared for their jobs through this detailed induction process.
- The provider is committed to ensuring that all staff are well supported by their line managers and have a process of 1-1 supervision (support sessions) in place with line manager every

4-6 weeks. The focus of these meetings is staff wellbeing, with a recognition that at times, the job roles can be challenging, and staff may benefit from a protected space to discuss this. Staff find that the 1-1s are helpful and supportive and value the investment in time spent away from the job.

- The provider sets clear targets for individual staff and teams as appropriate for the service. Targets are based on EF starts, outcomes and outputs. All staff are aware of their targets and regular discussions during 1-1s and team meetings means that they can see how they are progressing towards them. This approach helps to ensure that individual staff and teams feel a sense of responsibility for the delivery of the targets.
- The provider has a robust staff Performance and Development Review (PDR) process in place. All staff have an annual PDR which is completed by their line manager. This detailed exercise allows the staff member and line manager to reflect on performance and learning over the year and line managers rate the staff's performance and behaviours according to a formal PDR rating scale. The member of staff and the line manager then set SMART performance objectives for the forthcoming year which are all referenced to the relevant section of the Barnardo's corporate strategy. All staff must set at least one target which is related to equality and diversity. This useful exercise helps staff to recognise achievements whilst also identifying development opportunities.
- As an organisation, Barnardo's are invested in promoting CPD opportunities for all staff, and as such they have a learning commitment in place to ensure that they can access CPD of a minimum 3-day duration. Opportunities are flexible and diverse and can be identified by individuals or a team. For example, in the Highland and Moray region, Project Workers are working towards their L&D6 Managing Learning and Development in Groups award. Other examples include input on supporting people with mental health issues and transgender individuals, and child protection. Staff value this opportunity and find that it supports individual and team development.
- The provider implements the self-assessment process well. This year the Quality and Compliance Officer has facilitated meetings which have enabled all of the staff team to be involved in contributing to the assessment of their own part of the service through planned team days. This information was then collated by Service Managers, the Assistant Director and the Quality and Compliance Officer and compiled into an accurate document which reflects the service at the point of completion.
- The provider is innovative in their delivery, and keen to adopt new methods to support the learners to achieve. For example, the provider has recently implemented a new scheme in Renfrewshire for Volunteer Mentors. Barnardo's, as an organisation, makes good use of volunteers to resource their services. However, they have identified that this resource could also be utilised within Barnardo's works. The provider has recently developed a Volunteer Mentor programme, recruiting individuals to volunteer roles where they support learners in their work placements in the way that suits the learner's needs. Their support may include a phone call in the morning to make sure that the learner is awake to attend their placement, or they might meet them during their break to make sure that everything is going well on the placement. The provider has recently recruited 6 volunteers and whilst it is early days to see any impact of this scheme, this approach is innovative in addressing issues that learners may face in sustaining work placements.

Areas for Improvement or Development

- None identified during the assessment

Effective practice– this is an area that we believe is working well for the provider

<i>Developing the Young Workforce</i>

Barnardo's engage well with the SDS NTP Equality team to improve MA opportunities for young people who are care experienced. The 'Discovering Your Potential' programme is delivered by a consortium made up of Barnardo's, Action for Children and the Prince's Trust. The programme is targeted at supporting

young care experienced people into employment. As part of this programme, and in partnership with SDS NTP Equality Team, Barnardo's also offer support to MA training providers and employers about how best to support people who are care experienced in an MA.

To ensure that the Barnardo's team had all of the skills and information that they needed to successfully deliver the asks of the programme, the SDS NTP Equality team completed CPD activities with them, focusing on apprenticeships, and how best to promote these to employers. Barnardo's also use this as an opportunity to consult with MA training providers on the MA frameworks from the perspective of a care experienced individual. They have also worked with individual MA providers to create a pipeline to support young people into apprenticeships through work experience placements. At the start of an MA programme, where the learner has been identified as requiring some support, they use this opportunity to support all of the stakeholders by facilitating 3-way conversations between the young person, the employer and the training provider to ensure that support needs are identified and are clear to all parties from the beginning.

Although at the time of the assessment, the programme had not been evaluated, this is recognised as an innovative approach to supporting young care experienced people through their MA journey.

Staff development

The provider has recognised that many of the young people that they work with disclose that they have experienced mental health problems. In response to this, Barnardo's have committed to becoming a Trauma Responsive organisation, using the principles of the NHS Scotland Scottish Psychological Trauma Training Plan. This plan indicates that experiences of trauma can significantly affect the quality of life for an individual. To become a Trauma-informed organisation, all staff have completed Trauma-informed training to ensure that they are well equipped to support learners who may be experiencing trauma related issues.

Outcomes and Impacts (Results)








Strengths - These are the results that are good for the provider

- The provider has good overall outcome rates which have an upward trend over a 3-year period. In 2016-17 their overall outcome rate for EF provision was 51.8%, which was slightly above the national average of 51.6%. In 2017-18 their overall outcome rate had risen to 57.3%, which was above the national average 53.9%. In 2018-19, their overall outcome rate had risen again to 61.2%, which is above the national average of 54.8%.
- Over a 3-year period, the provider has consistently delivered higher start volumes for EF than originally allocated in their contract. In 2016-17 they delivered 106% (375/353) of their allocated volumes. In 2017-18 they delivered 102% (367/357) of their original allocated volumes, and in 2018-19 they delivered 111% (581/523) of the original volumes.
- The provider is committed to supporting young people to achieve recognised qualifications as part of their EF programme, with a trend of over 60% of learners achieving an output over a 3-year period. In 2016-17, 63.7% of learners achieved an output, compared with a national average of 53.1%. In 2017-18, the output percentage rose slightly to 64%, which is 5.3% higher than the national average of 58.7%. The output percentage fell slightly in 2018-19 to 61.3%, but this figure was still 7.1% higher than the national average of 53.1%.

- According to statistics generated by SDS, in 2017-18, 60% of referred EF learners were male, 40% were female. In 2018-19, the percentage of females undertaking the EF programme had risen to 43%, and the number of males had fallen to 57%.
- According to statistics generated by SDS in 2017-18, 1.6% of the provider's learners' self-identified as being Mixed or Multiple, Asian, African, Caribbean or Black and Other ethnic group. In 2018-19, this percentage had risen by 0.8% to 2.4%
- According to statistics generated by SDS, in 2017-18, 29% of learners self-identified as having an impairment, health condition or learning difficulty. In 2018-19, this percentage had risen by 6% to 35%.
- In 2017-18 8.4% of learners self-identified as being care experienced. In 2018-19, this figure had risen to by 5.6% to 14%.
- The most recent Awarding Body external verification reports were all rated green, with high levels of confidence and some areas of good practice along with minor recommendations highlighted.

Areas for Improvement or Development

- The provider has a satisfaction survey in place for learners and employers to complete at the end of their programme. However, although there is some limited evidence of feedback from both learners and employers, the sample size is small and the strategy for gathering feedback is not consistent across the provision. There is limited analysis of this feedback in place, with no evidence of improvement actions based on this.
- Despite having relatively good figures in relation to participation of learners who self-identified as being from a mixed or multiple, Asian, African, Caribbean or black or other ethnic group, the provider has identified themselves that they would like to do more to promote their programme to this community.

Overall Rating Definitions					
					
Grade 6 Score rating not awarded (Unsatisfactory)	Grade 5 Score below 300 (Weak)	Grade 4 Score between 301 and 400 (Satisfactory)	Grade 3 Score between 401 and 500 (Good)	Grade 2 Score between 501 and 600 (Very Good)	Grade 1 Score over 601 (Excellent)
Provider is unable to demonstrate how they meet the Standards – immediate remedial action required	Provider has been unable to meet the Standards at an acceptable level – important areas for improvement identified	Provider has demonstrated how they have met all Standards at the minimum level -with specific areas for improvement or further development highlighted	Provider has fully demonstrated meeting the Standards with strong strengths and minor areas for improvement noted	Provider has fully demonstrated meeting the Standards at a high level with major strengths and a few areas of enhancement to demonstrate ongoing Continuous improvement	Provider has fully demonstrated meeting all Standards providing a very high level of assurance - exemplifies best practice including delivery of ongoing Continuous Improvement.
Equality and Diversity RAG Rating Definitions					
					
Red is an indication that there is a clear need to take action to improve participation and support measures to improve retention of equality groups in SDS funded provision		Amber is an indication that this is an area for improvement. Although there is some evidence of activity to improve participation, more could be done. The provider could enhance measures to improve the recruitment and retention of the SDS specific equality groups		Green is an indication that this area is working well for the organisation with monitoring and review in place to assess impact of their activities	