

Hill Holt Wood

Focused monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider
Voluntary organisation
Hill Holt Wood

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FOCUSED MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Context and focus of visit

Hill Holt Wood (HHW) is a not for profit membership organisation, limited by guarantee and a charity. It is a social enterprise based in 34 acres of woodland situated on the Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire border, east of Newark on Trent. HHW provides a foundation learning programme for young people aged 16 to 18. This replaced the Entry to Employment programme in 2010. Currently 25 learners, including two female learners, are enrolled on the programme. Learners attend four days each week. Much of the programme is delivered through HHW's own training environments. A subsidiary trading company provides learners with work experience opportunities.

At the last inspection in June 2008 HHW was graded good for its overall effectiveness, capacity to improve, quality of provision and leadership and management. Achievement and standards were graded outstanding, as was the contributory grade for equality of opportunity. The subject area, preparation for life and work, was judged to be good. This report focuses on themes explored during a recent monitoring visit.

Themes

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress has been made in using the self-assessment process and quality improvement planning to address areas of improvement identified at the last inspection and subsequent self-assessment cycles?	Reasonable progress
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At the last inspection, the self-assessment report was described as comprehensive, thorough and inclusive. Apart from observations of teaching and learning, quality improvement was judged to be fully established. HHW responds promptly to stakeholder feedback and has established a quality improvement calendar. Staff are suitably involved in the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report is subject to peer review. HHW produces social audit accounts which compliment self-assessment. Parts of the 2009/10 report are insufficiently evaluative. The report does not cover all aspects of the Common Inspection Framework. HHW has identified these as areas for improvement.

The 2008/09 quality improvement plan sets out clearly a programme of actions to address the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. Progress on the implementation of these plans was slow. The 2009/10 plan reconfirmed these actions and includes actions to maintain strengths and address areas for improvement identified through self-assessment. Initially, progress was slow. A reorganisation of key posts has enabled HHW to appoint staff with responsibility for the full implementation of the quality improvement plan. Since the appointment of

the training manager the pace of change has increased and HHW has taken significant steps to address outstanding actions.

Outcomes for learners

What progress has been made to further improve outcomes for learners and the progress they make towards their chosen destinations? **Reasonable progress**

At the time of the last inspection, rates of positive outcomes were high. Achievement rates of qualifications in literacy and numeracy had improved and achievement rates of short work-related qualifications were good. In 2008/09, progression to employment, training or education was good. In 2009/10, the proportion of learners who progressed declined. This trend was reversed in 2010/11 and progression was good. Since the last inspection, the proportion of learners who achieve all key objectives of the Entry to Employment programme has remained about the same and are high. The achievement rates on qualifications remain high. It is too soon to evaluate the outcomes of learners on the foundation programme.

Quality of provision

What progress has been made to improve the quality of teaching and learning through improvements to planning learning? **Reasonable progress**

At the previous inspection learning was insufficiently well planned, uninspiring and focused on complex theory teaching. Rangers failed to make use of incidental opportunities to reinforce learning. Inspectors judged the language in handouts was too complex for learners. All training sessions observed during the monitoring visit had satisfactory learning plans. Learners are engaged fully in their learning, have a good rapport with the rangers and are progressing well. Learners reported that they were enjoying their learning. Rangers make good use of the natural environment to stimulate and support learning. Training materials are satisfactory but rangers make little use of information learning technology to support learning. Lesson planning is not standardised and although teaching sessions include individualised learning activities, they are not always planned clearly. The overall planning of learning programmes is satisfactory.

What progress has been made to improve the use of individual learning plans to manage personalised learning programmes? **Reasonable progress**

HHW has recently introduced a new individual learning planning process in response to the introduction of the foundation learning programme. This is a considerable improvement on the process used for the E2E programme. HHW has developed relevant documentation to support learning. Learners are required to complete a

comprehensive activity log that allows both learners and staff to reflect on the learning achieved during each day. Completed logs provide learners with regular opportunities to feedback improvements to the programme and allow staff to gain a good awareness of each learner's progress. At the four to six-weekly learner reviews, rangers make good use of the activity logs to reinforce learners' awareness of their progress and identify additional training and support requirements. Rangers do not record targets systematically in individual learning plans, and the targets that they set are not always clear and time-bound. HHW has not embedded fully the new planning process and not all rangers have a good awareness of the requirements of the system. HHW is aware of this issue and staff training is ongoing.

Leadership and management

What progress has been made in the use of data to support management decision making?

Reasonable progress

At the last inspection, inspectors reported that the use of data had improved and that data collection and usage was satisfactory for monitoring purposes. HHW's use of data to support the operational needs of the business is effective. A set of whiteboards provide very helpful prompts on which to identify day-to-day issues affecting learners. They are used for example to track attendance, starts, timing of learner progress reviews and the completion of units. HHW has reorganised the management team meetings to receive a number of reports from managers with specific areas of responsibility. This has improved business performance reporting, including progress against contract requirements, financial accounts and learner progress. HHW use benchmark data from a consortium of local training providers to monitor key performance indicators. However, HHW's management information database is not fully functional, and does not provide sufficiently accurate aggregated data to support a more systematic approach to performance monitoring and management decision making.

What progress has been made to use observations of teaching and learning to improve the quality of lessons?

Reasonable progress

In 2008, the observation of teaching and learning was described as underdeveloped; feedback was of variable quality; observers focused on tutor input rather than evaluating the effectiveness of the sessions; observers were insufficiently critical and they did not provide guidance to further improve teaching and learning. Since then, the instruments used to observe the quality of teaching and learning have been improved considerably. All rangers who tutor learners have completed a course which prepares them to teach in the lifelong learning sector. Since 2010, HHW has introduced a new observation system. Rangers receive constructive feedback that identifies areas for improvement. Rangers who have been observed through this process are well aware of the actions they need to take to improve the standard of their teaching and learning. The new system is improving standards by focusing more effectively on the impact that teaching and learning has on learner outcomes.

At the time of the monitoring visit, HHW has not observed all rangers through this system.

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