

INSPECTION REPORT

Training Trust - Waltham Forest Chamber of Commerce

08 July 2004



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

Training Trust - Waltham Forest Chamber of Commerce

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Waltham Forest Chamber of Commerce Training Trust (the Training Trust) is a limited company operating as a registered charity. The company was established in 1982 to offer training for young people in north and east London. Its offices are based at Gants Hill, in Essex.

2. The Training Trust offers training and assessment in construction (building services); engineering, manufacturing and technology (motor vehicle/cycle, engineering production and maintenance); business administration, management and professional; and health, social care and public services (early years). At the time of the inspection, there were too few learners in business administration, management and professional to include in the inspection, and too few learners in engineering production and maintenance to give a contributory grade. Off-the-job training and assessment in construction, and engineering, manufacturing and technology are subcontracted to local colleges. Training and assessment in health, social care and public services are carried out in-house.

3. Following the retirement of the chief executive in 2003, the senior management team was restructured. The company now employs a chief executive and an operations manager who are responsible for five liaison officers, an administration officer, a finance officer and administrative support staff. Liaison officers are responsible for recruiting learners and carrying out an induction into their programme, carrying out progress reviews with learners, providing advice, guidance and support to learners and liaising with their employers. Some also assess learners in the workplace, provide advice on portfolio-building and liaise with subcontractors when appropriate. The post of tutor in care is currently staffed by a sessional tutor and the Training Trust is in the process of recruiting a liaison officer. The chief executive reports to a board of trustees through the trustees' representative, who is also the former chief executive of the organisation.

4. In July 2003, the unemployment rate in Waltham Forest was 4.4 per cent, compared with 2.5 per cent nationally. According to the 2001 census, the proportion of the local population from minority ethnic groups is 35.5 per cent, compared with 9.1 per cent nationally.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Construction

5. There are 85 learners in construction at the Training Trust, 28 of whom are on plumbing programmes, 27 are on domestic heating programmes, and 30 are on electrical installation programmes. Fifty-four learners are foundation modern apprentices, 17 are advanced modern apprentices, and 14 are on national vocational qualification (NVQ) programmes. All learners are in employment in the local area, where they receive on-the-job training. Off-the-job training is subcontracted to local colleges of further education.

TRAINING TRUST - WALTHAM FOREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Learners attend this training for either one day each week, or in blocks of consecutive days. Liaison officers carry out progress reviews with learners every eight weeks, and make additional, more frequent visits to learners at work or the college.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

6. There are 19 engineering learners working towards foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships or NVQs in engineering. Five of these are training in engineering production and 14 are training in motor vehicle engineering. Of the 19 learners, seven are advanced modern apprentices, seven are foundation modern apprentices and five are working towards NVQs. All are employed by their work-placement provider. The main qualifications offered are vehicle maintenance and repair, vehicle body and paint operations, engineering production and engineering maintenance. Off-the-job training and assessment for all components of the modern apprenticeship frameworks and NVQs is subcontracted to a local college. Learners attend off-the-job training and assessment for one day each week. Liaison officers carry out progress reviews with learners every eight weeks, and make additional, more frequent visits to learners at work or the college. All applicants for training have an initial assessment, which includes literacy and numeracy tests and a selection interview.

Health, social care & public services

7. The Training Trust has 16 learners working towards early years qualifications. Six are foundation modern apprentices, one is an advanced modern apprentice and nine are on NVQ training at level 2. Most of the learners are in work placements and a few are in employment. Placements include community and private day nurseries, and nursery schools. All foundation modern apprentices and NVQ learners attend the Training Trust once a week for off-the-job training. Modern apprentices are working towards technical certificates, key skills and an NVQ. NVQ learners attend the same sessions as modern apprentices but do not complete the assignments. Assessment of practical skills is carried out in the workplace by visiting or work-based assessors. Progress reviews take place every eight weeks. There is currently a vacancy for a liaison officer.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	24
Number of learner interviews	45
Number of staff interviews	29
Number of employer interviews	13
Number of subcontractor interviews	6
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

8. The quality of provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training in construction; engineering, technology and manufacturing; and health, social care and public services is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of the Training Trust is unsatisfactory, as is quality assurance. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Leadership and management		4
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality assurance		4

Construction			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Building services - Work-based learning for young people	85	4	

Engineering, technology & manufacturing			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Motor vehicle/cycle - Work-based learning for young people	14	4	
Other contributory areas - Work-based learning for young people	5	None	

Health, social care & public services			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Early years - Work-based learning for young people	16	4	

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

9. **Learners in construction develop good practical skills during their training programmes.** Work placements provide learners with good opportunities to practise and develop the skills that they learn during the off-the-job training. Learners work to a good standard.
10. **Retention rates for foundation modern apprentices in construction are good.** They have improved since the Training Trust offered these programmes as an alternative to advanced modern apprenticeships.
11. **Since the previous inspection in 2002, retention rates for learners in engineering, technology and manufacturing have improved.** Of the 19 learners who started their training in the subsequent two years, 11 are still in learning.
12. **The completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks in construction are poor.** Although achievement of the NVQ in plumbing and domestic heating is satisfactory, achievement of the key skills and technical certificate is unsatisfactory. In electrical installation, progress towards completion of the technical certificate is good, but achievement of the NVQ and key skills is poor.
13. **Learners in engineering, technology and manufacturing make slow progress towards completion of their frameworks,** and most of those retained continue in learning beyond their expected end date. Too few of these complete their apprenticeship frameworks or achieve the NVQ or key skills qualifications.
14. **The completion rates for foundation or advanced modern apprenticeship frameworks in health, social care and public services are poor.** Of the learners who started in 2001-02, only 14 per cent completed the foundation modern apprenticeship, and only one-third gained the advanced modern apprenticeship, although more learners were successful in achieving the NVQ.

Quality of education and training

15. **Learners in construction receive good personal support from staff at the Training Trust.** Liaison officers make frequent and regular visits to learners in their work placements and at the subcontractor, and help with personal problems and give good advice and guidance. This is effective in maintaining learners' motivation and commitment to training.
16. **Support for learners in engineering, technology and manufacturing is good.** Liaison officers visit learners frequently in the workplace and at college and are sensitive and

responsive to individual learners' needs. Employers provide good support in the workplace. They place learners with experienced and well-qualified staff who provide good technical support to learners.

17. **Resources for off-the-job training for motor vehicle learners are very good.** They include modern testing and fault diagnosis equipment, spray booths, body jigs and welding equipment.

18. **The training programme for the modern apprenticeship in health, social care and public services is well structured.** All components of the framework have been integrated effectively into a comprehensive scheme of work for off-the-job training. Learners benefit from the structured delivery of background knowledge relating to early years care and education.

19. **Communication between the Training Trust and the learners in health, social care and public services is good.** During the past six months of staff shortages, managers have kept learners well informed of changes. These arrangements have been effective in retaining learners and enabling them to make progress.

20. **Progress reviews in construction are ineffective.** They rely too much on information provided by the learner, with insufficient use of feedback from trainers, employers and liaison officers. Targets are not always specific, with suitable timescales for completion and they are not followed up at subsequent reviews.

21. **Learners' progress in construction is inadequately monitored.** Liaison officers keep handwritten documents which record some aspects of learners' progress, but there is no mechanism by which progress can be monitored centrally to identify trends or to prompt intervention.

22. **The monitoring of learners' progress in engineering, technology and manufacturing is ineffective.** Although achievement is recorded when learners achieve the full qualification, there are no records to show how learners are progressing through the separate units.

23. **Progress reviews in engineering, technology and manufacturing are weak.** Action plans and targets are often vague and are not always followed up at subsequent reviews. They do not provide enough information on what learners must do to progress.

24. **Some assessment practices in health, social care and public services are unsatisfactory.** Portfolios have too much written work. Insufficient use is made of observation and oral questioning as evidence. Poor practice is not always fed back to learners and the witness testimony booklet is not used effectively. Records of assessment are not well kept.

25. **Not enough staff are available in health, social care and public services** to meet learners' needs. Although the provider is employing sessional staff while it recruits replacement staff to cover this area of learning, some learners have experienced gaps in

assessment, reviews and off-the-job training and their progress has been delayed.

26. There is insufficient specialist support to help develop the literacy and numeracy skills of learners in health, social care and public services.

Leadership and management

27. The Training Trust communicates well with the employers that provide work placements and employment. It produces good reports for employers, which give clear information about learners' progress and attendance. There are six-monthly programme reviews which enable concerns to be raised.

28. Staff development is carefully focused to meet the needs of the company and the individual staff member. The induction programme is thorough and takes place over several weeks. Staff are well supported to meet the needs of the provider and learners.

29. The Training Trust has carried out a number of actions aimed at widening participation. Its publicity promotes occupational areas to traditionally under-represented groups. A well-structured and thorough selection procedure helps ensure that recruitment is fair. These activities have attracted learners from under-represented groups.

30. The management of construction programmes is ineffective. Many of the actions to remedy weaknesses are recent, and the Training Trust has been slow to respond to problems with the performance of its subcontractors.

31. Arrangements for the quality assurance of provision are incomplete. A comprehensive quality assurance manual has been prepared and placed in all offices for use by staff. However, some aspects have not been implemented and it is too early for it to have had a significant impact on the quality of provision.

32. While there are clear procedures and policies for the management of subcontracted provision, **they do not ensure satisfactory retention and achievement rates**, or that all aspects of the programme are satisfactorily delivered.

33. The self-assessment report is not sufficiently critical. It does not include many of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors.

34. Data is insufficiently analysed and evaluated. Although accurate and comprehensive data is collected, it is not used to identify trends and patterns in learner activity and achievement. The procedures for setting targets are not sophisticated and are based on historical data and an evaluation of whether learners will achieve.

35. Learners' and employers' understanding of equality of opportunity is not sufficiently reinforced during the programme. Induction provides learners with some information on their rights and responsibilities, but only gives them a basic knowledge of equality of opportunity. Little formal checking is done to monitor or develop employers' awareness

of equality of opportunity.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- well-managed communication with work-placement providers
- carefully focused staff development
- successful actions to widen participation

Weaknesses

- incomplete arrangements for quality assurance
- ineffective monitoring of subcontractors
- insufficiently critical self-assessment
- insufficient analysis and evaluation of data
- insufficient reinforcement of equality of opportunity

Construction

Building services

Strengths

- good development of learners' practical skills
- good retention rates for foundation modern apprentices
- good personal support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks
- inadequate monitoring of learners' progress
- ineffective progress reviews
- ineffective management of training

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Motor vehicle/cycle

Strengths

- good support for learners
- very good off-the-job resources for motor vehicle learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards achievement
- ineffective progress reviews
- ineffective monitoring of learners' progress

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards achievement
- ineffective progress reviews
- ineffective monitoring of learners' progress

Health, social care & public services

Early years

Strengths

- well-structured foundation modern apprenticeship programme
- good communication with learners

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks
- some unsatisfactory assessment practices
- insufficient specific support for additional learning needs
- insufficient staff to meet learners' needs

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT TRAINING TRUST - WALTHAM FOREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

- the friendly and helpful staff
- learning is enjoyable and easy to cope with
- the help with dyslexia
- working as a team
- help with getting a job
- simple, easy to understand explanations
- putting theory into practice at work

WHAT LEARNERS THINK TRAINING TRUST - WALTHAM FOREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COULD IMPROVE:

- staffing in early years care
- the timing of final tests
- more help from tutors at the subcontractor
- the relevance of key skills
- more practical work at college
- better targets to help progress

KEY CHALLENGES FOR TRAINING TRUST - WALTHAM FOREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

- complete implementation of the quality assurance framework
- improve analysis and evaluation of data
- improve target-setting and review processes
- improve the monitoring of subcontractors
- appoint staff for early years care programmes
- improve retention and achievement rates
- develop a learner monitoring system

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

Strengths

- well-managed communication with work-placement providers
- carefully focused staff development
- successful actions to widen participation

Weaknesses

- incomplete arrangements for quality assurance
- ineffective monitoring of subcontractors
- insufficiently critical self-assessment
- insufficient analysis and evaluation of data
- insufficient reinforcement of equality of opportunity

36. The Training Trust manages the arrangements for communicating with employers well. It provides useful reports to employers every three months which give clear information about learners' progress and attendance at off-the-job training. The Training Trust responds quickly to requests for information and help from employers. It holds six-monthly programme reviews which are attended by learners, subcontractor staff, Training Trust staff, and employers. These are successful in ensuring that learners and employers have a forum in which to raise concerns.

37. Staff development is carefully focused to meet the needs of the company and individuals. The induction programme is thorough and takes place over several weeks. Staff are well supported, to meet the needs of the provider and learners. The Training Trust is an active member of local groups including a collaborative, local providers group, the Learning and Skills Council provider quality group and other provider development groups. These links are used well to ensure that staff have regular updates on new initiatives and also to share problems and good practice with other organisations. The company has a policy of training its own staff in response to the difficulties of recruiting suitably qualified people. Programmes of training are offered on an individual or group basis, according to need. For example, staff develop their training, assessment or vocational skills on an individual basis, and all have received recent training in reviewing progress. This strength is not recognised in the self-assessment report.

38. Internal communication is satisfactory. It is recorded as a strength in the self-assessment report. There is a flow of information between operational functions, occupational areas, staff and senior management. Regular six-monthly programme review meetings are scheduled and learners, subcontracted college representatives and employers are invited. In addition, all staff are based at the company's head office, and staff meet informally on a daily basis. Formal meetings are arranged to maximise

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attendance by sessional hourly paid staff. Minutes of meetings are taken, but they often do not include action points and associated follow-up.

39. The strategic direction of the company is satisfactorily communicated to staff. However, different documents are used to record the annual and three-year development and business plans, and the links between these different documents are not clear.

40. Data is satisfactorily collected by the Training Trust. In order to improve the accessibility of information even more, the company is in the process of changing the database system. A written form for recording learners' change of circumstances is used regularly and rigorously to ensure that accurate records are maintained. These records are used to ensure that learners are reviewed every eight weeks.

41. Data is insufficiently analysed and evaluated and this is recognised in the self-assessment report. Accurate and comprehensive collection of data has allowed analysis and evaluation of trends and patterns in learner activity, achievement and evaluation, but this is not yet done to any significant extent. Targets are set for staff to recruit learners and new workplace providers, and for retention and achievement. However, the procedures for setting targets are not sophisticated. They are based on historical data, an evaluation of whether learners will achieve, or in some cases an expectation of 80 per cent retention and 65 per cent achievement. There is little careful planning for realistic and challenging targets based on local employment needs, a knowledge of learners or a strategy for improvement.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

42. The Training Trust has carried out a number of actions aimed at widening participation. Its publicity and other literature reflects the diverse population served by the company. It makes good use of positive and non-stereotypical images in its displays on the walls of the main office and in the company's training room. A well-structured and thorough selection procedure is used to help ensure that recruitment is fair and the procedure is carefully followed by staff. The equal opportunities policy is displayed prominently in the provider's offices and training room. These activities have been modestly successful in attracting under-represented groups to participate. For example, two learners on the early years programme, and half of the learners in business administration are men. Although there are no women currently on construction or engineering programmes, the company has been successful in attracting women to plumbing and motor vehicle courses in recent years. The Training Trust monitors the gender and ethnicity of its client group when they apply, during the initial assessment process and when they start the programme. The profile of learners at each of these stages broadly reflects the population served by the company. Although it does not currently measure achievement against profile, the Training Trust's new management information system has the capability to produce these reports. The Training Trust also takes an active part in collaborative initiatives with other local providers to promote work-based learning to schools and the community. These have been successful in raising the profile of work-based learning in the area. For example, one initiative has produced a

measurable increase in the number of applicants for places on work-based learning programmes this year. Those applicants that the Training Trust cannot help are referred to other providers that have more appropriate provision.

43. The Training Trust's equal opportunities policy makes a commitment to equality of opportunity. Although it is not supported by statements showing how that commitment will be realised, many of the actions taken by the company are effective in ensuring that the policy is implemented. For example, clear criteria are used for the selection of learners and equality of opportunity is promoted in literature for learners and employers. Annual training is provided for staff on equality and diversity, although some do not remember attending these sessions. Learners are given a copy of the policy at induction and are encouraged to read and become familiar with it during induction exercises. However, some of the language in the policy is not suitable for learners with limited literacy skills. Learners are also given good examples of unacceptable behaviour to help them understand their rights and responsibilities. Learners feel well protected by the Training Trust and are treated fairly.

44. The Training Trust has a disability statement and guidance for staff on working with learners who have disabilities. Staff offer additional support and time to those learners who need it, for example to complete paperwork associated with the learner's qualification. However, its premises are not accessible for learners with restricted mobility or those in wheelchairs and it is exploring ways of making the building more accessible. In the meantime, the Training Trust is able to use its subcontractors' premises for recruitment, initial assessment and selection if necessary. These premises have appropriate access for learners with restricted mobility.

45. Learners' and employers' understanding of equality of opportunity is not sufficiently reinforced during the programme. Induction and its follow-up provides learners with some information on their rights and responsibilities, but only gives them a basic knowledge of equality of opportunity. Learners' awareness of the complaints procedure is limited, although they know what to do if they think they are being treated unfairly. Reviews include a prompt to check whether learners are being treated fairly. If learners have concerns, they are dealt with properly by the Training Trust. However, reviews are not used to develop learners' understanding further. Employers are required to adopt the Training Trust's equal opportunities policy if they do not have one of their own. The agreement they sign with the Training Trust makes clear their responsibilities in respect of equal opportunities. Staff are responsive if learners report concerns about their treatment by employers. However, little formal checking is done to monitor or develop employers' awareness of equality of opportunity.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

46. There are good written procedures and materials for the recruitment and selection of learners, and these are followed. All learners have the same initial assessment and interview process and these are effective in ensuring that learners and the provider make informed decisions during the selection process. Appraisal of staff is satisfactorily carried out on an annual basis and is used to review progress against previous action points.

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Appraiser and appraisee are given sufficient time to prepare for the session and are encouraged to contribute to proposed staff development plans and actions for improvement.

47. Other policies and procedures are not as well developed or monitored. In particular, arrangements for quality assuring activities in the areas of learning are incomplete. This is fully recognised by the Training Trust and it is currently putting into place a new quality assurance framework to follow the needs and progress of learners. A comprehensive quality assurance manual has been prepared and placed in all offices. However, it is too early for it to have had a significant impact on the quality of provision.

48. Some assessment practice is poor and the internal verification is unsatisfactory. The use of hourly paid staff for internal verification has limited their availability for training, assessment and review. The provider has identified that progress reviews are unsatisfactory and is currently carrying out an extensive quality audit. This has highlighted good and poor practice, and staff development has recently taken place to share and develop the good practice. Some improvements have been made, but reviews are not yet consistently good across all provision. Many of the reviews still do not have specific and time-bound targets, and comments often only describe progress rather than give clear guidance for progress. Files are audited to make sure that they fulfil awarding body and funding requirements, but this information is not yet used for future development or improvements.

49. While there are clear procedures and policies for the management of subcontracted provision, these are not effectively implemented or monitored. The experience of learners in subcontracted provision is not well managed. There is a service level agreement and staff from the Training Trust have open access to their learners, but this is not effective in ensuring satisfactory retention and achievement rates or in ensuring that all aspects of the programme are satisfactorily delivered. For example, subcontractors have been slow to respond to the need for improvements to the delivery of key skills.

50. The self-assessment report does not identify many of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors. The process for self-assessment is incomplete. It includes all permanent staff, and those who joined the company after the report was finalised have been made fully aware of its findings but it is not evaluative enough. The views of employers and learners are collected through questionnaires, but their contribution to self-assessment is limited.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Construction		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Building services - Work-based learning for young people	85	4

Building services

Strengths

- good development of learners' practical skills
- good retention rates for foundation modern apprentices
- good personal support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks
- inadequate monitoring of learners' progress
- ineffective progress reviews
- ineffective management of training

Achievement and standards

51. Learners develop good practical skills during their training programmes. Their practical work is to a good standard. Work placements provide learners with good opportunities to practise and develop the skills learnt during off-the-job training. For example, in one lesson at the subcontractor, learners connected domestic wiring systems and demonstrated good skills which were relevant to their work placements. At work, other learners installed combination boilers, radiators, and pipe-work to industrial standards, and showed a high regard for customers' property.

52. Retention rates are good for foundation modern apprentices, and have improved since the Training Trust offered these programmes as an alternative to advanced modern apprenticeships. Of the 70 learners who have started these programmes since 2002, 54 are still in learning.

53. Although some aspects of learners' programmes are completed successfully, the completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks are poor. This is recognised by the Training Trust in its self-assessment report. During the past five years, only one learner has completed all parts of the framework. Learners make sound progress in plumbing and domestic heating and their achievement of the NVQ is improving.

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However, achievement of the key skills and technical certificate is unsatisfactory. In electrical installation, progress towards completion of the technical certificate is good, but achievement of the NVQ and key skills is poor. Many learners in electrical installation do not complete the site evidence logbooks that are needed for NVQ achievement. Key skills assignments are not vocationally specific and learners find it difficult to understand the relevance of this work. This has been identified by the Training Trust, and improvements have been made to the delivery of key skills, but it is too early to measure the impact of these changes on learners' achievement.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000								
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	1		1		30		26		26							
Retained*	0		0	0	0		3		10								
Successfully completed	0		0	0	0		1		0								
Still in learning	1		0	0	4		9		3								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2003-04		2002-03														
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	33		37													
Retained*	0		8														
Successfully completed	0		0														
Still in learning	30		24														

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	9		5		2		8									
Retained*	0		2		2		3	38									
Successfully completed	0		0		1		2	25									
Still in learning	8		5		1		0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Quality of education and training

54. Learners receive good personal support from staff at the Training Trust. This is recognised by the provider in its self-assessment report. Liaison officers make frequent and regular visits to learners in their work placements and at the subcontractor, and give learners good advice and guidance to maintain their motivation and commitment to training. They help learners overcome personal problems which place them at risk of leaving early and refer them to an appropriate range of specialist support agencies when needed.

55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Delivery of the technical certificates is well planned. Off-the-job training includes practical sessions which are relevant to the learners' workplace, and tutors instruct learners well. On-the-job training is effective and helps learners to develop their skills and apply their knowledge.

56. Resources for construction are satisfactory. Staff who provide off-the-job training are suitably qualified and have relevant industrial experience. All liaison officers are from industry, and some have, or are working towards, assessor qualifications. Accommodation at subcontractors' premises conforms to health and safety requirements. The electrical installation workshop is spacious, and well equipped with tools and specialist equipment which are in good condition and up to date. Although progress has been slow in updating the plumbing workshops, they are being developed to meet the requirements of the new qualifications.

57. Work placements provide appropriate work experience. If learners do not have the opportunity to practise skills with their employer, alternative arrangements are made. For example, one employer arranged for learners in electrical installation to gain experience with other contractors to help generate evidence for the NVQ.

58. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to assess learners. An initial assessment identifies learners' literacy and numeracy levels and the results are used to complete individual learning plans. Additional support is provided satisfactorily by the subcontractor and take-up of this provision is monitored by the Training Trust. Learners' portfolios contain appropriate and sufficient evidence which is well matched to units and elements of competence. The standard of learners' written work is satisfactory. Internal verification is thorough and effective. However, assessment is not linked to planned programmes of learning and direct assessment of learners in the workplace has been slow to develop in electrical installation.

59. Progress reviews are ineffective. They rely too much on information provided by the learner, with insufficient use of feedback from trainers, employers and liaison officers. Employers are not sufficiently involved in ensuring that learners understand and work towards agreed targets for progression. Targets are not always specific, with suitable timescales for completion. Targets that are not achieved are carried over for future completion without sufficient exploration of the reasons for non-achievement. Some of the targets are not vocationally relevant and do not give learners sufficient information on what they need to do to progress. This weakness has been identified by the Training

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Trust and training has been provided to help improve the quality of progress reviews. However, it has not yet had a significant impact on provision. The good practice seen in some reviews has not yet been adopted across the organisation.

60. Learners' progress is inadequately monitored. The Training Trust does not have an effective system for recording learners' progress towards completion of their modern apprenticeship frameworks. Liaison officers keep handwritten documents which record some aspects of learners' progress, but these records are sometimes incomplete, particularly the records of key skills achievement. There is no mechanism by which progress can be monitored centrally to identify trends or to prompt intervention. This has been identified as a weakness by the Training Trust. In plumbing and domestic heating, progress towards the achievement of the technical certificate is now more carefully recorded, but it has not yet been extended to all aspects of the training programmes.

Leadership and management

61. The management of construction programmes is ineffective. Since the previous inspection, the Training Trust has not improved the achievement rates. Although the Training Trust has identified several of the weaknesses identified by inspectors, it did not note them in the self-assessment report. Many of the actions taken to remedy weaknesses are recent, and have yet to impact on provision. The Training Trust has been slow to respond to problems with the performance of its subcontractors. For example, problems with the delivery of key skills have only recently been resolved. Some learners are now achieving parts of their key skills qualifications, but these improvements have been slow, and some concerns remain.

62. Since the previous inspection, the Training Trust has placed learners on foundation modern apprenticeships, with options to progress to advanced modern apprenticeships if appropriate. Retention rates have improved, but this strategy has yet to impact on achievement rates.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Motor vehicle/cycle - Work-based learning for young people	14	4
Other contributory areas - Work-based learning for young people	5	None

Motor vehicle/cycle

Strengths

- good support for learners
- very good off-the-job resources for motor vehicle learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards achievement
- ineffective progress reviews
- ineffective monitoring of learners' progress

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- slow progress towards achievement
- ineffective progress reviews
- ineffective monitoring of learners' progress

Achievement and standards

63. Since the previous inspection in 2002, retention rates have improved. Of the 19 learners who have started in the subsequent two years, 11 are still in learning.

64. Motor vehicle learners develop good practical skills during the programme, and their work is valued by employers. However, engineering learners are working towards a qualification which is not well matched to their work placement and their development is slower.

65. Learners make slow progress towards completion of their frameworks, and most of

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those retained continue in learning beyond their expected end date. Not enough of these learners complete the modern apprenticeship framework. This is identified by the Training Trust in its self-assessment report. NVQ and key skills achievement is also low, although three of the five learners in engineering production have achieved the technical certificate. Learners in engineering production do not start their key skills until they are in the second year of their programme, and have too much to do to complete them within the time available to them.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	2		1		8		11		10		14				
Retained*	0		0	0	2		1		1		3	21				
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1		1		0		2	14				
Still in learning	2		0	0	3		1		1		0	0				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	3		5		3		1		4		7				
Retained*	0		0		0	0	1		0	0	1	14				
Successfully completed	0		0		0	0	0		0	0	1	14				
Still in learning	1		5		0	0	1		0	0	0	0				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	7		1		2		4		8		1				
Retained*	0		0	0	1	50	1	25	3		0	0				
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1	50	1	25	1		0	0				
Still in learning	3		0	0	0	0	0	0	2		0	0				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Quality of education and training

66. Support for learners is good. The Training Trust identifies this as a strength in its self-assessment report. Liaison officers visit learners frequently in the workplace and at college to provide advice, support and guidance in the collection of evidence and construction of portfolios, and to review progress. They are effective in helping learners who need or choose to find alternative employment. For example, one learner was made redundant following a fire at his employer's workshop and was found an alternative and suitable work placement, where he was able to continue his apprenticeship. Liaison officers are sensitive and responsive to individual learners' needs. For example, when they suspected that one learner might have dyslexia, they arranged diagnostic testing and responded to the results by providing a reader and additional time and support. They intervened effectively to help two learners who had completed their foundation modern apprenticeship to continue onto the advanced modern apprenticeship with their employer. Employers also provide good support in the workplace. They place learners with experienced and well-qualified staff who provide good technical support. Motor vehicle learners are given a wide range of on-the-job activities in the workplace to extend their learning. If necessary, employers vary learners' work to enable them to develop skills, and gather the evidence for their NVQs. However, engineering production learners have a restricted range of activities available to them and insufficient access to technical support from the Training Trust. Some employers encourage learners to continue with their training beyond their apprenticeships. For example, engineering production learners are studying for additional qualifications beyond the technical certificate.

67. Resources for off-the-job training for motor vehicle learners are very good. They include modern testing and fault diagnosis equipment, spray booths, body jigs and welding equipment. Learners have access to a good range of powerful computers containing specific software and simulators for all car systems. These simulators are used well to give learners fault diagnosis exercises on a range of motor vehicle systems. Workshops and other areas are spacious and well laid out. Relevant vocational displays in the rooms and the surrounding corridors provide a stimulating learning environment. Tutors are suitably qualified and many have professional qualifications. Liaison officers are qualified assessors or working towards qualification, although not all have occupational qualifications or experience in engineering. Resources in the workplace are satisfactory.

68. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Programmes are well planned with detailed schemes of work which include assessment schedules. These help to co-ordinate the on- and off-the-job training. Links between background knowledge and practical sessions are good. Information technology is used well in motor vehicle sessions where learners use simulation software to learn about car systems. Learners also benefit from the use of online testing.

69. A suitable range of qualifications and training is available to motor vehicle learners, including vehicle maintenance and repair and vehicle body and paint operations. Motor vehicle learners can also learn welding skills if these are not part of their framework.

However, the courses for engineering production learners are not well matched to their workplaces and the skills they learn off-the-job are not always appropriate for their employers' needs.

70. Assessment is carried out by the subcontractor and is satisfactory. Useful guidelines are provided for employers to allow them to help learners gather work-based evidence. Assessment is frequent, and online assessment is available for key skills and for motor vehicle qualifications. Motor vehicle learners can access assessment in the workplace by telephoning assessors and making appointments for workplace visits. In-college assessment is appropriately planned. However, feedback by assessors to learners is often only verbal. It is not sufficiently detailed, or recorded to help improve the learners' performance. Internal verification is satisfactory. The process is effective in assuring the quality of assessment decisions, but does not drive improvements in assessment. For example, internal verification plans exist but they are not followed. Some planned internal verification activities have not taken place. There are few formal standardisation meetings and no records showing how feedback from internal verifiers has improved assessment processes.

71. The monitoring of learners' progress is ineffective. Although achievement is recorded when learners achieve the full qualification, there are no records to show how learners are progressing through the separate units. The Training Trust does not gather enough qualitative information from the subcontractor, or from employers, on learners' progress. The subcontractor provides records of evidence referenced to units in the qualification for each learner, but these do not indicate which units have been completed successfully, or how learners are progressing towards their qualification. Information on the progress of groups of learners is not gathered or analysed to identify trends or to alert staff to concerns.

72. Progress reviews are weak. Liaison officers carry out progress reviews with learners every eight weeks, and review documents are completed with learners and are discussed with employers. However, action plans and targets are often too vague and are not always followed up at subsequent reviews. They do not provide enough information on what learners must do to progress. Reviews include a question on equality of opportunity, and if learners have concerns these are dealt with. However, there is little exploration or development of learners' understanding of equality of opportunity during this part of the review. Learners who have additional literacy, numeracy or language needs have access to the specialist sessions offered by the subcontractor. If they do not attend, this is followed up at review, but there is rarely any other discussion or record of additional learning or support needs. Individual learning plans are not updated to reflect changes to learners' programmes or completion dates, and they do not record achievement.

Leadership and management

73. The management of engineering learners and courses is unsatisfactory. Although there had been some improvement in retention rates, there has been little improvement in achievement since the previous inspection. Although the learners' progress is

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improving, it is still slow. Team meetings take place, but these do not focus sufficiently on improving retention and achievement. Concerns about key skills or progress reviews are discussed at meetings, but they are not always followed up with actions and some continue to appear in successive team meetings, with little review to measure improvement. The Training Trust has a clear service level agreement with the subcontractor. However, some of the requirements of the contract have not been fulfilled and the monitoring arrangements are not sufficiently effective in securing improvements to provision. Informal communication between Training Trust and the subcontractor is good, but formal communication is not well planned and recorded to monitor and improve provision. The Training Trust does not observe teaching or assessment at the college nor does it make enough use of the subcontractors' own quality assurance arrangements. Its self-assessment report does not include many of the strengths and weaknesses identified during the inspection.

Health, social care & public services

Health, social care & public services		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Early years</i> - Work-based learning for young people	16	4

Early years

Strengths

- well-structured foundation modern apprenticeship programme
- good communication with learners

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks
- some unsatisfactory assessment practices
- insufficient specific support for additional learning needs
- insufficient staff to meet learners’ needs

Achievement and standards

74. Retention rates are improving for foundation modern apprentices and in the last year, only one learner has left the programme early. However, retention rates for advanced modern apprentices vary, and numbers are too low to see a trend.

75. There has been little improvement in the achievement rates for foundation modern apprentices or advanced modern apprentices since the previous inspection, and completion rates remain low. Of the learners who started in 2001-02, only 14 per cent completed the foundation modern apprenticeship framework and only 33 per cent completed the advanced modern apprenticeship framework. More learners achieve their NVQ. Of the foundation modern apprentices who started in 2001-02, 48 per cent achieved the NVQ and this increased to 56 per cent for 2002-03.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts			4		6		13									
Retained*			0		4	67	4	31									
Successfully completed			0		2	33	2	15									
Still in learning			1		0	0	0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01										
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	2		18		21		27									
Retained*	0		11		10	48	3	11									
Successfully completed	0		0		3	14	3	11									
Still in learning	1		5		0	0	0	0									

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

LSC funded work-based learning																	
NVQ Training	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	5		5		1											
Retained*	0		2		1												
Successfully completed	0		0		0												
Still in learning	5		3		1												

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Quality of education and training

76. The programme for the new modern apprenticeship framework is well structured. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. All components of the framework have been integrated effectively into a comprehensive scheme of work for off-the-job training, which is delivered during weekly training sessions at Training Trust. The programme runs over 40 weeks and includes support with portfolio-building. Key skills and employment rights and responsibilities are delivered alongside the technical certificate. All elements of the framework are explained clearly at induction and learners

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are encouraged to take responsibility for referencing their evidence to the standards in their portfolio. Learners on NVQ training only also attend the sessions. They benefit from the structured teaching of background knowledge relating to early years care and education.

77. Communication between the Training Trust and learners is good. During the past six months the provider has had difficulty in maintaining an appropriate level of support for learners because of staff shortages, but has kept learners well informed throughout by letters and telephone calls. This communication has been effective in retaining learners, who were informed immediately when their tutor left and were provided with alternative arrangements for their off-the-job training. When learners or employers have had concerns, the Training Trust has responded swiftly. For example, two learners who were experiencing some difficulties in their placements were moved to alternative placements. However, one advanced modern apprentice has had little communication or support since her assessor left the provider.

78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, although their aims and objectives are not clear. An appropriate range of teaching and learning techniques is used, and most learners participate well in discussion and activities. Learners like the relaxed atmosphere, the clear presentation of information and the sharing of ideas and experiences. However, some disruptive behaviour is not always adequately dealt with. Learners have access to an adequate but limited range of resources. Several copies of the recommended textbook and supporting work packs are available, but there are no other books for reference or to extend the more able learners. There are no copies of current government documents for early years.

79. Learners have a satisfactory initial assessment which is used to determine whether they are registered for a full framework or the NVQ only. Their induction is satisfactory and includes health and safety, discussions on equality of opportunity and diversity and an introduction to the requirements of the programme. Progress reviews are carried out every eight weeks. These are thorough and help to support learners. The review format is comprehensive and includes contributions on progress from work placement supervisors and tutors of off-the-job training. Reports give information on learners' progress through units of the qualification. Health and safety is covered adequately. However, reviews are not always thorough. Discussions on equality of opportunity are superficial and do not reinforce learners' understanding. Targets are set, but some are not sufficiently clear and detailed.

80. Some assessment practices are unsatisfactory. Portfolios include too much written work with insufficient use of observation and oral questioning. Poor practice is not always fed back to learners. Written evidence is not referenced clearly enough to occupational standards. Evidence for background knowledge is kept in a separate folder from work-based evidence in many cases. Although learners have almost completed a substantial number of units they have not recorded the evidence on their unit assessment sheets and the units have not been signed off. If learners achieve skills in the workplace their supervisor records the date of achievement in a witness testimony booklet, but this is not signed and there are few comments to explain the achievement. Some

assessments, particularly those involving work-based assessment, are not sufficiently planned. This is recognised in the self-assessment report. Internal verification has only been in place since May and only half of the learners have had portfolios internally verified. The internal verifier has given detailed written feedback to the learners but not to the assessor. No standardisation meetings have yet taken place. This weakness was identified by the provider in the self-assessment report and a new training and development manager has been appointed to coordinate the internal verification process. A very comprehensive internal verification policy and plan is now in place.

81. There are currently not enough staff in childcare to meet learners' needs. Prior to the liaison officer/tutor's resignation in February 2004, learners were well supported. However, the provider has been unable to recruit a replacement and is currently buying in the services of two part-time staff to carry out teaching and assessment, but this is not fully meeting the needs of the learners. Some learners who have been training since September 2003 have had little or no observation of work practice, and assessment for others has been delayed. Some reviews have not been carried out. There was a gap of several weeks in the delivery of off-the-job training, although a senior member of staff carried out some of them. The delivery of key skills and first aid training has been delayed. One advanced modern apprentice who does not attend off-the-job training, has had little support since February.

82. The provider has a range of appropriate resources to support learners with literacy and numeracy needs, but these are not yet in use. A member of staff who has some experience of dyslexia is supporting one learner effectively by using visual learning techniques. However, there is insufficient specialist support to help develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills. Although they receive extra help and support to enable them to make steady progress with their qualifications, there is little support to help them overcome their specific difficulties.

Leadership and management

83. Senior management at the Training Trust has attempted to minimise the adverse effects of staff shortage in this area of learning, with some success. Although there have been delays in the programme, learners are making steady progress and are effectively monitored. Additional assessments have been arranged to take place during the summer break to speed up the assessment process. Although the part-time assessor and tutor work on different days and have difficulty in arranging meetings because of other commitments, liaison between them and managers is satisfactory. Learners have been kept well informed about the change and numbers have been kept low until the staff shortage is resolved. However, employers are not always well informed about the training programme and they do not receive a copy of the scheme of work for off-the-job training.