

Sutton and District Training

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54698

Name of lead inspector: Diane Stacey HMI

Last day of inspection: 2 March 2012

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: 240–244 High Street
Sutton
Surrey
SM1 1PA

Telephone number: 020 8687 2489

Information about the provider

1. Sutton and District Training (SDT), established in 1999, provides Foundation Learning programmes with vocational qualifications in construction, hair and beauty and sales and marketing. Functional skills are provided to level 2. The company also has contracts with local authorities providing alternative education for pupils aged 14 to 16. SDT is soon to complete subcontracted provision for level 2 apprentices in retail. SDT provides Foundation Learning programmes over two main sites; construction learners attend the Mitcham centre and all other learners attend the newly-relocated site in Sutton's town centre. SDT employs 16 full-time and five part-time staff in addition to three full-time working directors.
2. Currently, there are 77 learners enrolled on Foundation Learning programmes, funded by the Young People's Learning Agency. Approximately 50% of learners are female, 32% from minority ethnic groups and 21% of learners have a self-declared learning difficulty and/or disability.
3. The majority of learners come from the North Sutton and St Helier areas, with others enrolling from Croydon and the rest of Surrey area. The unemployment rate in Merton and Sutton is 6.8% compared with 7.6% nationally. The youth unemployment rate for 16- to 24-year-olds increased significantly in the quarter prior to January 2011. The percentages of young people who are known not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) in Sutton, Croydon and Merton areas are 4.6%, 7.6% and 5.5% respectively.
4. Sutton and District Training provides training on behalf of the following provider:
 - B2B Engage Limited (retail).

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
<p>Provision for young learners:</p> <p>Foundation Learning</p>	<p>234 full-time learners</p>

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	
Employability training	3

Overall effectiveness

- SDT makes satisfactory provision for young people who enrol on Foundation Learning programmes. Learners enjoy their programmes very much. After a downturn in the success rates during the first full year of Foundation Learning, learners are now achieving their vocational qualifications well with some outstanding results for hair and beauty learners. Numbers of learners progressing into further education, training or employment have also risen significantly this year. However, functional skills achievements in English and mathematics are low.
- Teaching and learning overall is satisfactory but with some good examples where tutors motivate learners particularly well. The new centre provides good information and communication technology (ICT) resources and plenty of open space for teaching and areas for developing practical skills. However, SDT does not always ensure that all learners' individual learning plans and target setting are of a satisfactory standard. Programmes meet the needs of learners satisfactorily, although access to work experience placements is limited. Partnerships are well established. The company's own advice and guidance service and training staff provide an exceptionally high level of support for learners to help them overcome barriers to enable them to achieve successful outcomes.

7. Management of the provision is satisfactory. Staff share the company's vision and are motivated to improve the provision. Safeguarding and the health and safety of learners are high priorities. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. SDT's arrangements to manage quality improvement are satisfactory, although SDT monitors some aspects of the programme insufficiently. The logistics of relocating to SDT's new centre were well planned. SDT provides good value for money.

Main findings

- Learners achieve high qualification success rates at award level in construction, hair and beauty, sales and marketing and ICT functional skills. Hair and beauty achievement at award level is outstanding. Achievement of personal and social development qualifications is satisfactory. Greater numbers of learners take qualifications at award level than at certificate or diploma level.
- Achievements in functional skills mathematics and English are poor. Too few learners participate in English and mathematics functional skills. SDT does not focus sufficiently on ensuring that learners with the greatest need for functional skills support receive it in a timely fashion.
- Learners enjoy learning and participate well. Attendance is good. Learners develop good practical and vocational skills and have good personal knowledge of what they need to do to progress. Learners are well motivated to participate in community projects. They raise funds for charitable causes and use skills gained on their vocational courses to good effect.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best sessions, enthusiastic staff engage learners from the outset. In other sessions, questioning techniques do not encourage participation by all learners and there is insufficient focus on individual learners' needs and giving appropriate challenge. Team teaching enables the interchange of teaching styles and helps learners to achieve units more quickly.
- Initial assessment accurately identifies the entry qualifications of many learners but does not sufficiently inform individual learning plans (ILPs). The initial interview does not accurately capture learners' existing skills and previous experience. Targets on ILPs are insufficiently exact. Progress review records lack sufficient detail.
- Programmes meet learners' vocational and social needs satisfactorily. However, SDT provides very limited opportunity for learners to develop their understanding of the world of work through planned work experience.
- SDT has highly productive partnership arrangements with strategic boards, local and national businesses, which offer advice and practical support to develop programmes. Links with local authorities and schools provide good support and alternative education for disaffected young people.
- Support for learners is outstanding. Well-qualified and knowledgeable members of staff offer advice and guidance through SDT's own careers advice

department. All staff are alert for learners' practical and emotional support needs and respond to these particularly well.

- Managers use business planning effectively to set strategic targets for the organisation. SDT has successfully planned and relocated to new premises. The provider plays an effective role in local and national initiatives to engage learners in training. Data analysis is under used.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. SDT meets its statutory safeguarding duties with very effective procedures and practices to ensure the safety of learners. Learners feel safe at both centres.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. SDT collates a range of information about the performance of different groups of learners, but does not sufficiently analyse or use it to action improvements.
- Arrangements for self-assessment include the views of staff and learners satisfactorily. Quality assurance procedures are satisfactory, but the formal monitoring of all aspects of learners' programmes is not sufficiently well coordinated.

What does Sutton and District Training need to do to improve further?

- Develop a coherent functional skills strategy to ensure tutors have appropriate skills and qualifications and that support focuses on learners with the greatest need in English and mathematics and to increase take-up and achievement rates.
- Ensure that initial assessment identifies learners' existing skills and experience and informs individual learning plans more fully so that learners can make better progress through agreeing specific and measurable targets and reviewing how well learners are progressing against these targets.
- Develop the curriculum to ensure that learners improve their employability skills through access to planned work experience.
- Develop the analysis and use of data to monitor all aspects of learners' performance to identify gaps between different groups of learners and set appropriate actions to improve.
- Develop more formal arrangements for improvement planning, better coordinated quality checks and improved procedures for recording observations of teaching and learning to identify and make more rapid improvements to the provision.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the help and support provided by tutors and all training staff
- developing their customer service skills
- gaining a better understanding of how to behave at work

- the opportunities to gain qualifications
- developing their social skills
- the improved facilities at the new premises
- the practical work.

What learners would like to see improved:

- provision of their own hair and beauty kit
- the opportunity for learners to progress to higher level beauty courses
- the range of opportunities to improve their literacy and numeracy skills
- the promptness with which work is marked.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the very efficient and helpful staff at SDT
- the opportunities that give most young people a chance to achieve.

What employers would like to see improved:

- nothing reported.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

8. SDT's capacity to improve is satisfactory. Overall success rates are good. While success rates and positive progressions were low last year, data for this year show a significant improvement in the numbers successfully achieving their vocational qualifications and progressing into further education, training or employment. The organisation successfully shares its strategic vision with all staff. The company sets itself, managers and tutors sufficiently challenging targets. Links with a range of partners are well established and productive. Staff readily take up opportunities to develop their teaching and gain additional vocationally relevant qualifications. However, SDT has not ensured that staff are appropriately skilled for supporting learners' functional skills development in English and mathematics effectively.
9. SDT is committed to improving its provision. However, managers do not sufficiently implement formal and systematic planning for the quality monitoring of all learners' activities. A key area for improvement at the last inspection, to improve opportunities for work experience, has not been a focus for improvement. Self-assessment is inclusive of the views of staff and learners. However, the judgements and grades that SDT awards itself do not reflect all those found during inspection.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

10. During the first year of Foundation Learning in 2010/11, progression rates for learners entering training, education and employment, and achievements of key objectives, showed a dip in performance. During the same period, the achievement of qualifications was variable. However, halfway through this contract year, data indicate clearly that learners are achieving high qualification success rates at award levels in construction, hair and beauty, sales and marketing and ICT functional skills. Hair and beauty achievement at award level is outstanding. Learners clearly enjoy developing their practical vocational skills and achieve good standards of work. Attendance is good. Progression rates have improved significantly since last year. Achievement of personal and social development qualifications is satisfactory. Greater numbers of learners take qualifications at award level than at certificate or diploma level. Too few learners participate in English and mathematics functional skills and achievement of these functional skills is low. While SDT identifies gaps in the performance of different groups of learners, it does not sufficiently analyse this data or set actions to improve any differences.
11. Learners feel very safe. SDT has a strong focus on ensuring the safety of learners. Learners are knowledgeable and demonstrate good understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Staff emphasise internet safety and learners adhere well to cyber-safety policies. Learners demonstrate good skills in health and safety in practical training environments.

12. Learners have access to, and receive a range of, information enabling them to make informed choices on their health and well-being. Learners have regular and very effective access to confidential personal support to help overcome personal and social barriers to learning. Enrichment activities include dance sessions to encourage healthy lifestyles.
13. Learners participate in a range of projects, which benefit local communities very well. Learners get involved in volunteering work such as gardening and painting for people in the local community. Learners are highly motivated to participate in charity fundraising projects and use their vocational skills gained in, for example, hair and beauty, for fundraising activities.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

14. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, tutors engage learners from the outset. Learners understand the clearly articulated objectives of the lessons. Good group management ensures that all learners participate. In a small number of lessons observed, however, questioning techniques do not encourage participation by all learners and activities are insufficiently challenging for learners who are more able. Accommodation and ICT resources are good at both centres.
15. Initial assessment identifies learners' literacy and numeracy levels effectively. However, initial interviews and learning styles assessments do not produce useful information about the learners' specific needs to inform either ILPs or lesson planning. Individual learning plans do not routinely indicate what each learner is to achieve, or by when. Learner review documents do not always clearly record specific actions or progress made against them. Assessment for personal and social development and for vocational programmes meets awarding body requirements satisfactorily.
16. SDT meets learners' needs satisfactorily. Thorough planning has ensured that the transition from Entry to Employment to the Foundation Learning programme has resulted in a wide range of vocational qualifications available to learners. SDT is in the process of expanding the range of vocational opportunities. Employer engagement is limited, however. Learners have too few opportunities to practise their new vocational skills in real work placements. Learners are involved in a wide range of enrichment activities.
17. Partnerships with schools, local colleges and local strategic partnerships are well established and particularly effective. Through these links, SDT has received particularly good support in the relocation of its main centre to a more central situation in the town centre. National suppliers have contributed consumable goods for learners on vocational programmes. Learners have received discounts for personal and protective equipment when requested.

18. Support arrangements, particularly in the provision of information, advice and guidance (IAG), are outstanding. The company is funding its own IAG service in response to local need. An experienced and qualified member of staff provides group sessions and individual careers advice and guidance. The careers adviser has formed particularly productive links with local schools, colleges, training providers and support agencies. A good range of careers resources is available for learners. Staff are highly and effectively responsive where learners' immediate needs are identified or when support needs to be provided immediately. Staff accompany learners to interviews, provide clothing funds where necessary, support applications for bank accounts and work with learners to ensure they have sole responsibility for their finances.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

19. SDT has a clear strategy for developing its provision. The company sets itself challenging goals to improve and extend the training provision across all its operations. Staff clearly share the enthusiasm and commitment of the senior management team. Directors have a sound understanding of both local and national initiatives and work to ensure that the company is at the forefront of innovative projects and developments. SDT managed the recent move to a new site in the middle of the town centre very well.
20. Formal meetings and informal communications ensure staff are fully informed of changes that may affect them and their learners. SDT operates an open door policy and promotes a supportive team ethos that staff and learners value highly. Clear targets relating to staff roles are set during annual appraisals. Staff have good opportunities for teaching and vocational training and for gaining additional qualifications. However, SDT has not yet appointed a member of staff with a functional skills specialism in mathematics and has not ensured that all tutors have the required expertise to support learners in functional skills. Managers monitor information related to contract compliance well, but make too little use of trend analysis to inform decisions.
21. Safeguarding has a high priority at SDT. The organisation fully meets government requirements for safeguarding. Staff receive formal safeguarding training with updates about any new information. Posters prominently display the three designated safeguarding officers at both centres. Very effective links exist with external safeguarding boards. A good range of information about external helplines is easily available on walls close to where learners work. Attention to the health and safety of learners during their training is a priority. SDT carries out thorough risk assessments. A group of learners completed a risk assessment of the new premises to identify potential hazards. Thorough checks and reinforcement of learners' understanding of safeguarding take place during reviews.
22. SDT has a strong focus on widening participation of learners who are disengaged from education and training. SDT does not tolerate disruptive behaviour and manages any incidents of unacceptable behaviour very well. SDT

promotes equality and diversity well through displaying posters, designed by learners, around the training centres. However, tutors are less successful in promoting equality and diversity in lessons and reviews. While the organisation has an equality monitoring plan, which identifies key areas for development, actions have not led to improvements. SDT does not analyse routinely the data that it collates on the recruitment and on learners' performance to identify any potential gaps in achievement.

23. SDT gathers and responds to learners' views very well. Learners give feedback after each teaching session, through quality questionnaires, reviews and in the learner forum. SDT acts upon these views to further improve. Learners develop a good rapport with training staff and feel able to regularly communicate their views informally.
24. Self-assessment procedures are inclusive of the views of staff and learners; however, judgements in the self-assessment report and the self-assessed grades did not match all those made by inspectors. Quality assurance processes have improved, with regular reviews of actions identified in the organisation's quality development plan. An annual quality audit cycle is well established and although it includes a range of monitoring activities, it does not focus sufficiently on all aspects of learners' activities. Observations of teaching and learning are not sufficiently thorough.
25. SDT manages its resources well to meet the needs of learners. Outcomes are good. Managers made the decision to move to town centre premises to promote their provision more easily. SDT has plans in place, as well as resources, to expand the range of vocational options it offers to learners. Value for money is good.

Information about the inspection

26. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's director, 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 body, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
27. 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)
Sutton and District Training

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	16-18 Learner responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners	77	77
Full-time learners		
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?	3	
How safe do learners feel?	2	
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	3	
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2	
Quality of provision	3	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?	2	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	1	
Leadership and management	3	3
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	na	
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?	2	
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