

Nestor Primecare Services Limited

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 58929

Name of lead inspector: Deavon Baker-Oxley HMI

Last day of inspection: 02 March 2012

Type of provider: Employer

Address: The Hub Business Centre
Bramford
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP8 4BZ

Telephone number: 0844 7368332

Information about the provider

1. Nestor Primecare Services (Nestor) is one of the largest healthcare providers in the United Kingdom, providing care predominantly to older clients within their own homes. Nestor has a network of branches throughout the country and a training arm, Nestor Professional Development Services. Currently the company employs 9,000 care workers.

2. Nestor’s training has received public funding from the Skills Funding Agency or its predecessor since April 2009. The company offers National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in health and social care at level 2 and 3 and team leading at level 2; apprenticeships in business administration at intermediate and advanced levels; and a Skills for Life programme. All learners are employees of Nestor who complete their training on-the-job. Assessors are also qualified as trainers and deliver training currently at 50 locations across the country. In addition, designated social care trainers deliver care worker training at every branch. This is the organisation's first inspection.

3. The following organisation provides training on behalf of the provider:
 - NVQ Training and Consultancy (health and social care)

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	292 part-time learners 33 part-time learners

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 3
---	----------------

Capacity to improve	Grade 3
----------------------------	----------------

	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3

Subject Areas	Grade
Health and social care	3

Overall effectiveness

- On the Train to Gain programmes, the vast majority of learners achieve their qualifications successfully and the number of learners completing within planned end dates is above the national average. Apprentices in health and social care achieve their qualifications at the same rate as that found nationally. Learners develop and enhance their clinical skills and develop self-confidence very well. They enjoy the programme and feel safe. Nestor's induction training is good and underpins its health and social care programme effectively. Training is supported satisfactorily across the provision. The flexibility of assessors and the provision meet learners' and employers' needs and support learners well. However, assessors do not use initial assessment results consistently to plan learning. Progress reviews are not always detailed enough to contribute to learners' full understanding of their programmes. Many branch managers have very little input into the training programmes and are not clear how their involvement would help their learners' progress through their programmes.
- Overall management of the provision is satisfactory. The organisation has taken effective action to improve outcomes for all learners. The health and social care programme builds effectively upon Nestor's own training. Professional and experienced assessors from the subcontractor and Nestor's own staff support this NVQ satisfactorily. Management of the subcontractor is satisfactory. An effective range of activities develops skills and involves learners effectively. Nestor's safeguarding arrangements are good and learners feel safe.

Main findings

- Train to Gain success rates are high and have improved in the past two years. In 2010/11, they were above the national averages for similar programmes for learners achieving within their planned end date. Apprenticeship success rates are satisfactory and in line with the national averages.
- Learners develop their confidence and good care skills to meet service users' complex needs. They have a good understanding of health and safety, the need for confidentiality and the promotion of independence for service users. Learners understand clearly their responsibilities for the vulnerable people in their care, including the necessity to follow appropriate work procedures, for example by maintaining accurate care records.
- Teaching of group sessions is good. Assessors use an appropriate range of activities to promote and check learning. Discussion topics relate clearly to learners' work in home care settings. One-to-one coaching by assessors is satisfactory. Learners complete initial assessments of their literacy and numeracy skills. However, assessors make insufficient use of these when agreeing individual learning plans.
- Assessment is satisfactory. Staff use an adequate range of assessment methods. Formal reviews are satisfactory. Assessors measure learners' progress and agree targets for completion of academic assignments. They provide accurate feedback but often provide learners with insufficient guidance on how to improve further. For example, staff rarely correct spelling and grammar errors. Assessment observations are often completed late in the programme.
- Learning resources are satisfactory. A few assessors create additional handouts and guidance on research. However, workbooks provided by the subcontractor are dull and uninspiring. Assessors' awareness and use of internet resources and opportunities to use information communication technology (ICT) to support learning is extremely limited. Few learners who use electronic portfolios access the available range of associated online resources.
- Programmes meet the needs and interests of learners adequately. All learners receive regular update training linked clearly to the health and social care programme. The provision supports the business need to meet national qualification requirements for learners in the job roles they perform. Where employers are involved in the training, learners are well motivated and make good progress. However, too often employers and their managers are insufficiently involved.
- Assessors provide learners with good pastoral and personal support. The majority of learners greatly appreciate the frequent communication by telephone, email and in person with their assessors. However, records do not show clear planning and the impact of this contact. The few learners who do not meet their assessors early enough in their training make slow progress.
- Learners do not receive sufficient pre-course information about the time commitment required for the health and social care programme. Many

employers do not allocate learners enough time for study in addition to their other commitments.

- The company promotes learning effectively throughout the organisation, focusing on planning training to meet employers' and learners' needs. Managers set and monitor ambitious, but achievable, targets for improvement. Nestor meets national and local priorities for health care in domiciliary settings and plans training well to match the programme.
- Nestor places a very strong focus on the safeguarding, health and well-being of all learners. Learners are very aware of safeguarding and health and safety issues. Regular risk assessments and monitoring of learners' locations contribute effectively to their safety. Learners have to contact branches as soon as they arrive and leave a client's home. Non-contact within 15 minutes of the designated time triggers an alert. Learners' awareness of internet safety is insufficiently developed.
- Effective initiatives by managers have improved success rates on Skills for Life programmes. They have also increased success rates on NVQ and apprenticeship programmes. The self-assessment report is accurate and the quality improvement plan is clear, detailed and monitored effectively.
- A few aspects of quality assurance are insufficiently developed. Nestor monitors the subcontractor's performance insufficiently and receives no reports from its quality assurance processes. Although Nestor gather learners' feedback at individual meetings, and act upon this, the systematic collection and analysis of users' views is insufficient. The observation of teaching and learning process focuses too much on teaching. The mechanism for sharing good practice is underdeveloped.

What does Nestor need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of training, by making better use of the results of initial assessments to plan for and provide appropriate support that meets the needs of individual learners. Include in this the development of literacy and numeracy skills and challenge for more able learners, for example, by ensuring that all spelling and grammar errors are corrected.
- Provide a wider range of better quality learning resources, including more use of ICT, to motivate learners more effectively, and support the collection of work place evidence.
- Ensure that all learners understand how to stay safe when using the internet, by promoting internet safety effectively.
- Identify and promote examples of best practice to branch managers and workplace supervisors to encourage them to provide effective support for learners.
- Provide timely and comprehensive information about the apprenticeship framework to allow prospective learners and branch managers to plan and manage the time available for study.

- Improve the quality of provision by more rigorous monitoring of quality processes across the country, by sharing best practice, improving the collection and analysis of learners' feedback and evaluating the impact of teaching on learning in observations of teaching and learning.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- increased confidence in their work
- greater awareness of service users' needs and how to meet them
- the support of employers and assessors to complete the qualification
- learning about dementia.

What learners would like to see improved:

- more group sessions and meetings with other learners
- more advance notice of what is happening with the training and getting it started earlier or more quickly
- a reduced amount of reading and writing.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the flexibility of training to meet work schedules
- increased learner confidence and awareness, which improves their standard of work
- good communication with assessors in some branches
- assessors' understanding of the domiciliary care industry.

What employers would like to see improved:

- improved communication with assessors about learners' progress in some branches
- a reduced delay in allocating assessors in some branches.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

6. In the past year, Nestor has taken effective action to improve the quality of the provision offered to learners by setting challenging targets that it has met. This has significantly improved success rates for all learners, including those with specific learning needs, within its provision and that of the subcontractor. Management of the subcontractor is improved and is now satisfactory. However, quality assurance processes are incomplete, for example the mechanism for the sharing of good practice not yet fully developed. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and the report identifies areas for improvement in line with the findings of inspectors. Nestor collects the views of learners and employers, but this information is analysed insufficiently.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

7. Overall outcomes are good, and show an improving trend. For Train to Gain learners, success rates have improved from satisfactory to good over the past year. In 2010/11, the success rate for learners completing within their planned end date was 12 percentage points above the national average. The use of the Skills for Life programme to support learners on health and social care provision is very effective. Outcomes have improved to satisfactory though the numbers of learners achieving by the planned end date remains low. For learners on the newly introduced apprenticeship programme in health and social care, success rates are in line with the national averages, and improving. Learners with identified learning needs make slower progress. Nestor has identified this issue and it is improving.
8. Learners develop self-confidence and good social and care skills to meet service users' complex needs. They have a very good understanding of health and safety issues both for themselves as workers and for the individuals in their care. They understand the need for confidentiality and promotion of the independence of service users. Learners have a clear understanding of their responsibilities for the vulnerable people in their care and follow the appropriate work procedures.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

9. Teaching of group sessions is good. All employees attend a wide range of mandatory off-the-job training sessions. The content of these sessions is cross-referenced effectively to the criteria of the main qualifications. Assessors use an appropriate range of activities to promote and check learning. Discussion topics clearly relate to learners' work in home care settings, and assessors make good use of learners' experience to encourage them to contribute. Assessors give satisfactory individual coaching in the workplace. Learners complete initial

assessments of their literacy and numeracy skills, and preferred learning styles. However, staff make insufficient use of these results when agreeing individual learning plans.

10. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Assessors use an adequate range of assessment methods including professional discussion and direct observation. They measure learners' progress accurately and agree targets for completion of academic assignments. Assessors' feedback to learners is accurate but often provides insufficient guidance on how they can improve further, particularly for learners that are more able. Spelling and grammar errors are rarely corrected in assignments. Formal progress reviews are satisfactory although a small number of learners have not received a formal progress review at the planned interval. Assessors often complete their observations too late in the programme, causing some learners to make slow progress.
11. Learning resources are satisfactory. Assessors are experienced in care, and have a satisfactory range of qualifications. Many have, or are working towards, suitable literacy and numeracy qualifications. A few assessors create extra handouts and guidance for learners on how to carry out additional research and develop a deeper understanding on some topics. Workbooks provided by the subcontractor are dull and uninspiring. Assessors' awareness and use of internet resources and ICT to support learning are extremely limited. Promotion of the range of online resources available is poor.
12. Programmes meet the needs and interests of learners adequately. All employees undertake regular update training linked clearly into the apprenticeship framework. The apprenticeship programmes support the business need to meet national staff qualification requirements. Where managers and workplace supervisors are involved in the training, learners are well motivated and make good progress. However, managers are insufficiently involved in training too often. The majority of branch managers are not routinely involved in progress reviews and are unaware of the progress made by learners.
13. Assessors provide learners with good pastoral and personal support. The majority of learners greatly appreciate frequent communication by telephone, email and in person with their assessors. Assessors provide informal support for literacy and numeracy. They direct learners to other local external providers, such as colleges of further education, for additional support, although work commitments often make it hard for learners to attend. The few learners who do not meet their assessor early enough in their training make slow progress.
14. As part of induction, Nestor makes all new employees aware that they will need to complete relevant training after their probation period. However, the company does not clearly explain that in addition to working normal hours, they expect learners to study in their own time. Learners find it difficult to allocate sufficient time for independent study in addition to their other commitments.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

15. Training and the development of good care skills are given top priority for learners. Nestor sets high standards, and assists learners to achieve these standards. The training that employees receive during their probation period links closely to the health and social care programmes, to ensure that the training supports and matches their needs. Well-designed in-house programmes are delivered effectively.
16. Nestor sets challenging targets for learners' outcomes and has increased success rates. Assessors' training and development has a high priority. They are well trained and experienced. Assessors' development is planned and managed carefully and meets business objectives. The company maintains detailed records of the outcomes of their training and other learning.
17. Safeguarding has a high priority. Nestor ensures that learners are well aware of the risks of lone working, and is rigorous in monitoring learners' whereabouts. Assessors monitor health and safety in the workplace very well, and any potential incidents are recorded effectively. The company produces regular detailed incident reports, that often include recommendations for additional training, or changes to training, that may be required. All staff and learners have Criminal Record Bureau checks and receive regular safeguarding training. However, the development of learners' understanding of the safe use of technology, such as the internet, is insufficient.
18. Nestor promotes and develops a culture of respect by embedding equality and diversity well into the programme. The focus on widening participation in the programme is strong. Staff and learner training in equality and diversity are satisfactory. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity issues is satisfactory. Nestor analyses data effectively, identifying differences in achievement between different groups of learners and focusing clearly on actions to improve the success of the lower achieving groups. These groups are now showing improved achievement.
19. Nestor takes into account users' views to support and promote improvement on an individual level. However, the collection and analysis of users' feedback in a systematic and purposeful way are underdeveloped. Feedback from learners is not collected or reported by the subcontractor, although it is required as part of the service level agreement. Nestor is aware of this and is taking action to improve the situation.
20. Nestor has recently improved its management of the subcontractor. However, the improved service level agreement still does not describe clearly how the subcontractor should report on the outcomes of its own quality processes. The monitoring of performance of the subcontractor is incomplete and performance reports lack detail.

21. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate and in line with the findings of inspectors. Quality improvement planning is detailed and monitored effectively. However, the quality improvement and assurance process has not identified sufficiently well the clear regional and branch differences in the quality of provision, that results in some learners having a better experience than others.

22. Value for money is good overall. Learners' skill development and self-confidence are good, and success rates are good and improving. Staff generally deploy resources well. Nestor has taken effective action to manage better its subcontracted provision.

Information about the inspection

23. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's professional development manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans and data on learners and their achievement over the last two years.
24. 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)
Nestor Primecare Services Limited
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 using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners		
Full Time Learners	0	0
Part-time learners	423	423
Overall effectiveness	3	3
Capacity to improve	3	
Outcomes for learners	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2	
How well do learners progress?	3	
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>	n/a	
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	n/a	
Quality of provision	3	
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3	
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	3	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3	
Leadership and management	3	
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>	n/a	
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?	3	
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

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk