

# Canto Ltd

## Inspection report

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**Unique reference number:** 50992

**Name of lead inspector:** William Baidoe-Ansah HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 15 January 2010

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** South Wing Welton House  
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## Information about the provider

1. Canto Limited (Canto) is a not-for-profit limited company based in Northampton, founded in 1992 to provide employment programmes for the local chamber of commerce.
2. The Canto contract with the Northamptonshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is to provide Entry to Employment (E2E) training for learners with moderate to severe learning difficulties or other severe mental or physical disadvantages. Programmes consist of activities designed to improve learners' life skills, increase their social integration and support their personal development and career progression. Canto is managed by a managing director supported by two other directors and three programme managers. Additionally there are nine tutors, eight full-time, and one part-time; and two support staff, one full-time and one part-time. A team of volunteers occasionally supports the company's work with learners. Around 20 percent of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds, compared to four percent locally.
3. Eighteen learners attend the E2E programme, nine at the Canto centre in Moulton, and nine at the Rushmere academy centre in Daventry through a subcontract. Learners often progress from other programmes onto the E2E programme and referrals can come from Connexions, schools, social services and the youth offender service. Canto also offers opportunities for learners aged 14-16, and from social services, which are not funded by the LSC.
4. The following organisation provides training on behalf of the Canto:
  - Rushmere Academy

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
<b>Provision for young learners:</b>  Foundation learning, including Entry to Employment	18 learners

## Summary report

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>
	<b>Grade</b>
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3
<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Preparation for life and work	3

## Overall effectiveness

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Learners' progression into employment, training and further education is satisfactory overall, although learners do improve their confidence and make good progress in their personal and social development. Learners enjoy learning new skills but there are not enough opportunities for them to gain nationally recognised qualifications or to gain substantial work experience. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and take good account of learners' individual needs. However, teachers do not integrate literacy, numeracy and information communication technology (ICT) sufficiently into subjects. Canto has good links with partners and works well with them to provide a varied range of training opportunities for learners. Support for individual learners is highly effective.
6. Managers have set a clear direction, which staff understand well. However, they do not set overarching targets for learner outcomes sufficiently. Canto gives safeguarding a high priority and has good arrangements in place. Learners feel safe. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Canto promotes respect well, but does not monitor the outcomes of different groups sufficiently.

## Main findings

- Progression of E2E learners into further education, training and employment is satisfactory overall. Learners make good progress in their personal and social development and their achievement of planned learning goals is satisfactory.
- Learners improve their confidence and behaviour, as well as their ability to work in teams, and they enjoy learning new skills. However, there are insufficient opportunities to gain nationally recognised qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- Most learners have had work experience tasters of short duration. However, there are few opportunities for ongoing work experience to help learners gain relevant work skills.
- Learners feel safe and have a good awareness of anti bullying practice and of the need to talk to staff if they have any concerns. Tutors give careful attention to safe working practices in training sessions.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors plan sessions carefully to take account of the individual needs and abilities of learners. They use a variety learning activities to maintain interest and participation. However, there is insufficient integration of literacy, numeracy and ICT into subjects.
- Canto is highly responsive to the concerns of partners. Partners view the provision as providing a much-needed training opportunity for learners with moderate to severe learning difficulties. Links with schools are good. However, partners are not formally contacted to give feedback on improvements.
- Care, guidance and support are good. Staff respond very effectively to learners' needs and concerns. A specialist member of staff supports learners in resolving their worries and concerns.
- Directors and managers provide satisfactory direction and leadership. Canto works collaboratively with other organisations to respond to national and regional priorities and staff have a good understanding of its direction. However, it does not set overarching targets for learner outcomes.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good and meet current government requirements. Safeguarding is given a high priority and swift action is taken when incidences arise.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory overall. Canto has an inclusive and welcoming learning environment where respect is strongly reinforced. Staff are committed to equality and diversity but have not received training recently. Canto monitors the recruitment of different groups but its management information does allow it to analyse the outcomes for different groups of learners sufficiently.
- Value for money is satisfactory and resources support learning well. Learners on the E2E programme benefit from the other programmes Canto offers. Most staff have vocational qualifications, but few have teaching qualifications, although they are now working towards them.

## **What does Canto need to do to improve further?**

- Improve opportunities for longer and regular work placements to assist learners' acquisition of work skills.
- Improve the opportunities for all learners to gain a nationally recognised qualification in literacy, numeracy and ICT to enhance individual achievement.
- Plan the integration of literacy, numeracy and ICT into other subjects, to ensure relevance to everyday life and work.
- Extend the use of information technology by learners and teachers to promote learning.
- Set and monitor ambitious targets to improve performance across the organisation.
- Improve its management information to allow it to analyse the performance of different groups of learners to inform action planning.
- Ensure that partners and employers have formal opportunities to evaluate Canto's service to improve the quality of provision.

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

### **What learners like:**

- the very enjoyable experience
- the fact that staff listen to them and change things
- developing more confidence
- being treated as an adult
- being made welcome
- the help to get more confidence
- the help with maths
- the help to get work experience
- making friends.

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

- too much sport
- bigger rooms
- a canteen to buy food
- more internet.

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

### **What employers like:**

- nothing identified.

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

- opportunities to give formal feedback to Canto.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 3**

7. Canto's capacity to improve is satisfactory. It has made some progress on, but not fully addressed, areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Curriculum management has been strengthened and is effective. Procedures for quality improvement are still not fully established. The promotion of work skills has improved substantially but remains insufficiently embedded across programmes. The monitoring and promotion of equality of opportunity remains satisfactory.
8. Progression rates and other positive outcomes for learners have improved in the last two years. However, the setting of performance targets for the organisation is underdeveloped. Canto's management information system is in the early stages of development, and whilst used better to inform self-assessment, there is not enough monitoring and analysis of learner outcomes. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate, but lacks feedback from Canto's main stakeholders. Learners' and parents views and the outcomes of the observations of teaching and learning are used to improve provision.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 3**

9. The progression of learners into employment or further training is satisfactory. Forty-seven per cent of learners progressed to positive outcomes in 2008/09. Additionally, 65 % of Canto's learners on non-LSC funded pre entry to employment programmes progressed on to E2E.
10. Learners make good progress in their personal and social development. They improve their confidence and behaviour, as well as their ability to work in teams, and they enjoy learning new skills in drama, music, arts and crafts and sport. Their achievement of planned learning goals is satisfactory. Learners are treated as adults and encouraged to respect each other and their environment. They work safely, with good levels of participation and teamwork.
11. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Most learners have had work experience tasters of short duration. However, at the time of the inspection learners had few opportunities for ongoing work experience to help them gain relevant work skills.
12. The links between literacy and numeracy targets and learners' overall milestones are not sufficiently clear despite some recent work to improve the identification of targets and milestones. Learners are able to gain centre-devised certificates for the achievement of ICT skills at various stages of difficulty. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to gain nationally recognised qualifications in literacy, numeracy, ICT and other relevant subjects. Canto's self-assessment report and development plan outline ways to improve accreditation opportunities for learners.

13. Learners receive satisfactory support to help them make informed choices about their health and well-being. Many learners are actively involved in community-based projects, such as holding drama and music performance events for an older peoples group.
14. Learners feel safe in Canto's own training centre and at Rushmere academy's centre in Daventry. Learners have a good awareness of anti-bullying practice they know who to talk if they have any concerns. Tutors give careful attention to safe working practices in training sessions.

## The quality of provision

## Grade 3

15. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors plan sessions carefully to take account of the individual needs and abilities of learners. They use a variety learning activities including games and paper based activities to maintain interest and participation. However, literacy, numeracy and ICT are insufficiently integrated across the curriculum. Respectful behaviour is promoted well and inappropriate behaviour and language corrected in a non-confrontational manner. The promotion of equality and diversity in teaching, and learning is satisfactory. Session plans contain reference to the avoidance of the use of stereotypes, and tutors make satisfactory use of diverse images. Resources are satisfactory. All rooms at Canto's centre and the subcontractor's centre have computers and two rooms at Canto have interactive white boards. Nevertheless, tutors do not use information learning technology sufficiently to enhance learning. Canto's centre does not have internet access.
16. The initial assessment of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory and informs learners' targets. However, the initial assessment for other subjects is not always sufficiently accurate to plan learning.
17. Learners receive good feedback on their progress. Formal reviews are held every three months with parents and care workers, with staff from Connexions invited to attend. A good emphasis is placed on recording learners' personal and social development and what they need to do achieve their milestones. However, too little attention is paid to learners' progress in literacy, numeracy and ICT to inform the achievement of the milestone in basic skills.
18. The range of courses to met learners' needs and interests is satisfactory. Learners are encouraged to participate in various learning activities, and can choose options such as drama, music, and arts and crafts and sport. There are regular opportunities for additional enrichment activities such as visits to Northampton shoe museum and the science museum in London.



19. Canto is highly responsive to its partners. Programmes have flexible starting dates and lengths of stay to reflect the needs of individual learners. Partners value Canto for providing a much-needed training opportunity for learners with moderate to severe learning difficulties in Northampton. Links with schools are good. Key school personnel are involved in learner's progress reviews and through this kept well informed of their progress. Partners are not formally invited to evaluate Canto's provision and give feedback on improvements.
20. Care, guidance and support are good. Staff respond very effectively to learners' needs and concerns. A specialist member of staff is available most days to listen to and help learners resolve their worries and concerns. Learners have a nominated key worker amongst the staff who is available to deal with immediate concerns and anxieties. Canto has very effective links with a wide range of specialist support agencies.

## Leadership and management

## Grade 3

21. Directors and managers provide satisfactory direction and leadership. They receive regular reports and ensure that resources are available to support the organisation's work. They are also involved in forward planning appropriately. Canto responds well to national and regional priorities and is working collaboratively with a specialist school and a college to deliver a foundation training programme. Staff generally have a good understanding of the company's strategic direction and its plans for the future. Canto does not set formal targets for learners' outcomes, and whilst appraisal is well established, the monitoring of staff performance through appraisal is being developed further.
22. Canto's approach to safeguarding is good. Its procedures for safeguarding meet current government requirements. They have an appropriate policy for children and vulnerable adults, which is reviewed regularly. They also monitor the practices of their sub-contractor closely. Canto has completed criminal record bureau checks for its entire staff. They prioritise safeguarding well. They record incidences well and deal with them swiftly. They also carry out risk assessments for activities and work placements. Tutors carry out individual risk assessments for learners with specific difficulties or disabilities. All staff have had training in safeguarding, which is updated regularly and is currently being supplemented by local authority training. Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues, which are a standing item on all meeting agendas.
23. Canto's approach to equality and diversity is satisfactory. It has recently updated its equality and diversity policy to cover all aspects required by recent legislation. It also has appropriate policies on discrimination, bullying and complaints. However, the policy does not have an implementation plan and monitoring arrangements are not clear. Nevertheless, incidences are dealt with well. In the last term, Canto dealt with two racist incidences sensitively and swiftly, with appropriate penalties for the offending learner. Canto's approach

to learning is highly inclusive and it has succeeded in creating a welcoming learning environment where the importance of respect is continuously reinforced. Whilst staff are highly committed to equality and diversity values, most have not had recent training either in the new legislation or in promoting equality and diversity in the classroom.

24. Canto monitors the recruitment of different groups well, but its current management information does not allow it to analyse the outcomes for learners sufficiently. No significant differences by ethnicity have been identified, but female learners tend to achieve slightly better than male learners do.
25. Canto captures the learner voice through timetabled evaluation sessions facilitated by staff. Learners engaged well in the most recent sessions and commented on a number of issues relating to the learning environment, which has led to changes to enhance their safety and learning. Similarly, Canto seeks feedback from parents through evaluation forms, which have led to a number of changes. However, other stakeholders such as employers and partners are not afforded formal opportunities for evaluation or feedback to improve provision.
26. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate and is linked to an appropriate action plan. The report identifies many of the strengths and areas for improvement identified by inspectors. However, the perspective of staff and the views of learners and external stakeholders do not sufficiently inform the self-assessment process. Staff had opportunities to comment on the draft text, but do not have a strong sense of ownership of the report or action plan.
27. The use of resources to support provision and value for money are satisfactory. Canto keeps group sizes small to support learners better. E2E learners benefit from the extra resources available through non-LSC funded contracts. For instance, the social services contract provides for greater individual support for learners, which benefits all learners because of Canto's commitment to equality for all its learners regardless of funding stream. Staff are adequately qualified and experienced and most hold relevant vocational qualifications. However, not all teaching staff currently hold an appropriate teaching qualification.

## **Information about the inspection**

28. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by the provider's managing director, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of Canto's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC), 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.
29. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from the subject area Canto offers.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

## Canto Ltd

**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> 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learner responsive
<b>Approximate number of enrolled learners</b>		
Full-time learners	18	18
Part-time learners	0	0
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	3	
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3	
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>	3	
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
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?	2	
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
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?	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?	3	

\*where applicable to the type of provision

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