

# Assurance Report

## J Murphy & Sons

**Address:** Kennedy Road, Astley, Manchester, M29 7JU

**Date of Assurance Visit:** 11th & 12th June 2019

**NSAR Assurance Manager:** John O'Brien

### Overall Effectiveness of the provider:

**Previous Inspection:** **Gold**

**This Assurance Visit:** **OVERALL: Gold**

Leadership & Management: Gold

Learner Outcomes: Gold

Quality of Provision: Gold

Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare: Gold

|  | Level 3 | Level 4 | Level 5 | Level 5+ |
|--|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| <b>Number of Assured Trainer/Assessors</b> | 1       | 3       | 0       | 0        |
| <b>Trainer/Assessors working towards</b>   | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        |

### DESCRIPTION OF THE SETTING:

This was the fifth visit to this provider and the second report under the third version of the NSAR assurance framework 2018.

The Provider delivers training from three main offices - Astley, London, and Cannock. The Rail Training and Assessment Team are primarily based out of Kennedy Road in Astley, Tyldesley on the outskirts of Manchester. The training department is located within the J Murphy & Sons depot and consists of purpose-built non-standard modular construction units.

The Provider offers a range of Safety-Critical and On Track Plant courses to both internal staff and external commercial customers.

The main training centre consists of two large purpose-built classrooms which contain a wealth of high-quality specialist railway training aids and equipment, a large rest area, a number of offices and additional multipurpose rooms. There is an outdoor Track Induction accredited practical area which consists of several tracks, a DCCR panel, and a working signal section.

## **KEY FINDINGS OF THE ASSURANCE VISIT**

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### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**GRADE: GOLD**

Leadership & Management meets Gold standard.

J Murphy & Son's Training division is an industry-leading provider who demonstrates the highest quality throughout all that they do. The Training Team is headed by the Rail Compliance Manager and supported by the Rail Training and Assessment Manager who oversee two trainer/assessors, two assessors, and a Rail Training and Assessment Administrator.

Organisation and compliance is outstanding throughout. The management team is meticulous in their attention to detail and this is driven throughout the team who embed a high level of quality in all areas. The Training Team has worked together for several years and it is evident that communication is excellent, as each member of the team has a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All members of the team are actively involved in the development and implementation of policies and procedures. The internal management system is high quality, fully comprehensive, well communicated throughout the team and evident within all that the provider does. There is a high level of understanding of relevant rules and regulations and it is clear that provisions have been made to ensure company policies and practices reflect this.

The Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is aligned to the NSAR Quality Assurance Framework 2018 and is industry-leading, informed (and signed off) by all members of the management team. Meetings are scheduled on a

monthly basis, highly detailed and clearly discuss a full range of agendas. S.M.A.R.T targets are clearly outlined in the QIP with realistic deadlines set out and monitored throughout the year.

Leaders within the business promote Equality and Diversity throughout the centre, with special provisions made for the individual requirements of delegates before training events. Management has implemented an Innovation Foundation programme through an online platform with the aim of incorporating ideas from all members within the business. A team of volunteers known as 'Innovation Champions' look to implement these new ideas, such as 'The Worry Bag' which is completed prior to the start of training and is used by the delegates to highlight any external concerns they might have that they feel may distract them from the course. The Trainers use the information collected to settle delegates nerves, so they can relax and perform to the best of their ability on the course. In addition to these initiatives the provider has established a provision of mental health first aiders within their training centres.

Management recognises the benefits of best practice and has recently conducted a review of the training providers that JMS use. The Provider created an initiative that allowed their new trainer/assessor to attend other companies to analyse new techniques and best practice.

CPD is proactively managed with all trainers and assessors up to date with their annual requirements.

## **LEARNER OUTCOMES**

**GRADE: GOLD**

Learner Outcomes meets Gold standard.

The Provider shows good evidence for the development of learners through Safety-Critical and apprenticeships with numerous case studies detailing learner's progression within training, education, and employment since 2013.

Through the JMS Apprenticeship Scheme, learners are given opportunities to work on large projects throughout the UK, developing skills, behaviours, and knowledge

whilst achieving nationally recognised qualifications. Each member of staff is subject to the Personal Development Review (PDR) process, this enables the Provider to set yearly objectives, track performance and manage training requirements of staff.

Overall achievement rates are high at 98% but these statistics reflect the current industry averages. Through the analysis of data, and monthly E & D meetings, the Provider can demonstrate that there are no under-performing groups.

From the Assurance Visit observation of training, several learners were spoken to about the impacts of training and how their development has been enhanced. Many of the learners had attended multiple courses over a few years and this had led them to an increased skillset and career progression within the organisation.

## **QUALITY OF PROVISION**

**GRADE: GOLD**

Quality of Provision meets Gold standard.

The training process from inception to evaluation is well planned and delivered to a high standard. There is a high level of synergy between administration, management, training and compliance and this is evident throughout. All paperwork is prepared in advance of the event with all elements of compliance met. On arrival to the centre learners are made to feel welcome and are briefed on all necessary health and safety procedures. To ensure that all learners are fit for duty the administrator registers all delegates on the Sentinel app. The delegates are questioned on their preferred learning styles before the training commences, these questionnaires then inform trainers who use this information proactively in their teaching methods. Any learners who have additional needs are provided support through the assistance of readers or scribes. In addition, there are posters throughout the main areas which display contact information for adult learning centres should delegates need external support in both math and English. Before training is delivered, all delegates are fully briefed on the requirements of the course, their rights and responsibilities, including if necessary, their rights to implement an appeals process.

Classrooms are bespoke and provide an excellent environment for learning. The classrooms have a wealth of rail specific tools, equipment, and technology for the trainers to incorporate within the lessons. Trainers go beyond the minimum course content to enhance the learners knowledge by including site visits, a small track layout, and a desktop model railway. As part of the event observed the trainers went beyond the lesson criteria to incorporate the use of radios to enhance the learning experience and make the session more real to the operational environment, however, it is a recommendation that PPE is to be used when carrying-out such activities when outside near areas of moving vehicles.

The Provider has a strong team of highly experienced and respected trainers and assessors. From the session observed, the lead trainer is passionate with a wealth of knowledge and experience, and this was evident throughout the sessions being delivered. The training delivered challenged learners through a variety of scenarios which added additional wealth, above and beyond the baseline requirements of the lesson plans. All learners were engaged and motivated.

Feedback from question analysis of training events are acted upon to improve the learners experience. Any trends found are supported with additional ways of embedding the knowledge, either through using different scenarios or the use of technology and equipment.

Health & Safety commitments are presented to learners in an eye catching '6 simple actions' strategy: Safety Documents in place, Protect our health, Control our work areas, Prevent service damage, Operate plant safely and Protect the environment. This reinforces to learners that the Provider and their trainer/assessor is committed to ensuring that Health & Safety is embedded in their day to day operations reinforcing the sense that learners can feel safe within the learning and working environment.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE      GRADE: GOLD**

Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare meets Gold standard

All learners were made aware of their rights and responsibilities, with all relevant information provided before the session. The Provider has a positive culture, and this is supported by the trainers and the many posters throughout the centre. The trainers treat the delegates with respect and this behavior is reciprocated.

The Provider creates a positive environment for learners, and this was evident throughout the Assurance Visit. Several learners spoken to were familiar with the trainers and the centre and in addition to the course being observed there was additional advice and guidance being offered. Whenever possible the provider looks to include training around elements of the learners' job roles that are not detailed within the training material but make up an integral part of the learner's operational duties.

During the observation the learners showed a keen interest for the recertification course being delivered. As learners had previous knowledge of the course the trainer used various scenarios to challenge learners, this led to greater in-depth discussions on rules and standards and allowed the learners to brainstorm around various ways to solve problems.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

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### Leadership and Management

- Current six-monthly verification process to be adapted to consider any risks that occur within these timeframes.
- New up-skilling process to be documented within the management system

### Learner Outcomes

- In the event that course durations do not meet the GLH a risk assessment needs to be undertaken and kept within the course packs in line with RTAS 2.2.8. & 2.3.3.
- Ensure that a process is in place within the management system for breaches to the RTAS Rules and that timeframes for reporting are detailed.

### Quality of Provision

- N/A

### Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare

- Ensure that all PPE is used when carrying out external practical events

## OVERALL JUDGEMENTS

| Judgement   | How the grade is achieved  |
|---|--|
| <b>Gold</b>   | Overall effectiveness will be gold standard when Leadership and Management, Quality of Provision, Outcomes for Learners and Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare are GOLD.<br>Safeguarding is effective.  |
| <b>Silver</b>   | Overall effectiveness will be silver when all of the following Leadership and Management, Quality of Provision, Outcomes for Learners and Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare are at least SILVER.<br>Safeguarding is effective.   |
| <b>Bronze</b>   | Overall effectiveness will require improvement when any of Leadership and Management, Quality of Provision, Outcomes for Learners and Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare are rated BRONZE<br>Safeguarding is effective.   |
| <b>Inadequate</b>   | One or more of the following Leadership and Management, Quality of Provision, Outcomes for Learners and Personal Development and Behaviour are INADEQUATE<br>Safeguarding is effective/ineffective.<br><br>The provider will be suspended from delivery until it can demonstrate to NSAR that the areas for improvement have been addressed, which must be within 4 months. Where corrective actions are not implemented within 4 months Assurance to deliver training and/or assessment may be permanently withdrawn. |
| <b>Next Steps</b>   |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The provider will receive their next Assurance Visit between 9 and 15 months from the date of their last visit.</li> <li>2. NSAR operates an unannounced visit regime, whereby the provider can be visited without notice at any time between assurance visits.</li> <li>3. In addition, educational observation visits of training/assessment delivery are undertaken to independently evaluate quality of provision and delivery. Educational observation visits can be both unannounced and notified.</li> </ol> |  |

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