

# Shaw Trust

## Inspection report

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**Unique reference number:** 59071

**Name of lead inspector:** Mike White HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 10 February 2012

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** Fox Talbot House  
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## Information about the provider

1. The Shaw Trust (the Trust) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee established in 1982. Its core purpose is to help disabled and disadvantaged people to enhance their lives and gain employment through work preparation, in-work support and skills training. The Trust is governed by a board of trustees consisting of non-executive directors who are volunteers. The board meets at least five times a year.
2. The Trust receives income from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA), local authorities, charitable fundraising, the European Social Fund (ESF), national lottery and other sources. It runs welfare-to-work services, self-directed support services for disabled people, social enterprises, and learning and skills services.
3. This inspection focused on the learning and skills provision including contracts with the YPLA for a foundation learning programme, the SFA for ESF programmes, and subcontracted programmes. Together, these programmes constitute just under 5% of the Trust's income and activity.
4. Learning and skills provision is delivered through 12 Trust centres and four community venues in the North East, South East or North West. Three heads of service, supported by three operations managers, lead a team of 40 staff.
5. Of the 263 learners following programmes in preparation for life and work, 117 are on subcontracted programmes. Sixty three learners are on foundation learning, 55 on programmes funded through adult skills budgets, and 145 on ESF co-financed provision. Around 65% of learners have a declared disability or learning difficulty, and 53% are male. Two-thirds of learners are aged 16 to 18, and one-third are adults. A further 22 pupils aged 14 to 16 were on programme but were out of scope for the inspection.
6. The Trust provides training on behalf of the following providers:
  - Gateshead College (preparation for life and work)
  - Durham County Council (preparation for life and work)
  - Barnardo's (preparation for life and work)

| Type of provision   | Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11 |
|---|--|
| <b>Provision for young learners:</b><br>Foundation learning, including<br>Entry to Employment | 72 part-time learners                  |
| ESF co-financed (16 to 18)  | 385 part-time learners                 |
| <b>Provision for adult learners:</b><br>ESF co-financed (19+)                                 | 327 part-time learners                 |
| <b>Employer provision:</b><br>Train to Gain   | 55 learners                            |

## Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

| Overall effectiveness of provision |  | Grade 2 |
|------------------------------------|--|---------|
| Capacity to improve                |  | Grade 2 |
|                                    |  | Grade   |
| Outcomes for learners              |  | 2       |
| Quality of provision               |  | 2       |
| Leadership and management          |  | 2       |
| Safeguarding                       |  | 2       |
| Equality and diversity             |  | 2       |
| Subject Areas                      |  | Grade   |
| Preparation for life and work      |  | 2       |

## Overall effectiveness

7. Learners enjoy their training and there are good rates of attendance and retention. They develop good personal, social and employability skills and they comment on their increased confidence and self-esteem. Many learners face significant barriers to achieving their aims but they make very good progress in relation to their starting positions and their outcomes are good. Many learners benefit from work experience, voluntary work, or by contributing to community activities.
8. Management of training is good. Many of the training activities are engaging and interesting. They help to motivate and encourage learners to progress. Learners feel safe in the training centres, develop a good understanding of safeguarding and increase their awareness of the importance of equality and diversity. Good support helps learners overcome barriers to learning.
9. The Trust has a strong commitment to work with the most disadvantaged people and to help them to improve their qualifications and gain jobs. It achieves its mission well. Learners' feedback is used effectively to bring about improvements to the provision. The Trust has a good understanding of its strengths and the areas it needs to improve and is working hard to implement its strategy for moving to excellence.

## Main findings

- A large majority of learners start their programmes with low levels of previous achievement, and they may also have mental health issues, or learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learners make good progress relative to these starting positions and successfully achieve their learning goals. The motivation and enthusiasm of learners is very high and this is reflected in good retention and attendance.
- Learners make good improvements in their self-confidence and self-esteem. They develop good employability skills and the rates of progression to employment, training or further education are mostly good. Most learners benefit from good work experience opportunities although these are not available sufficiently for foundation learners in the north east.
- Learners feel very safe, fully understand safeguarding procedures and are confident about raising any issues. Tutors place a strong emphasis on internet safety during induction. Learners develop a good awareness of personal safety including issues concerning weapons' misuse and substance misuse. Programmes are carefully planned to meet learners' needs. Learners' understanding of healthy living and their contribution to the community are both good.
- In the outstanding sessions, tutors use particularly interesting and engaging learning activities. Some lesson plans do not contain sufficient detail to meet the needs of different learners. Learners benefit from additional in-class support. Although support staff and tutors work well together, this support is not always well planned.
- Individual learning plans are satisfactory. Most identify individual learner targets clearly and record progress well, although in a minority their targets are too broad and do not record in sufficient detail learners' personalised targets or monitoring of progress. Learners' reviews are satisfactory.
- Learners who study functional skills achieve very well in information and communication technology and well in literacy and numeracy. However, too few learners take the opportunity to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. The Trust has too few staff with specialist qualifications in literacy and numeracy.
- Programmes meet learners' needs well. Learners can choose from a good range of accredited and non-accredited provision and vocational options. The Trust's partnership arrangements are excellent. It has extensive links with local authority services, training providers, charities, support agencies and the community, enabling very effective collaborative working which benefits learners.
- Care, guidance and support are particularly good. Staff quickly gain a very good knowledge and understanding of learners' individual needs to promote their well-being. They are very sensitive to learners' anxiety levels and mental health issues. The Trust has effective links with a range of external support agencies that assist in providing good levels of practical advice and support for learners.

- The Trust is very successful in realising its vision and mission of working with the most disadvantaged groups in society. It is very proactive in national and regional groups to raise public awareness of the issues concerning these groups. Staff have had good involvement in developing a realistic strategy for the future of the provision.
- A board of trustees comprising a wide range of expertise provides appropriate support and challenge and has a good understanding of the main areas for improvement of the provision. It has good links with the regions and trustees are proactive in visiting projects to meet staff and learners. However, not all board members have completed safeguarding training.
- Arrangements to safeguard learners, led by an effective safeguarding forum, are good. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and developments are well led by the safeguarding forum. The Trust very effectively fulfils its social inclusion mission and the promotion of equality and diversity is good. Analysis of equality and diversity data is satisfactory and there are no significant differences in performance between different groups of learners.
- Good use is made of learners' feedback to make improvements to the provision although the direct involvement of learners within decision making groups is insufficiently developed. The self-assessment process is good leading to an accurate self-assessment report. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. However, the process for observation of teaching and learning is insufficiently developed as a tool for sharing good practice.

### **What does Shaw Trust need to do to improve further?**

- Improve teaching and learning by redesigning the observation of teaching and learning system, to provide greater evidence for the grading of observations and to produce more specific action plans for sharing good practice.
- Ensure that all lesson planning clearly identifies specific actions to meet the needs of individual learners and makes best use of the in-class additional support staff.
- Ensure all individual learning plans record detailed personalised targets and monitor progress so that all learners understand their achievements, skills developed and what they need to do to continue to progress.
- Implement the existing skills for life strategy to increase the number of staff who hold literacy and numeracy specialist teaching qualifications.
- Establish and embed the new management information system to enable the currently satisfactory analysis of performance data to extend to wide-ranging equality and diversity characteristics.
- Ensure that all members of the board of trustees complete safeguarding training to develop their ability to effectively support and challenge this aspect of their activity.

## **Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**

### **What learners like:**

- meeting other learners and making new friends
- the relaxed and reassuring atmosphere at centres making it comfortable to learn and helping overcome previous negative experiences
- the very supportive, friendly and patient staff
- being better prepared for employment and gaining in self-confidence
- the staff who listen to suggestions to improve the training areas
- the readily available help.

### **What learners would like to see improved:**

- the computers that can be slow at times
- the availability of help for people who have difficulties in reading and writing.

## **Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**

### **What employers like:**

- the good involvement in learners' development
- the very good support given by the Trust
- the mutual benefit from working with the Trust.

### **What employers would like to see improved:**

- no improvements identified.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 2**

10. The Trust's mission of engaging with the most disadvantaged groups is achieved very well. Plans for the future development of the provision are clear, well considered and supported well by staff. Learners' outcomes are good and improving. Learners' views have been used very effectively to inform quality improvements with good involvement of learners in developing and implementing actions following their feedback. Staff are heavily involved in the self-assessment process which is also well informed by learners' views. The self-assessment report accurately identifies the key strengths and areas for improvement. The quality improvement plan is clearly linked to the self-assessment report although some actions lack sufficiently measurable targets. The board of trustees has a good understanding of the provision, providing appropriate support and challenge.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 2**

11. In foundation learning, progression has improved significantly over the last three years and was satisfactory in 2010/11. Data provided by the Trust for the current year indicates continued improvement. The achievement of functional skills is good in literacy and numeracy and very good in information and communication technology. The achievement of other qualifications to increase employability is also very good. Progression on ESF co-financed provision is at least satisfactory and mostly good with very good achievement of qualifications. There are no significant differences in the performance of different groups of learners.
12. Learners are particularly well motivated and enjoy their programmes leading to high rates of attendance and retention. Their confidence and self-esteem, often low at the start of the programme, improve well. Learners confirm that they feel better equipped and more motivated to enter into employment or further training. Many learners benefit from work placements or voluntary work experience, further developing their work readiness although, as recognised by the Trust, foundation learners in the north east have too few opportunities for work placements.
13. Learners feel very safe in the training centres. They fully understand the safeguarding procedures and are confident that any issues they raise will be quickly dealt with. Both learners and staff adhere to strict codes of conduct and exhibit high levels of mutual respect. Learners develop a good awareness of personal safety, weapons' misuse, substance misuse and other topics. In some sensitive areas where gang culture could adversely affect learners, the Trust plans its programmes carefully to reduce the potential for conflict.
14. All learners receive good information about healthy lifestyles in the course of their training. Learners on the foundation programme have healthy eating as an



integral part of their personal and social development and many take an additional cookery qualification. Foundation learners enter into a range of events raising funds for local and national charities. Adult learners in the north-east work in the community on garden projects, make furniture for local schools, or contribute to recycling activities within social enterprises.

## The quality of provision

## Grade 2

15. In the good or outstanding sessions, learners benefit from particularly interesting and engaging activities. Imaginative topics are used well to develop learners' confidence and communication skills. Good use is made of praise and constructive feedback. The good interaction encourages teamwork and motivates learners to make valuable contributions. In the satisfactory lessons, tutors spend too long presenting information and some learners lose concentration. Some lesson plans insufficiently meet the need for a range of learning activities.
16. Initial assessment is satisfactory. However, the support to improve learners' literacy and numeracy skills is not sufficiently established. In most lessons, learners benefit from the support provided by a range of additional staff, including volunteers and advisers. Although support staff and the tutors work well together, in many cases, the tutors do not provide the support staff with sufficient guidance. Resources are satisfactory. However, access to learning technology varies. Staff are well qualified and dedicated. A wide range of skills and expertise provides good support for learners.
17. Individual learning plans are satisfactory. Most plans clearly identify individual learning targets and record progress well but in a minority, the targets are too broad or are simply a list of qualification aims and the plan does not record in sufficient detail learners' personalised targets. The monitoring of progress so that learners are fully aware of the skills they need to develop, the behaviours and attitudes they need to work on and the actions they need to take to overcome barriers is not always recorded well. Most learner reviews are comprehensive and learners are treated with sensitivity and follow up actions are taken quickly.
18. Learners complete a timely initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy. The learners who take functional skills in literacy and numeracy achieve well. However, too few learners take up the opportunity to improve these skills. The Trust is aware of this and has a strategy to increase the number of staff with specialist literacy and numeracy teaching qualifications to further develop the support. Most learners are particularly successful in improving their information and communication technology skills.
19. Programmes meet learners' needs well and tutors foster a strong ethos of inclusion for learners with complex needs to overcome barriers to learning. The Trust is adept at sourcing other funding streams to complement the good range of programmes. Provision is planned flexibly at times and in locations to suit

learners. Learners are consulted about the design, planning and delivery of their individual learning programmes. Most foundation learners access a good range of personal and social development, vocational and work skills. Whilst the Trust has plans to increase work placement opportunities for learners in the north east, currently some foundation learners do not benefit from this experience. Learners appreciate the informal and inclusive ethos which contrasts with their negative previous experiences. Learners enjoy the good range of visits and off-site activities that extend their local cultural knowledge.

20. The Trust's partnership arrangements are excellent. Extensive links with local authority services, training providers, charities, support agencies and the community enable particularly effective collaborative working which promotes social inclusion. The excellent partnership working enables learners to access provision enabling them to identify and overcome their individual barriers. Partners value the contribution that the Trust makes to their wider aims by offering provision to marginalised groups.
21. Care, guidance and support are particularly good. The good personal support, advice and guidance enable learners to take a full part in their programmes. Staff quickly gain a very good knowledge and understanding of learners' individual needs in order to ensure their well-being. They are very sensitive to learners' anxiety levels and mental health issues. The Trust has effective links with a range of external support agencies that assist in providing good levels of practical advice and support for learners on a range of issues. Learners feel valued and they appreciate the approachability of staff and their sensitivity to individual needs.

## Leadership and management

## Grade 2

22. The Trust has a very clear mission to work with, and meet the needs of learners facing significant barriers, disadvantage, disability or learning difficulties. It very effectively achieves this mission. It has very good involvement in national and local strategic organisations contributing to the development of government policy on the issues facing these groups. Staff have contributed well to developing a clear and realistic strategy for the future of the organisation including the learning and skills provision. A structure of frequent team and individual meetings enables good communications across the Trust. Performance management is also good with frequent one-to-one meetings having a sharp focus on meeting individual targets. Subcontractors confirm the Trust to be a flexible and proactive partner ensuring that mutual benefits are achieved.
23. A board of trustees representing a wide range of expertise provides appropriate support and challenge for the provision. Trustees have a good understanding of the key strengths and areas for improvement of the learning and skills provision. They recognise that deficiencies in the management information system have had an adverse impact on the quality of data available for their scrutiny. The board moves the venue for its meetings around the country

enabling visits to the different parts of the provision and creating opportunities to meet with staff and learners. One board member takes the lead for safeguarding aspects. Not all board members have undertaken specific safeguarding training.

24. Safeguarding arrangements for learners are good and led very effectively by a safeguarding forum. Policies and procedures are very comprehensive and the structure of designated persons is appropriate to needs. Safer recruitment principles are applied and all appropriate staff have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check prior to taking up appointment, renewable every three years. Staff safeguarding training is good and new staff complete this in their probationary period. Detailed records show good evidence of the thorough investigation of any disclosures or allegations against staff, with the appropriate involvement of external agencies where necessary. Tutors place a strong emphasis on internet safety during induction and throughout the programme. Learners and staff both show a good understanding of safeguarding. Links with external agencies are good. For example, two staff members in the north east are members of the local children's safeguarding board.
25. The Trust's promotion of equality and diversity is good. A strong emphasis on social inclusion is embedded in the staff recruitment process. Staff and learners are strongly committed to upholding very clear codes of conduct. This commitment is reflected in the good behaviour and the high levels of mutual respect among learners. Equality and diversity are promoted well during learners' induction and integrated into the teaching sessions to reinforce and develop understanding. The future development of equality and diversity within the Trust is steered well by an effective working group. Arrangements to protect learners from bullying or harassment are effective. Good use is made of adaptive technology and external agencies to provide support where appropriate. Some learners represent the Trust on external bodies such as the South Wiltshire learner disability group. The discussions of equality and diversity during progress reviews are thorough although these discussions are not always well recorded on progress review documentation. The analysis of equality and diversity data at a regional level is satisfactory and shows no significant differences in the performance of different groups.
26. The ownership of quality improvement activity at a regional and programme level is good, with many good examples of improvements taking place. This is being further strengthened through the implementation of an overarching excellence strategy encompassing all of the Trust's provision to provide better sharing of good practice between different types of provision. The lesson observation process is effective in improving the performance of individual tutors but underdeveloped in facilitating the sharing of good practice. The process is over reliant on ticking predetermined criteria and evidence to support the grade given is not always clear.
27. The Trust provides good value for money. Plans for the future development of the learning and skills provision are clear and well considered. Learners'

attainment is good as is learners' progress relative to their starting positions. Learners' views have been used effectively to improve the provision. The management of resources is good. Accommodation is suitably located within the Trust's own or hired community venues although some community venues are quite small.

## **Information about the inspection**

28. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's director of service design, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding bodies, and data on learners and their achievement.
29. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the provider offers.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

## Shaw Trust

**Learning types: 14 – 16:** Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

| Grades <b>using the 4 point scale</b><br>1: Outstanding; 2: Good;<br>3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate                              | Overall  | 16-18<br>Learner<br>responsive | 19+<br>Learner<br>responsive |
|--|----------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Approximate number of enrolled learners</b>   |          |                                |                              |
| Full-time learners   | 263      | 176                            | 87                           |
| Part-time learners   | 0        | 0                              | 0                            |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b>                       | <b>2</b>                     |
| <b>Capacity to improve</b>   | 2        |                                |                              |
| <b>Outcomes for learners</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b>                       | <b>2</b>                     |
| How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?   | 2        |                                |                              |
| How well do learners attain their learning goals?  | 2        |                                |                              |
| How well do learners progress?   | 2        |                                |                              |
| How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?                              | 2        |                                |                              |
| How safe do learners feel?   | 2        |                                |                              |
| <i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>  | 2        |                                |                              |
| <i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>  | 2        |                                |                              |
| <b>Quality of provision</b>  | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b>                       | <b>2</b>                     |
| How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?   | 2        |                                |                              |
| How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?  | 2        |                                |                              |
| How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?                        | 1        |                                |                              |
| How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?                                    | 2        |                                |                              |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b>                       | <b>2</b>                     |
| How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?                     | 2        |                                |                              |
| <i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>                         | 3        |                                |                              |
| How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?  | 2        |                                |                              |
| How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap? | 2        |                                |                              |
| How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?  | 3        |                                |                              |
| How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?                             | 3        |                                |                              |
| How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?                         | 2        |                                |                              |

\*where applicable to the type of provision

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