

Inspection of The Marine Society College of the Sea

Inspection dates: 12 to 14 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

The Marine Society College of the Sea (MSCS) is a specialist designated institution situated in the London Borough of Lambeth. It provides education and training to the maritime industry. In 2004, MSCS merged with the Sea Cadet Association to form the Marine Society and Sea Cadets (MSSC). MSCS operates within the MSSC.

At the time of the inspection, there were 36 adult learners who study English and mathematics functional skills courses from entry level 1 through to level 2. MSCS subcontracts this provision to Learning and Skills Solutions Ltd. Learners have been in learning for approximately five weeks.

At the time of the inspection there were six apprentices in learning. Five apprentices were studying the level 2 marina and boatyard operative standard-based apprenticeship and one apprentice the level 2 port operative standards-based apprenticeship.

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

Apprentices and adults enjoy their training. This is because they receive good-quality training and support from their trainers. Apprentices have good opportunities during their programme to work in different areas of the dock, including the office and gate, and the bricks, tanks and the heavy lift areas. Trainers encourage apprentices effectively to have high standards of behaviour at work.

Apprentices and learners are highly motivated and participate very well in their lessons, showing much enthusiasm. They attend their online sessions well. They show respect for each other and their trainers and tutors. Online learning takes place in a calm and purposeful environment.

Apprentices and learners make good progress during their studies. This is because skills trainers and tutors use the results of assessments well to plan and teach an ambitious curriculum to a good standard. Consequently, learners and apprentices develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours. For example, apprentices learn the regulations they must adhere to at work such as the frequency of checks on lifting equipment. They know what signals mean when communicating with skippers when yachts traverse from a port to a marina.

Apprentices and learners feel safe and know who to turn to if they have a concern. Trainers and tutors teach a range of topics such as staying safe online, safeguarding, fundamental British values, and radicalisation and extremism that includes smuggling, county lines and suspicious activity on boats.

Contribution to meeting skills needs

The college makes a strong contribution to meeting skills needs.

MSCS is a strong advocate for the maritime sector. Leaders and managers make a valuable and vital contribution to meeting the skills needs of the niche industries within it. Leaders, including trustees, used the government's 'Maritime 2050: navigating the future' strategy to develop their highly ambitious strategic plan. This provides clear strategic direction on how MSCS will work to address the skills shortages and meet the government's vision and ambitions for the British maritime sector.

Leaders involve major influential stakeholders from sector bodies and employers to design and implement the curriculum. These actions have a direct, positive impact on apprentices. Stakeholders include The Workboat Association, Maritime Skills Alliance and British Marine. The Workboat Association were instrumental in the development of the occupational standards for the level 3 small commercial vessel crewmember apprenticeship. This means that apprentices gain Maritime and Coastguard Agency licenses so they can operate machinery, boats and equipment.

This year, leaders implemented a new strategy within the Solent region, which is a maritime-rich area, to teach functional skills in English and mathematics to adults,

with the aim of them achieving qualifications to help them gain employment, including in maritime industries.

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

Leaders, including trustees, have a clear vision for MSCS. They provide good opportunities for young people and maritime professionals to develop their skills and move on in their careers. Leaders have strategic plans and a curriculum offer that link well with the government's vision for the British maritime sector. As a result, leaders have well-designed adult and apprenticeship programmes to fulfil their vision.

Trustees, leaders and managers have good oversight of the provision. They carry out a variety of activities effectively to identify the quality of education and training that apprentices and learners receive, including those at the subcontractor. They take swift action when they need to make changes to improve the provision. As a result, apprentices and learners receive good education, training and support that helps them remain in learning and achieve their learning goals. Although the achievement of apprentices last academic year was low, the circumstances were beyond leaders' control. The majority of learners and apprentices who remained in learning at MSCS achieved their planned outcomes.

Leaders and managers make sure that the curriculum for each provision is logically sequenced. For example, trainers teach apprentices the hand and light signals used to guide ships and boats into a lock, harbour, marina or through bridges. Apprentices develop a very good level of competency in these skills before they safely guide ships and boats under supervision, and eventually independently.

Trainers and tutors use a range of effective strategies to make sure that learners and apprentices remember what they have been taught. In online sessions, they give clear explanations on topics such as the provision and use of workplace equipment regulations. They revisit topics where apprentices and learners have not fully understood the content. However, not all learners fully engage in their online lessons, and tutors do not always know if learners have understood what is taught.

Trainers work effectively with employers to make sure that apprentices have good opportunities at work to practise and develop what they learn. Consequently, apprentices develop skills early in their programme to perform a wide range of tasks at their yard, marina, or port. For example, they can operate a tugmaster to load and unload cargo and safely use a telehandler to lift and lower cargo onto trailers. Apprentices become valued colleagues to their employer.

Trainers provide highly effective support to apprentices in the workplace. They visit them frequently at work and conduct thorough observations of apprentices at work. They use observations very well to test out apprentices' understanding of, for example, when it is unsafe to move a boat. As a result, apprentices develop their knowledge securely and apply it well at work. They understand the regulations that

they must adhere to and how these apply to their roles. They understand the international management of dangerous goods code and work to these principles when moving and storing flammable gas and flammable liquids.

Leaders and managers make sure that apprentices gain useful qualifications over and above the requirements of the apprenticeship standard that make them more employable. For example, apprentices successfully achieve qualifications in forklift truck, tug, and telehandling operations. They take courses in operating and directing cranes and lifting equipment, powerboat handling, and fire safety.

Leaders and managers plan opportunities to develop apprentices' and learners' character and skills and promote their interests well. For example, level 2 marina and boatyard apprentices take part in a voyage at sea, working alongside crew members. Leaders provide adult learners with a range of online learning modules that focus on well-being, career development, computer software, and administrative and interpersonal skills. However, adult learners are not sufficiently aware of the offer to participate in these opportunities.

Leaders and managers provide good careers advice and guidance. For example, guest speakers inform apprentices about the range of roles they can pursue in the sector. As a result, apprentices have good knowledge about the opportunities available to them within the maritime sector.

Trustees use their wide range of skills and expertise well to provide strategic direction and develop MSCS. They have good oversight of the provision, including the subcontracted programmes, because leaders provide them with frequent and detailed information on the performance and quality of the provision. Trustees find the quality of reports helpful and provide suitable challenge and support to leaders to make sure apprentices and learners receive good teaching and support.

Leaders and managers provide a good range of development opportunities for staff. This includes pedagogical training such as how to embed English and mathematics into vocational sessions. Trainers participate in industry updates. For example, they gain Royal Yachting Association instructor certification and training on the latest technology and maritime equipment. As a result, staff leading the curriculum development and implementation of the programme have strong, current vocational and apprenticeship training experience and expertise.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Make sure that adult learners are aware of the wider opportunities available to develop their character and skills, and promote their interests.
- Make sure that adult learners engage in their learning sessions.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130414
Address	200b Lambeth Road London SE1 7JY
Contact number	02076547000
Website	www.marine-society.org
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Darrell Bate
Provider type	Specialist designated institution
Date of previous inspection	28 and 29 September 2017
Main subcontractors	Learning and Skills Solutions Ltd

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director of maritime training and development, 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

Joanna Walters, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jon Bowman

His Majesty's Inspector

Saskia Niderost

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 2024