

Inspection of City Gateway

Inspection dates: 17 to 19 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| The quality of education | Requires improvement |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Requires improvement |
| Personal development | Requires improvement |
| Leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Education programmes for young people | Requires improvement |
| Adult learning programmes | Requires improvement |
| Apprenticeships | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Information about this provider

City Gateway is an independent learning provider based in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Most learners come from the borough and live in low-income households. City Gateway offers both traineeship and apprenticeship programmes. Traineeship programmes are between 12 and 20 weeks in length. Young people and adult trainees are taught together as one cohort in City Gateway's training centre. Apprentices study the level 3 business administration standards-based apprenticeship. At the time of the inspection, there were 78 learners on the traineeship, of whom 53 were aged 16 to 18, and 25 were young adults aged 19 to 24. There were 12 apprentices, five aged 16 to 18 and seven aged over 18.

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

Learners and apprentices enjoy their time at City Gateway. They are treated fairly, and staff encourage them to do well. Tutors use well-practised strategies to manage learners' behaviour if needed. As a result, learners' and apprentices' behaviour in class is consistently positive, and learners benefit from calm, purposeful lessons. Many say that City Gateway is a good place to learn.

Learners and apprentices value the support they receive while in training. For example, learners receive free breakfast and snacks and have access to a well-stocked weekly food bank. Learners benefit from access to a job club, which supports them to prepare for and apply for jobs.

Learners benefit from well-taught classes in English and mathematics. Lessons help learners to develop and practise new knowledge that builds on what they already know. A high proportion of learners who take English and mathematics examinations successfully achieve their qualifications.

Learners and apprentices do not receive sufficient careers advice and guidance. As a result, too few learners and apprentices understand the career options open to them once they complete their studies.

Learners and apprentices have limited opportunities to access a broad personal development curriculum. For example, learners and apprentices have not studied topics such as sex and relationship education regarding consent. Learners and apprentices report that they are interested in developing a wider understanding of topics such as how to spot bullying in the workplace and how to support those who are being bullied. However, learners and apprentices do not feel that they get sufficient opportunity to discuss and develop their understanding of these issues.

Learners and apprentices feel safe. They trust the safeguarding process and say the team is easy to contact and talk to if needed. Learners have gained an understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism through presentations from the local authority, local police, and drama groups. However, apprentices do not have a secure understanding of the specific dangers they may face in the areas in which they live and work.

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

Leaders and managers sequence the English curriculum effectively so that learners develop the knowledge and skills they need to gain employment or progress to further learning. For example, English teachers have a strong focus on punctuation and grammar skills, which some learners lack. Learners then apply these skills when learning how to write a CV and cover letter. As a result, learners and apprentices develop writing skills and are becoming more work ready.

Leaders do not ensure that all apprentices can frequently apply their new knowledge and skills at work. A few apprentices do not have job roles that sufficiently match the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the apprenticeship standard. As a result, these apprentices have fewer opportunities to practise and apply their new skills.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that all requirements of the traineeship programme are met. Most trainees do not have a work placement. Therefore, too few benefit from the opportunity to enhance their understanding of their chosen career or practise the employability skills they have learned.

Tutors are well qualified and experienced. Most present new concepts clearly and concisely. Tutors encourage group discussion in sessions to help find gaps in learning. Tutors use questioning and past test questions effectively to find and close gaps in learners' and apprentices' knowledge. As a result, current learners and apprentices are well prepared for their final assessments and exams.

Too many learners do not attend sessions frequently enough. A minority of apprentices do not value attending their day-release sessions because they can access resources online, and they often work independently in class. Therefore, they do not see the value in travelling to attend. As a result of poor attendance, the progress of some learners and apprentices is hampered.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff benefit from a range of training and activities. For example, a few staff are trained in mental health first aid, and most have trained in trauma-informed approaches. This training has had a positive impact on how staff support apprentices and trainees with mental health issues. However, opportunities for teachers to develop their teaching skills are in the initial stages of implementation.

Too few apprentices successfully achieve their apprenticeship standard. Leaders have made positive steps to improve the provision. They have appointed coaches and new teaching staff. Early signs are positive and are beginning to have an impact. For example, apprentices who have recently completed have achieved high grades. However, it is too early to see the full impact of the changes made.

Leaders and managers have identified most of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. However, the actions they have taken have not had a rapid enough impact. For instance, actions taken to improve learners' attendance and the number completing work experience have been too slow.

Leaders and managers have put in place suitable governance arrangements. Trustees have relevant backgrounds and expertise in, for example, education, finance, law, safeguarding and human resources. Trustees have access to data that allows them oversight of the provision. However, the challenge they provide is not yet generating sufficient impact on improvements to all aspects of the provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and trustees ensure that City Gateway has a strong culture of safeguarding. They have good oversight of safeguarding concerns through a comprehensive tracking and monitoring system. Leaders frequently review safeguarding cases and present these to the safeguarding board, which includes their trained safeguarding trustee.

Leaders and managers have implemented effective safeguarding policies and procedures to keep staff, apprentices and learners safe. They have strong links with local and national safeguarding partnerships, which helps leaders to stay up to date with emerging risks across the country.

Leaders follow safe recruitment practices to ensure all new staff are suitable for their roles.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should ensure that all trainees have access to and take part in work experience placements.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that trainees and apprentices have access to effective careers advice and guidance.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that apprentices are in job roles that are closely related to their apprenticeship so that they can put into practice the knowledge and skills they learn.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that they track learners' attendance accurately and put in place appropriate actions to improve attendance.
- Leaders and managers should ensure they develop a comprehensive personal development curriculum so that learners and apprentices can develop their talents and interests.

Provider details

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Unique reference number | 58841 |
| Address | The Pavilion Import Building 2 Clove Crescent, Poplar London E14 2BE |
| Contact number | 020 3727 6310 |
| Website | www.citygateway.org.uk |
| Principal, CEO or equivalent | Diane Betts |
| Provider type | Independent training provider |
| Date of previous inspection | 25 to 27 February 2020 |
| Main subcontractors | None |

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of education and inclusion, 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 Manning, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Jon Bowman | His Majesty's Inspector |
| David Baber | Ofsted Inspector |
| Christina Christou | Ofsted Inspector |
| Sam Hanmer | Ofsted Inspector |

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023