



## Investigation Outcome report

### Provider: The Child Care Company

#### Background

In August 2025, the Department for Education (DfE) commenced an investigation into concerns relating to the apprenticeship funding claimed by and paid to The Child Care Company (TCCC). It covered learners from academic years 2020/21 through to 2024/25 and the concerns involved:

- A high number of learners were recorded as having withdrawn or entered a break in learning (BiL) on 1 August. This raised concerns about the accuracy of data submitted to DfE due to potential impacts on Qualification Achievement Rate (QAR) performance and funding recoveries.

#### Outcomes of the investigation

- The investigation concluded that the learner withdrawals and Breaks in Learning (BiL) recorded on 1 August were attributable to administrative and recording issues.
- No evidence was identified to indicate that the recording of learner statuses on 1 August was intended to affect Qualification Achievement Rate (QAR) outcomes or funding recovery calculations.
- Breaches of apprenticeship funding rules were identified, however they did not result in any funding implications or recovery.

The following breaches of the apprenticeship funding rules were identified:

| Framework                                                                                                                                | Breach                                                                               | Issue                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Apprenticeship funding rules<br><a href="#">2020-21</a> , <a href="#">2021-22</a> , <a href="#">2022-23</a> ,<br><a href="#">2023-24</a> | P378-380 (2020-21)<br>P384-386 (2021-22)<br>P360-362 (2022-23)<br>P270-272 (2023-24) | Data returns submitted to DfE did not accurately reflect the evidence held to support funding claims. |

| Framework                                                                                                                                | Breach                                                                                | Issue                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Apprenticeship funding rules<br><a href="#">2020-21</a> , <a href="#">2021-22</a> , <a href="#">2022-23</a> ,<br><a href="#">2023-24</a> | P361.2 (2020-21)<br>P367.3 (2021-22)<br>P59-60 & P341 (2022-23)<br>P88-88.5 (2023-24) | Tripartite progress reviews were either absent, incomplete or not evidenced in accordance with the funding rules.                                                                                                                                             |
| Apprenticeship funding rules<br><a href="#">2020-21</a> , <a href="#">2021-22</a> , <a href="#">2022-23</a> ,<br><a href="#">2023-24</a> | P139-140 (2020-21)<br>P132-133 (2021-22)<br>P133-134 (2022-23)<br>P39 (2023-24)       | Learners were not provided maths & English qualifications where they did not hold prior attainment in these subjects.                                                                                                                                         |
| Apprenticeship funding rules<br><a href="#">2020-21</a> , <a href="#">2021-22</a> , <a href="#">2022-23</a> ,<br><a href="#">2023-24</a> | P291 (2020-21)<br>P290 (2021-22)<br>P267-269 (2022-23)<br>P230-234 (2023-24)          | In one instance, documentary evidence of a process for managing breaks in learning was not held/retained by the provider.<br><br>Evidence of delivery being re-planned following a break in learning was not held/retained by the provider for some learners. |
| Apprenticeship funding rules<br><a href="#">2020-21</a> , <a href="#">2021-22</a> , <a href="#">2022-23</a> ,<br><a href="#">2023-24</a> | P48-50 (2020-21)<br>P41-43 (2021-22)<br>P40-42 (2022-23)<br>P71-73 (2023-24)          | Off-the-job training records did not contain sufficient detail to determine whether knowledge, skills or behaviour relevant to the apprenticeship were gained and/or contained entries that did not meet the definition of what can be included.              |

## Action

The investigation concluded that the breaches resulted from error.

TCCC had rectified their data returns to the DfE therefore no funding was identified for recovery.

TCCC has implemented a range of measures intended to improve overall recording and monitoring of learner activities. Notable improvements were observed in the quality of evidence and audit trails available during the investigation.

## Prevention

Upon the conclusion of the investigation, the DfE undertook a prevention analysis exercise to establish what could have been done to prevent the breaches that were identified in the investigation.

| Issue                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Prevention                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| Data returns did not accurately reflect the evidence held to support funding claims.                                                                                                                                                             | Data returns should accurately reflect evidence held to support funding claims.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Tripartite progress reviews were either not held/retained by the provider.                                                                                                                                                                       | Tripartite progress reviews should be held or retained by the provider.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Learners were not provided maths & English qualifications where they did not hold prior attainment in these subjects.                                                                                                                            | Functional Skills is no longer a mandatory element of an apprenticeship for all learners. Providers should ensure delivery is compliant with programme requirements.                                                                                                                   |
| Documentary evidence of a process for managing breaks in learning was not held/retained by the provider.<br><br>Evidence of delivery being re-planned following a break in learning was not held/retained by the provider.                       | Documentary evidence should be held and retained for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the process of managing breaks in learning.</li> <li>the re-planning of delivery following a break in learning</li> </ul>                                                                 |
| Off-the-job training records did not contain sufficient detail to determine whether knowledge, skills or behaviour relevant to the apprenticeship were gained and/or contained entries that did not meet the definition of what can be included. | Off the job training records should contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sufficient detail to determine whether knowledge, skills or behaviour relevant to the apprenticeship were gained</li> <li>entries that only meet the definition of what can be included</li> </ul> |