

The Academy Hair & Beauty

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Contents

Background information	3
Inspection judgements	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider.....	4
Summary of grades awarded	5
Overall judgement.....	6
Effectiveness of provision	6
Capacity to improve	6
Key strengths	7
Key areas for improvement.....	7
Main findings	8
Achievement and standards	8
Quality of provision.....	8
Leadership and management	9
Equality of opportunity	9
What learners like:.....	12
What learners think could improve:	12
Learners' achievements	13

Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Description of the provider

1. The Academy Hair & Beauty, (The Academy), is a private limited company, offering apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in hairdressing and beauty therapy. Of the 32 work-based learners, 24 are following apprenticeships and seven are following advanced apprenticeships in hairdressing. Currently one is following an apprenticeship in beauty therapy.
2. The Academy has purpose built training premises in Norton which lies within the Ryedale area of North Yorkshire. The director of the company is the owner of The Academy and is responsible for business planning and quality assurance. A manager is responsible for The Academy's operational management and an office manager looks after all the administration functions. A further 10 part-time staff are involved in the delivery of the training programmes, including three internal verifiers.
3. Some learners are employed in the four salons of the parent company, Goodys. Other learners are employed in salons in York, Scarborough and Malton. The Academy also offers privately funded training in hairdressing and beauty therapy, and assessor awards. Currently 76 school pupils are following programmes with The Academy. The level 1 hairdressing course and the schools diploma are offered to 14 to 16 year olds. National vocational qualifications (NVQs) at levels 2 and 3 are offered to sixth form students.
4. Over 90% of The Academy's work is funded through North Yorkshire LSC. Ryedale is a sparsely populated district with most workers using their own transport. The 2001 census shows that less than 1% of the local population is from minority ethnic groups. At 1.1% the number of Ryedale citizens available for, and actively seeking, work is considerably lower than the national average of 2.1%. Only 10.1% of Ryedale's population have no qualifications compared with 15.3% in Yorkshire and Humber.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: Grade 1
Achievement and standards	Outstanding: Grade 1
Quality of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding: Grade 1
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Sector subject area

Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Outstanding: Grade 1
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

5. The quality of provision is outstanding. Teaching and learning are outstanding. Theory and practical sessions are well planned and well taught. Facilities and resources are good quality and modern. Staff are highly experienced. Learners are highly motivated and have a particularly good understanding of their programmes. The range of provision is very good and meets the needs of local employers, learners and school pupils. Several learners have established their own salons. Enrichment activities are very good. Learners make a positive contribution to the local community. Pastoral support and literacy and numeracy support very effectively help learners complete their programmes. Support is well managed and closely monitored.
6. Leadership and management are outstanding. Strategic and operational management are very good. The director's clear vision to improve the learning opportunities and raise the aspirations of young people in Ryedale, is shared by all staff, partners and learners. Communication with learners, staff and employers is very good. Staff are very actively involved in decision-making and sharing of good practice. Partnership working is very good. Success rates are excellent on the programmes that The Academy provides for schools in the Ryedale area learning partnership. The Academy works closely with other training providers to identify and share good practice. Monitoring of learners' progress is outstanding. Issues which could affect progress are identified and addressed swiftly. Engagement with employers is very good. Employers have a good understanding of learners' programmes and progress. On- and off-the-job training are closely linked. The emphasis on equality and diversity with learners, staff and employers is good. Learners show respect for their peers and are supportive of each others needs. The Academy provides excellent value for money.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding: Grade 1

7. The Academy's capacity to improve is outstanding. The organisation's response to dealing with the previous inspection's findings has been good. Previous weaknesses have been resolved, satisfactory areas developed and strengths maintained. Apprentice success rates which were satisfactory at the previous inspection have been very high for the last three years. Facilities and resources are now very good. Information and learning technology is now routinely used by staff and learners. A formal complaints procedure and an employer agreement are now in place and regularly monitored. Quality procedures are now established, used by all staff and audited. The quantity and quality of employer contact has increased. The quality of observations of teaching and learning has improved and criteria relevant to learning are now used to develop tutors further. The review process has improved. The appointment of the salon manager has had a positive impact on operational management. Internal verification is thorough. Since the previous inspection the number of learners and range of programmes has grown. Grades awarded during inspection are higher than at the previous inspection for leadership and management and hairdressing and beauty therapy and remain the same for equality of opportunity.

8. Self-assessment is an inclusive process. The resulting action plan is used well to make improvements. Strategic priorities are linked closely to self-assessment. The self-assessment report accurately matched the grades awarded at inspection.

Key strengths

- Outstanding apprentice success rates
- Very high standard of learners' work
- Very good accommodation and resources
- Good teaching and learning
- Highly motivated, well informed learners
- Very good enrichment opportunities
- Good learner support
- Very good strategic and operational management
- Very good communication
- Very good partnership working
- Outstanding monitoring of learners' progress
- Very good employer links
- Strong emphasis on equality and diversity with learners, staff and employers
- Good response to previous inspection findings

Key areas for improvement

- None identified

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Outstanding: Grade 1

9. Achievement and standards are outstanding. Apprentices' success rates have been outstanding for the last two years. Standards of learners' practical and written work are very high.
10. Apprentices' success rates are outstanding, as the self-assessment report identified. In 2005-06 and 2006-07 overall success rates for apprentices were very high at 90%. In 2004-05 they were twice the national average. Timely success rates have increased rapidly over the last three years and were outstanding at 89% in 2006-07. Numbers on advanced apprenticeships are low, but success rates for the last three years are good and above national averages. Timely achievements are improving and are now above national averages. Current learners are making good progress and are on target to achieve their planned outcomes.
11. As the self-assessment report identified learners' practical work is very good. Learners complete good, high-fashion hair styles. In particular, 14 to 16 year olds from schools demonstrate very high level skills when completing bridal styles on long hair. Learners' written work and portfolios are good and well presented. Some portfolios contain good photographic evidence of learners' practical work.

Quality of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

12. Teaching and learning are outstanding. As identified in the self-assessment report accommodation and resources are very good. Since the previous inspection, when facilities were adequate, The Academy has invested in designing and developing a modern learning centre with good quality beauty and hairdressing training areas and classrooms. Tutors and learners now access and use information and learning technology comfortably and confidently. Tutors set high standards for learners and have much industry experience. All tutors are practitioners and some are finalists in national hairdressing and business competitions. All staff, apart from the office manager and the director, are part-time. Their continuing professional development is good. All staff either have or are working towards their certificate in education. Salons and training rooms at the training centre are well equipped and have data projectors to enable good use of power-point presentations by staff.
13. The teaching of background knowledge is good. In the better lessons tutors use a range of strategies and teaching aids to engage learners. Challenging tasks are set with a clear focus on the learner. Time is well managed and the pace of lessons is good. Lessons are well planned and tasks appropriate for different learners identified. Learners evaluate the quality of lessons. Learners are motivated and enjoy sessions. Tutors act as good facilitators. In one session learners gave good short presentations to the rest of the group. The ratio of tutors to learners is good. Most groups are small. Tutors and learners develop a good rapport. Learners benefit from good individual coaching. All learners have designated training times in the workplace and work-based trainers use The Academy's

training plans. Assessment practice is satisfactory. The Academy staff attend work-based learning sessions to assess and sample the quality of training.

14. As identified by the self-assessment report, learners are highly motivated and well informed. They are confident and enjoy their training at The Academy and in their work place. Learners are proud to be at The Academy and have a very good attitude to learning. Learners have a particularly good understanding of their long- and short-term targets for completion of NVQ units and the actions required to achieve them.
15. Learner reviews are regular and effective. Targets set are achievable and learners understand the actions required by them to progress. Employers are involved in and understand the review process. Equality of opportunity and health and safety are promoted during reviews.
16. Enrichment activities are very good. Learners make a positive contribution to the local community by visiting care and nursing homes, primary schools and one parent families to provide hairdressing and beauty services. Learners are involved in fund-raising for local and national charities. Competitions are staged and local and national competitions and exhibitions are visited. Success is celebrated with employers and parents. Learners benefit from specialist manufacturers' courses. Workplaces offer learners additional specialist vocational courses which are not part of their apprenticeship.
17. As identified in the self-assessment report, support is very good and effectively helps learners complete their programmes. Pastoral support is particularly good. Learners have staff members' mobile telephone numbers which they can use if they have problems at any time. Learners experiencing financial difficulties and those who are pregnant or have babies are well supported. Numeracy, literacy and dyslexia support needs are identified at induction. Support is provided both in discrete and vocational lessons. An evening 'drop-in' support session is available for learners who find it difficult to attend during the day. Advice and guidance are good. Learners are guided to higher level provision and to specific provision to meet their needs. For example, those who require it are directed to English classes for speakers of other languages. Support is well managed and monitored.

Leadership and management

Outstanding: Grade 1

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

18. Strategic and operational management are very good. The director has a clear vision to improve learning opportunities and raise the aspirations of young people in Ryedale. This is clearly communicated to and shared by all staff, partners and learners. Although the

type of programmes and numbers of learners has increased, staff have carefully maintained and improved the quality of provision. The Academy and its learning programmes are efficient and well organised. Records and communications are very well maintained and the audit of processes is thorough. The Academy provides excellent value for money.

19. Communication is very good. Most staff are part-time, but all are very well involved in decision-making and the sharing of good practice. Team working is very good. The good, formal meeting structure to carry out self-assessment, standardisation and progress monitoring, is supplemented by very frequent informal communication. Good practice is quickly identified and shared among the team. Staff have a wealth of educational experience gained from other employment, which benefits The Academy. Learners', employers' and parents' views are regularly sought and acted upon. Schools and parents are well informed of pupils' attendance and progress. Learners and employers receive useful newsletters containing legislative updates and course information.
20. Partnership working is very good, as the self-assessment report identified. Good partnerships with local schools have been further strengthened. The Academy now works with all four schools in the Ryedale area learning partnership, teaching hairdressing to sixth form pupils and hairdressing and beauty therapy to 14 to 16 year olds. Numbers have increased significantly since 2004 with 76 school pupils now on The Academy's programmes. Success rates are excellent. All pupils have achieved their level 1 qualification and 65% are progressing to further training with The Academy. The schools diploma is now offered to challenge more able pupils. The Academy hosts a range of activities aimed at raising the profile of work-based learning, for example attending parents' and pupils' 'choices' evenings. Partnership working is used well to benefit learners.
21. The Academy works closely with other training providers to identify and share good practice. It has visited outstanding providers to learn from them and invited other providers to observe and feedback on The Academy's teaching and learning. The Academy generously shares its own practice with other providers. For example, an employment rights and responsibilities programme developed by The Academy is now being used by a local college. Staff are well represented on national hairdressing and beauty organisations.
22. Monitoring of learners' progress is outstanding. Boards showing learners' practical, assignment, test and written question achievements for each unit are prominently displayed. All learners and tutors can easily see who has achieved. The director has a very good knowledge of each learner and their progress which is monitored very closely. Issues which could affect progress are identified very quickly. Learners at risk are added to a list displayed in the staff room which shows the action to be taken. Very effective short-term action plans set each week are displayed in salons to remind learners and employers of the assessment opportunities learners need. Useful monitoring sheets, updated by learners and kept in the front of their portfolios have been introduced since the previous inspection. Learners customise and take ownership for action plans and monitoring assessment sheets.
23. Employer engagement is very good as the self-assessment report identified. The Academy has developed excellent relationships with employers over the years and now works with 28 employers. Additionally five previous learners have been very well supported to set up

their own successful salons. Employers appreciate how the flexible training suits their needs. They have a good understanding of learners' programmes and progress. On- and off-the-job training are closely linked. Employers are supported well, for example, if dealing with learner problems. On-the-job training is observed by The Academy's staff. The Academy helps work-based assessors gain relevant qualifications. Employers are very supportive and take a keen interest in their learners' progress. Most employers speak to The Academy's staff each week. Contact and communication with employers is recorded and monitored.

24. Equality of opportunity is good. The emphasis on equality and diversity with learners, staff and employers is strong. Learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity. They show respect for their peers and are supportive of each others' needs. Tutors emphasise equality and diversity in teaching and encourage learners to value diversity in their dealings with clients. Learners are prepared well to work with diverse clients. Employers have a good understanding of equality of opportunity and its importance for learners and clients. Action is taken to encourage learners from minority ethnic groups in the area. Signs in Slovak are used as The Academy has identified that there is a growing local Slovak community. Currently five work-based learners are male and they participate in recruitment and marketing events. Enrichment is used to increase learners' awareness of citizenship and their responsibilities to the community. Staff benefit from involvement in a good range of equality and diversity training and projects. The Academy is making good progress against its equality and diversity action plan.

What learners like:

- 'I like everything'
- 'It's like being in a family'
- 'The learning including the theory is fun'
- 'It's exciting taking part in competitions'
- The friendly, helpful, supportive staff at The Academy and in the salons
- 'It's better than school'

What learners think could improve:

- 'Nothing'

Annex

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by the provider **2004 to 2007**.

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	2004-05	Overall	2	100%	48%	100%	34%
		Timely	2	50%	31%	50%	22%
	2005-06	Overall	5	60%	53%	60%	44%
		Timely	5	0%	34%	0%	26%
	2006-07	Overall	3	100%	NA	60%	NA
		Timely	4	45%	NA	41%	NA
Apprenticeships	2004-05	Overall	15	80%	51%	80%	39%
		Timely	11	55%	29%	55%	22%
	2005-06	Overall	11	91%	58%	91%	52%
		Timely	12	75%	38%	75%	34%
	2006-07	Overall	10	90%	NA	90%	NA
		Timely	9	89%	NA	89%	NA

Note 'At the time of the inspection - LSC data for 2006-07 had yet to be fully validated'

- * Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned
- ** Provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'