

Nova Training

Address: Nova Training, Bushbury Lane, WOLVERHAMPTON, WV10 9TT

Unique reference number (URN): 53682

Inspection report: 13 July 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, learners are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect providers for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The provider has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The provider has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

1. Inclusion, and leadership and governance

Expected standard	
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Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders promote an inclusive culture in which learners and apprentices feel valued and supported. Staff identify learners' and apprentices' needs effectively and develop a clear understanding of the barriers that may affect participation, progress or wellbeing. They monitor progress and wellbeing closely and adapt support where needed to meet individual needs.

Learners and apprentices benefit from a range of well-planned support strategies. Staff receive relevant training that helps them provide consistent support, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or high needs and those who face disadvantage. This support helps learners and apprentices to engage fully in learning, overcome barriers and make positive progress from their starting points.

Leaders work effectively with employers and external agencies to ensure that support remains appropriate and responsive to learners' and apprentices' circumstances. Learners and apprentices develop greater confidence, resilience and independence and take responsibility for their learning and development.

Learners who are care-experienced receive personalised support that reflects their individual circumstances. Leaders and staff ensure that personal education plans identify clear actions, and they review learners' progress, attendance and wellbeing frequently. This helps to reduce barriers to learning and enables care-experienced learners to engage positively and achieve their personal and educational goals.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have a clear and purposeful vision to support learners and apprentices who face significant disadvantage and multiple barriers to learning. They are ambitious for what learners and apprentices can achieve and work effectively to help them develop the skills, knowledge and confidence needed for future success. Leaders have an accurate understanding of their strengths and priorities for improvement.

Governors provide effective strategic oversight. They have a secure understanding of the organisation's strengths and areas for development and use their experience to support and challenge leaders. Governors are realistic about where further development is needed and hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions.

Leaders invest in staff development. A notable proportion of staff are undertaking recognised teaching qualifications, which contributes positively to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders use performance and quality assurance information to identify development needs effectively and provide appropriate training, coaching and support to strengthen practice.

Leaders place a high priority on staff wellbeing. They promote a healthy work-life balance through a range of wellbeing initiatives and closely monitor the workloads of coaches and

tutors to ensure that they remain fair and manageable. Staff feel well supported, value the positive culture and are proud to work for the organisation.

Leaders work effectively with employers and external partners to enhance learning opportunities. This includes working with support agencies to raise awareness of knife crime and providing opportunities for learners to gain qualifications in mental health awareness. These partnerships help ensure that the curriculums are broad and responsive to learners' needs and interests.

2. Education programmes for young people

Expected standard

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Many learners face disadvantage, have special educational needs and/or disabilities or face multiple barriers to learning and progression. A large proportion have experienced disrupted education before joining their programme. Despite this, learners make clear progress from their starting points and develop the knowledge and skills that they need for their next steps. Since the previous inspection, the proportion achieving their full qualification has increased consistently. Nearly all learners who leave their studies early achieve a recognised qualification.

Learners produce work that is appropriate to the level of their study and improves in quality over time. They typically organise their work well and they complete it with pride. Learners develop useful new knowledge and skills in their chosen subjects. They also strengthen their English, mathematical and digital skills, often following previous negative experiences or low attainment in these subjects.

Learners are prepared well for their next steps. Many develop confidence, resilience and independence after overcoming significant personal, social and educational challenges. A high proportion progress to positive destinations, including further education, apprenticeships and employment. Learners are well equipped to continue their learning, enter the workplace and contribute positively to their communities.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders and tutors design curriculums that specifically meet the needs of learners who experience significant barriers to education, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or very low prior attainment and prior school refusers. They use learners' starting points well to plan personalised programmes that support engagement, confidence

and progress. Leaders ensure that staff receive effective support and training to teach the curriculums successfully. Learners benefit from programmes that prepare them well for adulthood, further learning and employment.

Leaders sequence the curriculums carefully so that learners develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need for future learning, work and independent living. In English and mathematics, learners routinely revisit earlier learning. This helps them to consolidate their knowledge and deepen their understanding. Learners recall their learning confidently and apply it to increasingly challenging activities.

Tutors teach effectively in most cases. They often use clear explanations, modelling and targeted questioning to develop learners' knowledge and understanding. Tutors identify learners' misconceptions and provide helpful feedback that supports improvement. Learners value this support and can explain how it helps them to make progress. However, teaching is not consistently expert across all centres and curriculum areas. Leaders recognise this and are taking appropriate actions to improve the consistency of teaching and learning.

Tutors and support staff, in nearly all cases, adapt learning effectively to meet the needs of learners. They use assessment information and support plans to provide appropriate adjustments, including assistive technology, alternative assessment methods and personalised learning strategies. Learners access their curriculums successfully, participate fully in learning and make positive progress from their starting points.

Participation and development

Expected standard 

Learners benefit from a supportive and inclusive environment that helps them re-engage with education. Many have experienced significant barriers to learning and develop greater confidence, resilience and independence during their programme.

Learners demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and treat staff and their peers with respect. They participate well in lessons, support each other and take pride in their achievements. Most learners attend well and engage fully in their learning activities.

Learners benefit from work experience, college visits and other enrichment activities. They also learn about healthy relationships, online safety and everyday risks. Leaders ensure that most learners understand their progression options and receive suitable support with applications and interviews for further study or employment. However, work-related learning opportunities are not yet broad enough to help all learners develop well-informed career goals and employability skills. Careers guidance does not consistently help learners develop a detailed understanding of future pathways.

Learners understand what bullying, discrimination and harassment are and know that these behaviours are unacceptable. They know how to report concerns and trust staff to deal with them quickly.

3. Apprenticeships

Expected standard



Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Apprentices make sound progress from their starting points. They develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to succeed in the workplace and apply their learning confidently in their roles. Their growing competence helps them to make a positive contribution at work. Leaders have improved achievement rates successfully, and most apprentices achieve their qualification.

Apprentices develop secure occupational knowledge and skills and produce work that meets, and in a few cases exceeds, the requirements of their qualification. They apply their learning effectively in the workplace and strengthen their English, mathematical and digital skills successfully. A notable proportion achieve the highest available grade in their apprenticeship.

Apprentices are well prepared for their next steps. They understand how their learning supports their future career aspirations and develop the confidence to take on greater responsibilities in the workplace. Most apprentices remain in employment, progress to new roles or gain promotion. Apprentices are well placed for further training, career progression and long-term success.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders monitor the quality of apprenticeships closely and take appropriate action to improve teaching and training. They evaluate the quality of provision through reviews of apprentices' work, observations of teaching and standardisation activities. They use the findings to support coaches to improve their practice. As a result, leaders have an accurate view of the quality of training that apprentices receive.

Leaders ensure that coaches sequence the curriculums effectively so that apprentices build knowledge, skills and behaviours in a logical order. They work closely with employers to ensure that the curriculums reflect industry needs and provide apprentices with opportunities to practise new skills in the workplace. Apprentices build their occupational competence over time and strengthen their prior learning successfully. For example, business administrator apprentices develop communication and delegation skills before applying them to more complex situations such as conflict resolution and project management.

Coaches use their industry expertise to teach apprentices effectively. They explain concepts clearly, break learning into manageable steps and link learning closely to workplace practice. Coaches use a well-planned range of activities, including demonstrations, questioning and discussion, to develop apprentices' knowledge and skills and check their

understanding. Their teaching reinforces learning and supports apprentices to make good progress. As a result, apprentices retain their new knowledge over time, apply new skills confidently in the workplace and achieve well in their final assessments.

Leaders and coaches promote an inclusive learning environment where apprentices receive the support that they need to succeed. They identify barriers to learning promptly and adapt teaching, learning resources and training activities to meet individual needs. Apprentices from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with additional learning needs participate fully in the curriculum and develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours successfully.

Participation and development

Expected standard

Leaders create a safe and supportive culture where apprentices feel valued and respected. Well-established relationships between coaches, employers and apprentices promote confidence, wellbeing and positive engagement in learning.

Coaches set high expectations for behaviour and participation. Apprentices demonstrate professional attitudes, meet deadlines and take responsibility for their learning. They attend well, arrive punctually and engage fully in their learning.

Leaders create a respectful and inclusive environment where bullying, discrimination, harassment and victimisation are not tolerated. Apprentices feel safe and know who to contact if concerns arise. They trust staff to deal with incidents promptly and effectively.

Most apprentices benefit from opportunities that extend learning beyond their apprenticeship curriculum. These include employer-led events, leadership activities and additional programmes, such as Women in Leadership modules. Apprentices also develop their understanding of healthy relationships, online safety, professional communication and the risks associated with radical and extreme views. These experiences help apprentices to develop confidence, broaden their workplace skills and contribute positively in their workplaces and communities.

Apprentices benefit from suitable careers information, advice and guidance. However, in some cases, careers discussions take place too late in the apprenticeship to help apprentices explore fully the range of progression pathways and future opportunities available to them.

4. Provision for learners with high needs

Expected standard



Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

A high proportion of learners with high needs progress to their next steps and nearly all achieve full or partial qualifications. Many overcome significant personal, social and educational barriers during their studies. Over time, they develop greater confidence, resilience and independence, engage positively in learning and move on to further education, training or employment that is appropriate to their aspirations and abilities.

Learners with high needs produce work of an increasingly high standard throughout their studies. Their work meets the expectations of their programme and reflects the knowledge and skills they develop over time. They improve their English and mathematical skills and use these effectively to increase their preparedness for adult life.

Many learners with high needs start their studies with low confidence and with limited communication skills. Over time, they develop the independence and interpersonal skills needed for future success. They become increasingly confident, express themselves clearly and attend interviews for further education, training or employment independently.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculums for learners with high needs effectively. They identify what works well and where improvements are needed and take effective action to strengthen teaching and support.

Learners with high needs benefit from curriculums that help them develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need for adult life. The teaching that learners receive has a clear focus on English, mathematical and employability skills. Learners with high needs gain the confidence and independence needed to progress to further education, training or employment.

Tutors use information from learners' education, health and care plans, annual reviews and initial English and mathematics assessments to plan learning for learners with high needs effectively. They create detailed learning plans that reflect learners' individual needs and aspirations. Tutors review progress frequently and set clear targets that help learners with high needs make progress across the curriculum.

Tutors use an appropriate range of teaching strategies to help learners and apprentices with high needs understand and apply new learning. They adapt activities and resources effectively to meet individual needs. For example, learners who find extended writing difficult can demonstrate their understanding by creating a poster, sharing a presentation or discussing their ideas with tutors. This helps them to engage confidently in lessons.

Teaching assistants support learners with high needs effectively. They help learners take part in lessons, participate in activities and remain focused on their learning. When learners disengage, teaching assistants respond quickly and help them to re-engage successfully.

Apprentices with high needs receive effective support that helps them to participate fully in learning and make good progress. Coaches adapt learning and support to meet individual needs. For example, learners with long-term health conditions or challenging home circumstances benefit from flexible deadlines, timely wellbeing checks and tailored support. This helps them to enjoy their learning and achieve well.

Participation and development

Expected standard 

Learners with high needs benefit from a calm and supportive learning environment. They study in small centres, and a high level of staff support help learners to feel secure, valued and ready to learn. Learners engage positively in their studies.

Learners with high needs demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They treat staff and their peers with respect, listen carefully to others and participate well in group activities. Learners support and encourage each other and contribute positively to the learning environment.

Learners develop a good understanding of how to stay safe in modern Britain. Tutors help them to explore risks linked to social media, online gaming and situations that they may encounter in the community. Learners make sensible choices and understand how to protect their wellbeing.

Staff work with learners early in their programme to help them identify their career aspirations and plan their next steps. Learners benefit from work experience, college visits and other work-related activities, where appropriate. Most learners with high needs understand the options available to them and receive effective support with applications and interviews.

Learners with high needs understand what bullying is and know that it is unacceptable. They trust staff to deal with concerns promptly and effectively. Learners feel safe and respected and are able to focus on their learning.

What it's like to be a learner and/or an apprentice at this provider

Learners and apprentices often enter learning from highly disadvantaged circumstances and with a range of barriers that include previous disengagement from education, low prior attainment, special educational needs and/or disabilities and high needs. They quickly develop positive attitudes to learning, and many improve their attendance significantly compared with their previous experiences in school or other education settings. Learners value the supportive environment and personalised approach, which helps them re-engage successfully with education and develop positive learning habits.

Learners and apprentices develop their English, mathematical, vocational and employability skills well. They make positive progress from their starting points and achieve qualifications that prepare them for their next steps. Learners apply their knowledge effectively and become increasingly confident in using their skills in practical and workplace-related settings.

Learners with high needs receive effective support that enables them to access learning successfully. They manage challenges with increasing independence and develop the resilience needed to achieve their goals. As a result, many exceed the developmental targets identified in their education, health and care plans.

Learners develop a secure understanding of healthy relationships, online safety, equality and diversity and how to protect themselves from radical and extremist views. They discuss these topics confidently and respectfully and understand how to keep themselves safe. Learners value different perspectives and treat others with respect.

Learners routinely participate in a range of community projects, including grave-cleaning activities and environmental initiatives such as maintaining local canals and green spaces. Through these activities, they contribute positively to their communities and develop communication, teamwork and social skills. Through their studies they gain a greater appreciation of the communities in which they live.

Apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours that they apply effectively in the workplace. They speak confidently about how their learning improves their performance at work and supports career progression. Employers recognise the value that apprentices bring to their teams.

Apprentices benefit from an inclusive environment where coaches know them well and respond effectively to individual circumstances. They value the frequent feedback and guidance that they receive and feel well prepared for their final assessments and future employment opportunities.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching and training are consistently expert across all centres and curriculum areas.
 - Leaders should continue to take action to raise achievement rates for learners and apprentices.
 - Leaders should strengthen careers guidance, so that all learners and apprentices develop a detailed understanding of progression routes and future career opportunities.
 - Leaders should broaden work-related learning opportunities, so that learners experience a wider range of work settings and develop better-informed career aspirations.
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About this inspection

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with leaders, governors, coaches, tutors, learners, apprentices and employers during the inspection.

Nova Training is an independent learning provider based in Willenhall, West Midlands. The provider specialises in training learners and apprentices who are at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training, face known barriers to learning, and live in areas with recognised high levels of deprivation.

The provider operates from 13 centres, most of which are located in the West Midlands. It also has two centres in Essex and one centre in Norfolk. Nearly all teaching and training takes place face-to-face.

At the time of inspection, 497 learners aged 16 to 18 were enrolled on study programmes, including 91 learners who were in receipt of high-needs funding. Eleven part-time learners were aged between 14 and 15. Most were studying programmes focused on work readiness and the development of essential English and mathematics skills.

There were 305 apprentices in training, of whom 113 were aged between 16 and 18. Fewer than five apprentices were in receipt of high-needs funding. The provider offers a wide range of apprenticeships in administration, education, customer service, management and motor vehicle.

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Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 13 July 2026

Number of learners

Total learners

802

Education programmes for young people

408

Apprenticeships

302

Provision for learners with high needs

92

Percentage of learning aims successfully achieved

Education programmes for young people

Year	This provider	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	61	84	Below
2023/24	47	83	Below
2022/23	28	81	Below

Adult learning programmes

Year	This provider	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	56	87	Below
2023/24	51	87	Below
2022/23	31	87	Below

Apprenticeships overall achievement rate

Year	This provider	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	63	65	Close to average
2023/24	45	60	Below
2022/23	50	55	Close to average

Apprenticeships pass rate

Year	This provider	National average
2024/25	100	98
2023/24	100	98
2022/23	99	97

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other providers can learn from it.

Strong standard

The provider reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The provider is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The provider needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects

and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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