



## **Education Scotland Inspection Report on the External Review of Training in Modern Apprenticeships in Social Services: Children and Young People.**

**Report by Maria Lloyd, Acting Head of Education**

### **1 Purpose of Report**

The report outlines the outcome of the above inspection as carried out by Education Scotland which was communicated in their report of July 2019. This inspection was an external review and was part of a national sample. A copy is included in appendix one.

### **2 Background**

#### **2.1 External Review Process**

External reviews are structured according to the quality framework External quality arrangements for the evaluation of Modern Apprenticeship Off-the-Job and On-the-Job training, which can be found on Education Scotland's website.

Reviews involve the ten core quality indicators, which provide the minimum requirements for Education Scotland to evaluate the delivery centre against the high-level questions. There is scope for review teams to use other quality indicators in the framework in a proportionate way, depending on identification of risk or excellence or analysis of a centre's context.

Reviewers report the outcome of external review visit in terms of strengths and areas for further development with grades awarded for each of the high-level questions. After each review visit to a centre, the team provide verbal feedback on key strengths and areas for development to senior managers and contractors. The Lead Inspector (LI) for the visit will discuss and agree with the review team provisional grades from the six point scale to assign a grade to each of the high-level questions.

These grades will be incorporated into the national report on the industry sector. The national report will have grades for each of the high-level questions. It will reflect findings from all of the delivery centre visits and will be published after all the review visits have taken place by Education Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government.

This report contains the grades awarded by the team for the high-level questions:

- Grade 1 excellent – Outstanding and sector leading
- Grade 2 very good – Major strengths
- Grade 3 good – Important strengths with some areas for improvement
- Grade 4 satisfactory – Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
- Grade 5 weak – Important weaknesses
- Grade 6 unsatisfactory – Major weakness

#### **2.2 The External Review in Midlothian**

The review of Midlothian Council by Education Scotland took place during April and May 2019. The team examined learning and teaching and other important activities that impact on the quality of the apprentice experience. They evaluated these against the three high level principles of Outcomes and Impact, Service Delivery and Leadership and Quality Culture; using the ten reference quality indicators outlined in External quality arrangements for the review of Modern Apprenticeship Off-the-Job and On-the-Job training April 2017.

The team found two examples of excellence which they describe in their report.  
The external review team talked with apprentices, staff at all levels and employers.

The report for Midlothian Council was published in 30 July 2019 and has been distributed to all Elected Members and Church Representatives on the Cabinet for their information.

### **2.3 The Centre and Its Context**

In carrying out the external review of Midlothian Council, Education Scotland took the following context fully into account.

Midlothian Council delivers vocational education and training for the early learning and childcare workforce across the local authority which also includes professional updating training for external delivery partners. The centre is approved by the Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA) to deliver Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) in Social Services (Children and Young People) at Scottish Credit Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 7. The Modern Apprenticeship (MA) Social Services (Children and Young People) programme is funded by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

Midlothian Council are actively involved in South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) and also work in partnership with secondary schools and colleges to support the delivery of programmes. The centre is expanding their contract to meet the proposed in of early learning and childcare provision across the local authority including the delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) in early learning and childcare.

At the time of the review the centre had 45 apprentices in training.

### **2.4 Outcomes of external review**

Many areas of positive practice were noted in the report. The following particular strengths were indicated by the inspection team:

- Centre staff take good account of local authority priorities and are responding well to the planned expansion of early learning and childcare. The MA programme is linked to local authority policy with an emphasis on children's rights and wellbeing.
- Centre managers and assessors support and encourage apprentices well to complete their MA programme. This includes peripatetic placement supervisors and setting based mentors who provide helpful support to apprentices within the workplace. Almost all apprentices make good progress in achieving their goals.
- Arrangements for quality assurance are effective within the centre and satisfy awarding body requirements. Centre staff have developed detailed handbooks for apprentices, mentors, placement supervisors and managers which are used well within workplace settings. Placement supervisors encourage apprentices to document their experiences in reflective accounts and provide assistance in evaluative writing techniques.
- The centre has strong strategic links and collaborative arrangements in place with a number of partners. Centre staff have established good links with Edinburgh College and provide important professional updating training to all early learning and childcare practitioners within the local authority and these development opportunities are also available to external delivery partners.
- The centre's vision, entitled "Midlothian, the best place to grow and learn in", is underpinned well by values of equality, empathy, respect, trust and integrity. Staff are highly motivated and committed to delivering a high quality training experience for apprentices which aligns well with vision of the centre.

### Signposting Excellent Practice

During the Education Scotland external review, the centre submitted examples of what it considered to be excellent practice and the review team also identified examples worthy of dissemination.

- Induction programme (provisional)
- Mentoring programme (provisional)

The following areas for development were noted by the inspection team:

- Assessors do not formally assess apprentices until after their three month induction period. During this period there are no opportunities for apprentices to use their workplace experience to contribute towards unit and core skills evidence.
- Centre staff do not carry out initial assessments of additional support requirements until after the induction programme is complete. This limits opportunities to provide appropriate early interventions to support apprentices.
- There are no opportunities for apprentices to have their prior learning accredited to enable quicker qualification progression. Apprentices with relevant prior knowledge and experience feel frustrated with the pace of their learning.
- Most apprentices are unclear on how they are achieving their core skills elements within their programme.
- Assessors do not use reflective accounts produced by apprentices during induction to generate unit and core skills evidence. This is a missed opportunity to provide additional support for apprentices on commencement of their qualification.
- Assessors are unaware of the placement supervisor role and how these arrangements support apprentices within workplace settings.
- Apprentices are not clear on how the various staff roles and responsibilities contribute to the delivery of the MA programme.
- There is insufficient consultation with training staff to help learners plan next steps in learning and suggest improvements to the programme.

Grades were awarded in the following areas:

Outcomes and Impact	
<b>How well are apprentices progressing and achieving relevant high quality outcomes?</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>How well do we meet the needs of our apprentices and stakeholders?</b>	<b>Good</b>
Delivery of Training	
<b>How good is our delivery of training?</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>How good is our management of training delivery?</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
Leadership and Quality Culture	
<b>How good is our strategic leadership?</b>	<b>Good</b>

### 2.5 Background factors as outlined by the Local Authority

As part of the 1140 Expansion Plan the Early Years Team created a Workforce Development team to support the delivery of 1140 hours by 2020. The MA programme was created to ensure we were proactive about training our own staff and meet our staffing target. This is the first full year of delivery working with the Council SVQ team and colleagues in Life Long Learning and Employability. To date we have nearly 100 MAs in training.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Education Scotland have concluded that the Modern Apprentice Workforce Development Team working with the SVQ team and LLE have a strong capacity to improve and enhance provision and service delivery.

## **3 Report Implications**

### **3.1 Resource**

There are no financial and human resource implications associated with this report.

### **3.2 Risk**

Education Scotland visits a sample of Local Authorities regularly to review how they are performing. A national report is published which informs stakeholders about service delivery, key strengths and, its capacity for further improvement and sets out the main points for action.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of progress by School Group Managers and Senior Education Managers is the control measure in place to reduce the risk of failure of the service and to demonstrate its capacity for improvement.

### **3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation**

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☒ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

### **3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

The service will continue to improve its work in line with its Workforce improvement plan and the Education Service will continue to challenge and support the setting in relation to developing and implementing a range of quality improvement strategies.

### **3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

To achieve the Scottish Government 1140 hours, we are committed to training and recruiting appropriate staff. The Modern Apprenticeship scheme is helping us to do this and we will continue to engage with this.

### **3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

Copies of the report have been made available to Elected Members and other interested parties.

### **3.7 Ensuring Equalities**

The Workforce Improvement Plan will be screened for equalities implications.

### **3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development**

The Workforce Improvement Plan allows for sustainable development and improvement.

### **3.9 IT Issues**

There are no IT implications.

## **4 Recommendations**

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note the content of the inspection report which will be part of a national report.
- (ii) Pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration; and
- (iii) congratulate the Workforce Development team, SVQ team and LLE on the key strengths and areas for improvement highlighted in the report.

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**Appendix: Education Scotland Inspection report on the external review of training in Modern Apprenticeships in Social Services: Children and Young People.**