

Inspection of Total People Limited

Inspection dates: 10 to 13 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Education programmes for young people	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Total People Limited (TPL) was acquired by the Learning, Training and Employment group in July 2015. TPL is a national community learning and skills provider. The company provides government-funded and privately funded training programmes. TPL provides education programmes for young people, adult learning programmes, apprenticeships and provision for learners with high needs.

The company's head office is based in Openshaw, Manchester. It has training centres in Crewe, Chester, Openshaw, Macclesfield and Wythenshawe. TPL works with 11 subcontractors across England and Wales. The majority of their provision is based in the North West.

At the time of the inspection, there were 2,146 apprentices studying levels 2 to 7 apprenticeship standards, including a small number of apprentices who are on legacy apprenticeship frameworks. Most apprentices study at levels 2 and 3. There were 74 learners on education programmes for young people. The majority of these study employability courses. There were 22 learners with education, health and care plans on employability courses, supported internships or apprenticeships. There were 44 adults on functional skills English and mathematics courses.

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

Most learners and apprentices, display positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy their courses and feel valued by staff. Most learners and apprentices routinely attend their training. This is because they are motivated to achieve. Consequently, most move on to the next steps in their learning or their careers.

Most learners and apprentices value the support they receive from staff. They know that their learning coaches want them to succeed. This helps learners and apprentices to effectively build their confidence and self-esteem. For example, adult learners who speak English as an additional language confidently and proudly read bedtime stories to their children and ask for items in shops. However, not all learners or apprentices feel that their course meets their needs, or that they get the support they require.

Young people on employability programmes develop job application and interview skills, as well as vital work behaviours such as effective team working and time management. However, leaders have not yet arranged work experience for a small number of learners. As a result, they have not been able to develop their work skills as much as those who have already had work experience. The large majority of young people progress into employment or further education.

Adult learners quickly improve their lives as a result of their courses. They increase their self-belief and become self-sufficient. This helps them to be successful, whether it is in the job market or in their personal lives. Learners fulfil their goals to improve their communication with their families and communities, gain employment or move on to further learning.

Most apprentices develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to be successful at work. Level 3 bus and coach technicians accurately diagnose and repair engine faults on work vehicles. Level 5 HR consultant partner apprentices swiftly and accurately provide information about employment law or staff sickness to colleagues. As a result, many apprentices gain promotion, additional duties or a pay rise. However, a significant number of apprentices, and their employers, told us that until recently, they have had too many changes of learning coaches which has disrupted their learning. A small minority of apprentices do not feel that tutors provide feedback that helps them to improve, or that their work is marked quickly enough.

Most learners with education, health and care plans improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours at the same rate as their peers. Learners on employability courses confidently search and apply for jobs in their chosen sector. Learners on supported internships in primary schools receive de-escalation training to help them successfully manage conflict in the classroom. Apprentices develop essential work skills, such as good attendance and punctuality. Almost all young people achieve their ambitions to move on to further learning, employment or voluntary work.

Learners and apprentices feel safe and know to whom they should report any concerns. They feel that if they raise any concerns they will be heard.

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

Senior leaders have a clear strategy to meet the skill requirements of the employers they serve and those needed nationally. They have designed and developed a curriculum that allows most learners and the large majority of apprentices to progressively develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours. However, leaders and managers have not ensured that all apprentices receive the same high-quality training, including with subcontracted provision.

Learning coaches and tutors have the appropriate skills and experience to teach learners and apprentices. They receive a range of training, such as the effective use of assessment and using engaging resources. As a result, most learners make good progress on their courses. However, this is not the case for a significant number of apprentices who are behind in their learning and have not completed their apprenticeships on time.

Leaders do not ensure that effective assessments are completed at the start of the programme to identify what apprentices know and what they need to learn. As a result, most apprentices, including those with additional learning needs, follow a generic curriculum that is not sufficiently individualised to meet their needs and does not support them to achieve their full potential. However, learning coaches deliver an ambitious curriculum that meets the individual needs of young and adult learners.

A small number of apprentices complete additional training. For example, level 5 HR consultant partners complete health and well-being and mental health awareness modules. Level 3 custody and detention officers receive training on Black history and civil rights. This extends apprentices' knowledge beyond the minimum requirements of their course, standard or framework and meets the exacting needs of their employers' businesses.

Most learners and apprentices improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours as a result of their programmes. For example, level 2 hair professional apprentices confidently talk to clients, colleagues and visitors to their salon. Level 3 early years educator apprentices learn about nutrition and apply this knowledge successfully when they select and prepare healthy food for children. Level 3 installation electricians accurately interpret drawings before safely installing wiring systems in buildings or vehicles. As a result, apprentices become trusted members of their teams at work.

Learning coaches prepare apprentices effectively for their final assessments. For example, level 3 custody and detention officer, level 3 early years educator and level 5 HR consultant partner apprentices benefit from frequent opportunities to practise

professional discussions. As a result, most apprentices are successful in their final assessments.

Tutors and coaches do not routinely and consistently provide helpful feedback to a few learners and most apprentices to help them to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours over time. As a result, learners and apprentices, including those with an education, health and care plan, do not know what they specifically need to do to improve.

In apprenticeships, managers and learning coaches do not sufficiently plan and coordinate on- and off-the-job training for most apprentices. They do not routinely plan the development of apprentices' skills in the workplace with the employer. This means that most employers do not know what they need to do to help apprentices to improve, practise and master their knowledge, skills and behaviours throughout their apprenticeship. As a result, most apprentices do not make rapid enough progress in their learning.

Learning coaches and tutors do not systematically plan to develop a few young learners' and most apprentices' English and mathematical skills. They do not routinely identify specific English or mathematics improvements in apprentices' work. A small number of young learners feel that they are unprepared for their functional skills mathematics examination. As a result, too many apprentices and a few young learners make slow progress in developing their English and/or mathematical skills. Conversely, adults and most young learners, including those with education, health and care plans, routinely improve their English and mathematical skills. They are successful in their examinations and move closer to their goals to achieve employment.

Learning coaches do not routinely provide apprentices with ongoing, unbiased careers information, advice and guidance so that they have the right information to help them make appropriate career choices. However, this is not the case for adult and young learners, most of whom know what their next steps will be.

Significant deficiencies in the previous leadership and management of the provider led to a decline in the quality of direct and subcontracted provision. Leaders swiftly reduced the number of subcontractors and restructured the management and learning coach teams. They now focus more on improving oversight and the quality of the provision. For example, managers have recently appointed new staff to plan and teach the level 3 bus and coach technician and installation electrician apprenticeships effectively. As a result of these changes, the quality of education is already improving for these apprentices.

Governance arrangements are not effective. The board's focus has been primarily on finance and contractual performance for funding agencies as opposed to improving the quality of education for learners and apprentices. The board has very recently appointed a member with significant experience in quality assurance and quality improvement in further education and skills settings. However, the board member has yet to attend a board meeting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have put in place appropriate policies and processes to ensure that staff know how to keep learners and apprentices safe. They ensure that staff are appropriately trained. Staff benefit from regular training on aspects such as sexual harassment and drug and alcohol misuse. The safeguarding lead and team have the appropriate experience and training to carry out their roles effectively.

Learners and apprentices feel safe. They know to whom they should report any safeguarding concerns. Learners and apprentices receive an appropriate induction that includes fundamental British values, the 'Prevent' duty and sexual harassment. Most young learners and adults have a good understanding of these topics. However, most apprentices struggle to recall this information.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders should ensure that learning coaches and staff receive appropriate training and subsequent support to enable them to successfully provide consistent and effective feedback to young learners and apprentices so that they know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours, as well as their English and mathematics.
- Learning coaches should plan and coordinate on- and off-the-job training effectively with employers so that apprentices can practise, improve and master their knowledge, skills and behaviours at work.
- Leaders should rapidly improve the use of assessments completed at the start of the programme to develop an ambitious curriculum that challenges all apprentices to achieve their potential.
- Leaders should ensure that their careers guidance helps learners and apprentices to understand the full range of next steps and career options available to them.
- Leaders should continue to rapidly improve the governance arrangements to ensure they are held to account for the quality of learners' and apprentices' education and training.

Provider details

Unique reference number	55022
Address	Ashton Old Rd Openshaw Manchester M11 2WH
Contact number	0161 674 6220
Website	www.totalpeople.co.uk
Principal/CEO	Melanie Nicholson
Provider type	Independent learning provider
Date of previous inspection	8 to 11 May 2017
Main subcontractors	Apprentify Limited Build Skill – Plus Ltd Cheshire College South & West Clifford College Ltd G4S Plc Genesis Training Group Ltd LSL (Your Move) Property Services Plc Parallel Parents Plato Training UK Ltd Power in Partnership Rebus Training Ltd

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy managing director, 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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