

Nine Dots Development Limited

Address: Gleneagles House, Vernon Gate, Derby, DE1 1UP

Unique reference number (URN): 2625244

Inspection report: 23 June 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

Strong standard



Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders are firmly committed to providing the best support strategies for their apprentices to enable them to succeed. Leaders and coaches consistently and skilfully use very well-established approaches to identify and understand swiftly apprentices' support needs and any barriers to learning that apprentices face. Coaches use this understanding to plan suitable adaptations and support strategies effectively and to put these in place quickly.

Leaders and coaches use a systematic and thorough approach to reviewing the effectiveness of support. This is revised or reduced for any apprentices who are ready to work more independently.

Leaders carefully monitor the progress of apprentices with additional needs, temporary vulnerabilities or other barriers to learning or wellbeing. They have a thorough oversight of the effectiveness of support strategies, reviews, adaptations and changes. Leaders also scrutinise apprentices' outcomes to enable them to understand fully the impact of the support that apprentices receive.

Leaders have provided comprehensive training for all their team about their organisational inclusion strategies, which has resulted in a shared understanding and consistently high-quality practice. More recently, the teaching staff have benefited from in-depth specialist training on ways to support their growing numbers of apprentices with dyslexia or attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders are highly ambitious for the success of their apprentices. They are explicitly clear about their expectations for high-quality training and successful outcomes for apprentices. They have in place very effective approaches for oversight, monitoring and quality improvement. This has helped them to identify accurately any concerns or underperformance and to take swift impactful actions.

Leaders have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of provision. They monitor in detail staff performance against their quality framework. Any coaches who do not meet leaders' high expectations receive helpful and targeted support. Leaders undertake meticulous reviews of apprentices' progress. This has contributed to the significant improvements in apprentices' outcomes, including for those with additional needs.

Governors are highly experienced with relevant backgrounds and specialisms. They work closely with leaders, providing significant scrutiny and challenge to drive strategic developments as well as improvements in quality.

Leaders are considerate of staff wellbeing. They carefully monitor caseloads and make adjustments for coaches working with for apprentices who need a lot of support. Leaders provide an employee assistance programme, mental health days and wellbeing discussions.

Leaders provide coaches with highly relevant and very well-targeted professional development. Coaches benefit from developmental and focused feedback on their teaching practice and attend training on pedagogical approaches. Leaders support coaches to develop a range of skills through, for example, subject-related webinars and higher-level qualifications.

Leaders work closely with key employers to devise training explicitly linked to their organisation's values and leadership approaches. Apprentices at these employers benefit from extremely well-contextualised resources that very effectively prepare them future leadership roles.

2. Apprenticeships

Strong standard



Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Leaders' actions to enhance quality have led to substantial improvement achievement rates. A very high proportion of apprentices, including those without prior English and mathematics qualifications and those with additional needs, now achieve their apprenticeship. Those with additional needs outperform their peers. Apprentices make rapid, sustained progress from their starting points. There is an improving trend in the proportion of apprentices achieving distinction grades and in the first-time pass rate.

Across the curriculum, apprentices master new concepts securely, refine their skills with precision and apply their learning fluently and to a high standard in the workplace. They produce consistently high-quality work and make tangible improvements to organisational processes, systems and decision-making.

Apprentices are very well prepared for their next steps, demonstrating the confidence, independence and professional behaviours that they need to take on increased responsibility and progress into positive destinations.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a highly accurate and well-informed understanding of the quality of the curriculum, teaching and training. They act quickly when concerns arise and resolve issues effectively.

Leaders review and adjust curriculum plans frequently. This makes sure that content stays closely aligned to industry standards and ensures that apprentices have sufficient time to

learn, practise and apply new knowledge. Leaders collaborate closely with employers to ensure that the curriculum is meaningful and well matched to workplace practices. Leaders' reflective, evidence-informed approach drives consistently high-quality teaching and training.

Apprentices benefit from a rich, carefully tailored curriculum. They gain valuable additional knowledge and professional skills that enable them to excel in their roles, progress rapidly and contribute more confidently in the workplace.

Trainers and coaches are industry experts. They teach complex concepts, such as project management techniques and data integration, with clarity. Coaches skilfully link learning directly to real workplace contexts. Teaching is well structured, with targeted questioning, scenario-based tasks and purposeful assessment that deepen apprentices' understanding. As a result of the high-quality training, apprentices are able to apply their learning with confidence and precision in their job roles.

The curriculum is highly inclusive. Staff identify apprentices' barriers early and adapt teaching, resources and support so that all apprentices can participate fully. Coaches respond swiftly to emerging needs and work closely with employers to secure access for apprentices to the right systems and workplace opportunities.

Participation and development

Strong standard 

Leaders and staff set very high expectations for apprentices' conduct and achievement. Coaches reinforce these expectations at the start of every workshop, creating a purposeful learning environment where apprentices collaborate respectfully and value each other's perspectives.

Apprentices attend consistently well. They conduct themselves with professionalism and show high levels of motivation and dedication to their courses. They arrive punctually, submit work on time and participate readily in discussions. Apprentices contribute thoughtfully to group tasks, respond positively to feedback and improve their work promptly. They take ownership of their progress and apply their learning confidently in the workplace. They show resilience when managing workload pressures and maintain high standards over time.

Leaders are well informed about apprentices' wider development needs. Apprentices benefit from a comprehensive, age-appropriate suite of additional high-quality resources and leadership activities.

Careers guidance is purposeful, ongoing and highly effective. Staff establish apprentices' aspirations early in their courses and revisit these frequently. This enables apprentices to reflect on their goals, understand progression routes and plan their next steps with clarity and confidence.

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

Apprentices are extremely satisfied with their training and the environment in which they work. They look forward to their workshop sessions and attend very well. They feel comfortable to share experiences and network with like-minded professionals, which broadens their knowledge. Apprentices especially value the interactive and interesting workshop content as well as the wide range of high-quality resources and online learning tools.

Apprentices are rightly impressed by their coaches, whom they find to be experienced, friendly and highly constructive. Coaches have high expectations for their apprentices and demonstrate a strong commitment to helping them to achieve their goals. Apprentices especially value the way that their coaches skilfully help them to apply theoretical concepts to real work scenarios. This rapidly develops and deepens their understanding.

Outside of group workshops, apprentices benefit greatly from extremely effective individual coaching and support. Their coaches get to know them very well as individuals. Apprentices report that this is both motivating and immensely supportive.

Apprentices have access to a very wide range of pertinent resources to support their wellbeing. They undertake thought-provoking and highly relevant wider learning activities, such as discussions about equality and current affairs. This enables them to use this understanding in their job roles as well as in society more broadly.

Apprentices make strong progress and achieve highly, because of the close links that coaches maintain with their employers and the excellent individual support that they experience. They are able to expertly apply what they learn in their workplaces. Their employers likewise recognise that apprentices become more skilful and confident over time, contributing positively to their organisations. Apprentices, for example, now handle challenging workplace situations more effectively, including managing difficult conversations and independently completing annual reviews.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to build into the curriculum meaningful opportunities for apprentices' wider development.
- Leaders should maintain their close oversight of quality of teaching and apprentices' progress, including for any newly introduced courses.

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, managers, skills coaches, governors, apprentices and employers during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the provider:

Nine Dots Development Limited provides apprenticeships from levels 3 to 5, with a focus on leadership and digital courses. At the time of inspection, there were 377 apprentices, almost all of whom were aged 19 and over. Most apprentices study the level 3 team leader, the level 5 operations manager and the level 5 people professional apprenticeships. Leaders have very recently introduced the level 3 data technician and the level 4 in artificial intelligence and automation practitioner apprenticeships. Currently, there are low numbers on these courses. Training takes place online or in person from employers' premises on a national basis.

Director: Jordan Burke

Lead inspector:

Vicki Locke, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Nikki Brady, His Majesty's Inspector

Karen Green, Ofsted Inspector

Kat Morris, Ofsted Inspector

Anne Moynihan, Ofsted Inspector

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 23 June 2026

Number of learners

Total learners

377

Apprenticeships

377

Percentage of learning aims successfully achieved

Apprenticeships overall achievement rate

Year	This provider	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	63	65	Close to average
2023/24	52	60	Close to average
2022/23	54	55	Close to average

Apprenticeships pass rate

Year	This provider	National average
2024/25	97	98
2023/24	91	98
2022/23	95	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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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
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