

Joint Learning Partnership Limited

Inspection report

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Name of lead inspector: Bob Busby HMI

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: The Old Bank
82 Waterloo Road
Hillside
Southport
Merseyside
PR8 4QW

Telephone number: 01704 562696

Information about the provider

1. Joint Learning Partnership Limited (JLP) is a privately owned work-based learning provider. Its head office and training centre are based in Southport, in the North West of England. The company has been trading for over 14 years and came under new ownership in August 2006. JLP employs 73 staff, of whom 45 are vocational coaches carrying out coaching, assessment and reviews in learners' workplaces.
2. JLP provides training for approximately 1,500 learners across the country on programmes including foundation learning, Train to Gain and apprenticeships. Training and assessment are mostly carried out on employers' premises. JLP offers training in: business administration; customer service; retail; warehousing and distribution; hospitality and catering; management; learning and development; performing manufacturing operations; information technology for users; business improvement techniques; and sales/telesales. Training funded by the Skills Funding Agency and the Young People's Learning Agency represents approximately 99% of JLP's business.
3. JLP provides training on behalf of the following organisation:
 - Impact Sefton (functional skills in mathematics, English, and information and communication technology; personal and social development awards, and parents-to-be level 1 award)
 - The following organisations provide training on behalf of JLP:
 - Beacon Learning (construction, childcare, and beauty therapy)
 - Cornerstone Vocational Training Ltd (construction)
 - Right Track (NW) Ltd (music)

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Provision for young learners: 14 to 16 Entry to Employment	1 full-time learner 193 learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	1,368 learners 1,892 apprentices

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		3
Quality of provision		3
Leadership and management		3
Safeguarding		3
Equality and diversity		3
Subject Areas		
Retail and commercial enterprise		3
Business administration		3
Marketing and sales		3

Overall effectiveness

- Current learners are making satisfactory progress. The proportion of learners who are successful has increased and is now close to the national average. The number of learners completing within their planned timescale has also improved but remains below the national average. Achievement of qualifications on Entry to Employment (E2E) and foundation learning programmes is good. Most learners make good progress in developing their confidence and self-esteem and develop good occupational knowledge. Many learners progress to further training courses. On foundation learning programmes the proportion of learners who have progressed to higher-level courses is low, although JLP expects more to progress to college when college courses start. JLP has started to monitor and report on the progress made by different groups of learners and has successfully improved the performance of males.
- Effective learning takes place at work and during individual coaching sessions. Employers provide excellent resources that support learning and development. The quality of accommodation and specialist resources at the training centre is satisfactory. Foundation learners benefit from effective group and individual coaching sessions and enjoy their classes. Staff are suitably experienced but

many have not yet achieved teaching qualifications. Learners' review records do not accurately record progress in meeting targets to help learners improve. Observations of learning sessions are not sufficiently focused on recognising effective learning. JLP has been slow to develop resources, in particular information and learning technology (ILT). The range of provision is good. It is relevant to learners and employers and supported by very effective partnerships with employers and schools. Assessment is arranged at times to suit learners and employers.

6. JLP manages its programmes satisfactorily. Managers took successful actions to improve a decline in performance in 2008/09. Arrangements to ensure learners are safe are thorough and JLP's promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity are well-established. Under-represented groups are identified and JLP has set some targets for recruitment. However, detailed strategies to achieve these targets are not yet fully developed. The self-assessment process is inclusive but the final report is overly descriptive and the grades are not sufficiently supported by evidence. Quality assurance systems are effective in ensuring assessment decisions are valid and reliable.

Main findings

- The proportion of apprentices who are successful has improved steadily over the last three years and is satisfactory. The number who complete within their planned timescale is now satisfactory and improved in 2010/11 to be close to the national average. Achievement is good on E2E programmes. Achievement rates are good on foundation learning programmes but progression so far onto higher-level courses is low. Retention on all programmes has increased this year compared to the same time last year.
- The proportion of Train to Gain learners gaining their qualifications declined, and was below the national average in 2009/10. The number who completed within their planned timescale also declined in 2009/10 and was below the national average. Data for 2010/11 show significant improvement in success rates and in the number of learners who completed within their planned timescale to slightly above the national average, which is satisfactory.
- Learners' acquisition and development of work-based skills are satisfactory. Learners effectively develop new skills and knowledge to support their role in the workplace. Most learners develop increased confidence and self-esteem. In some cases learners are given additional responsibilities and progress well within their companies. Learners on foundation learning programmes particularly gain in confidence and have renewed enthusiasm for learning.
- Teaching, training and assessment are satisfactory. Effective learning takes place at work or during one-to-one coaching sessions. Foundation learners benefit from an effective blend of group and individual coaching sessions. Employers provide excellent resources that support learning and development. Learners' progress reviews do not accurately record agreed targets and identified support arrangements.

- The provider's arrangements for meeting the needs of learners and employers are good. JLP plans its provision well to be flexible and very responsive. The blend of learning topics within the qualification is determined to suit learners' interests and aspirations along with their employers' business requirements. This enhances business improvement and learners' satisfaction.
- Partnership working is good. JLP works productively with employers, strategic bodies and schools to provide a broad and expanding range of programmes. Good employer relationships benefit foundation and unemployed learners through extensive, relevant work experience. Feedback from employers and learners is very positive and learners benefit from good in-house training at work.
- Arrangements to care for, guide and support learners are satisfactory. Support for learners on foundation programmes is particularly effective. Specialist support for more complex support needs is good for foundation learners and satisfactory across other programmes. Information, advice and guidance about progression are satisfactory. The impact of support interventions on learners' success is insufficiently evaluated to plan improvements and inform strategy.
- Directors have a clear understanding of the development needs of the organisation. They have successfully halted a decline in learners' outcomes which are now improving. However, JLP has no formal business or development plan. The recent re-organisation and re-structuring, staff recruitment and development are contributing to the improvement in learners' success rates. The development of teaching skills for vocational coaches has been slow.
- JLP's arrangements for safeguarding meet government legislative requirements. Appropriate Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are in place for those staff in frequent contact with learners and a suitable register is maintained centrally. Staff are appropriately trained. Appropriate risk assessments are in place to ensure learners are safeguarded in work placements or on employers' premises.
- JLP's approach to promoting equality and diversity is well-established across the whole organisation. A detailed policy is used to support further developments. An equality and diversity working group monitors and reviews the policy's implementation. A good quality training package develops both staff and learners' knowledge and understanding. Reinforcement of equality and diversity at learners' reviews is satisfactory.
- A clear equality and diversity strategy identifies a range of priority groups that JLP intends to target for recruitment onto training programmes. Under-represented groups are identified and some targets have been set, but it is too early to see the impact of these strategies. Marketing materials are produced in a range of languages.
- The self-assessment process is inclusive. The final report, however, is overly descriptive and grades are over-generous and not sufficiently supported by evidence. Quality assurance systems are effective in ensuring assessment decisions are valid and reliable. Data are not used sufficiently at team and management meetings to monitor progress and achievement. A thorough review of staff performance is not yet fully in place and observations do not sufficiently focus on learning.

What does Joint Learning Partnership Limited need to do to improve further?

- Set and record realistic individual targets which reflect any support needs and monitor learners' progress throughout their programme to improve success rates further. Make better use of management information at all staff meetings to monitor learners' progress.
- Evaluate the impact of different support interventions on success rates.
- Improve the quality of the learners' experience by developing vocational coaches' teaching skills, using improved and more interactive learning resources and incorporating a more effective focus on learning into the observation process.
- Develop, implement and fully establish the performance management strategies for all staff. Ensure that every opportunity is taken to monitor and review performance so that all staff prioritise and understand the progress they are making against their performance targets.
- Develop a formal business and development plan to identify clearly how future development activities and opportunities will be achieved and how threats will be overcome so that all staff understand how they contribute to raising learners' expectations and promoting learners' ambition.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the high levels of support from the flexible and very approachable vocational coaches
- gaining motivation, confidence and research skills through their studies
- developing key skills which improve their confidence in using mathematics and their ability to communicate at meetings
- the improved opportunities for career progression
- gaining a qualification relevant to the workplace
- help in preparing for, and gaining, employment
- earning while learning.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the provision of learning resources to help their research
- the opportunity for some learners to progress at a faster pace
- greater use of a computer to provide evidence for their portfolios.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the positive impact of learning on their organisation in improving working practices and employees' motivation
- the good relationships with vocational coaches
- the wide range of suitable qualifications offered which match well to workplace duties
- the good consultation and communication
- the accessibility and flexibility of the vocational coaches
- the increased confidence and vocational skills of learners.

What employers would like to see improved:

- no improvements were identified.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

7. The proportion of apprentices who successfully achieved their qualifications has generally been close to the national averages for the last three years. Managers introduced successful actions, bringing about a marked improvement in 2010/11. Completion within planned timescales improved significantly in 2010/11 to the national average, having been consistently low in previous years. The proportion of Train to Gain learners achieving their qualifications and the proportion completing within planned timescales have been inconsistent in previous years. They show a marked improvement in 2010/11 to above national averages.
8. The setting of targets is becoming more established throughout the organisation and managers have started to performance manage staff. Targets are set for individual vocational coaches and subject areas, primarily to exceed the national average. Although realistic, not all targets are sufficiently challenging.
9. Senior managers and staff have a good understanding of the short- and medium-term vision and mission of the organisation. Priorities focus on improving outcomes for learners and improving the quality of provision. Learners' and employers' views are gathered using a range of systems and processes and inform actions to improve provision.
10. The organisation is reorganising and restructuring to meet the needs of learners more effectively. Staff roles and responsibilities, along with job descriptions, are still being developed but staff understand how they contribute to improvements. All staff are now more focused on improving outcomes for learners. Self-assessment is inclusive, but the report is overly descriptive and most grades are over-generous and not sufficiently supported by evidence.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

11. The percentage of apprentices who are successful improved slightly in 2009/10 to 71%, close to the national average of 74%. The number of apprentices completing by their planned end date also improved to 51% but remained below the national average of 62% in 2009/10. Figures for 2010/11 show further improvement in both success and timely success rates which are satisfactory.
12. On Train to Gain programmes the percentage of learners who were successful in 2010/11 is satisfactory and exceeds the national average. The number of learners completing within their planned timescale is also now slightly above the national rate. However, the proportion of learners who were successful and achieved in their planned time had declined over three years to below the national average in 2009/10.

13. On E2E programmes and foundation learning programmes achievement of qualifications is good. However, a low number progressed onto other courses from foundation learning programmes in 2010/11, although destinations for many of these learners are yet to be determined. Retention has improved on all programmes this year and is now good overall.
14. Performance varies between areas of learning and between different regions. There was no appreciable difference in performance between learners of different ages in 2009/10. Women achieved better than men in 2009/10 after achieving at similar rates in previous years; the gap narrowed in 2010/11. On apprenticeships overall, learners from minority ethnic groups achieve at lower rates than White British learners but on Train to Gain programmes there is no appreciable difference. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and health problems do not achieve as well as other learners.
15. Learners' acquisition and development of work-based skills is satisfactory. They effectively develop new skills and knowledge to support their role in the workplace and exhibit increased productivity. Most learners make good progress in developing their confidence and self-esteem. In some cases they are given additional responsibilities at work and progress well within their companies. Learners on foundation learning programmes particularly gain in confidence and are eager to learn. They show good teamworking skills and appreciate how these increase their employability. Learners feel safe.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

16. Teaching, training and assessment satisfactorily support learning and development. All learners take part in a thorough initial assessment during their induction. For learners on foundation programmes this information and the further evaluation of their complex support needs are used well to plan their learning and support. Learners are generally clear about the progress they are making and what they still need to do to complete their learning programme. However, progress review documentation is often poorly written and insufficiently detailed to capture the targets and personal support actions that are agreed between the coach and the learner.
17. One-to-one coaching is good and is the most effective teaching method used by JLP's vocational coaches. On foundation learning programmes a blend of group teaching and personal coaching is used effectively to support learners' development and progression. During assessments and progress reviews learners generally receive useful feedback about how they may improve. The recording of these actions is good on foundation programmes but poor across retail, customer service, and business programmes. The promotion of equality and diversity and the support to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills in lessons and coaching sessions are satisfactory. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory and are planned particularly effectively to suit learners' and employers' needs. The sharing of good practice is satisfactory and assessments are fair, consistent and reliable.

18. The newly established observation of teaching process has identified areas for development, including the need to develop interactive learning resources and establish better target setting during reviews and coaching sessions. However, the observation process is insufficiently focused on the standards of learning. The outcomes from the process lack thorough moderation to ensure the grades awarded and subsequent judgements in the self-assessment report are reliable and accurate. Many vocational coaches have not yet been observed.
19. Employers' resources for learning and development in the workplace are excellent and significantly benefit learners' skills development. JLP has developed satisfactory teaching and learning resources but these are not yet being fully used to challenge and extend learning. Learners are not always aware of the available resources. Coaches often direct learners to other sources of information outside the organisation. Resources are available in different formats but their effectiveness and quality are not evaluated. The use and development of new technologies, including ILT and virtual resources, to support teaching and learning are insufficient.
20. JLP's vocational coaches are experienced practitioners and use their expertise well to make the programmes more interesting for learners. However, staff development has been slow in ensuring all vocational coaches have teaching skills and are confident in the use and development of teaching resources and learning technologies.
21. The range, content and context of provision effectively meet the needs and interests of users. JLP has successfully introduced foundation learning that is particularly relevant to learners' personal career, future training and development goals. Progression opportunities for foundation learners are good and many of the recent learners have progressed successfully into appropriate employment. JLP provides a broad and expanding range of apprenticeships for adults and young people. The programmes are developed and introduced carefully to meet learners' current and future ambitions and employers' needs. Learners and employers routinely select units from a wide range of relevant options to suit individual work roles and specific business requirements, for example units relating to debt recovery and customer credit. Vocational coaches visit learners frequently and respond very flexibly to learners' individual needs. Many employers provide training and support for learners to help them develop their work-related skills and knowledge. Work placements for learners on foundation learning programmes are carefully selected to help learners build confidence and self-esteem.
22. Partnership working with employers and other community groups is well-established and productive. JLP's coaches and business development team are particularly effective in identifying and using the training and development carried out by learners at their place of work to support their development. For example, customer service learners are often highly trained by their employers in the use of call centre equipment and in recognising and responding effectively to changes in customers' body language. Foundation and pre-apprenticeship learners benefit from these partnerships through good work-

experience arrangements that link closely to learners' occupational ambitions. Links with local schools in the Southport area are developing well to promote apprenticeship and wider learning opportunities. The content of apprenticeships and the selection of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) units enhance learners' employability and are effective in meeting employers' needs.

23. Arrangements to guide and support learners are satisfactory. The support for learners on foundation programmes is particularly effective in developing learner's confidence and ability to overcome personal and educational barriers to progression and employment. Many learners progress into further education or into work and further learning. Arrangements to identify and direct learners to specialist counselling support and other agencies are good. Parents and carers of learners greatly value the support which is provided and the positive impact this has on improving learners' attitudes and behaviour.
24. Vocational coaches provide satisfactory personal support for all learners which is effective in meeting their needs. Learners are supported with the provision of relevant adaptive equipment at work. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory when choosing qualification options and when planning next steps, for example when moving to a higher level of qualification or when job roles change. The support for learners facing redundancy is appropriate and helps them to complete their programme. The induction process enables learners to have a clear understanding of the demands of their programmes. Initial assessment is effective in identifying learners' individual learning and additional support needs. The recording of additional learning support needs for work-based learners with dyslexia is detailed. However, the records of progress and learning are often insufficiently detailed and the information about support is not analysed to establish the impact of support interventions. Staff providing specialist learning support have received relevant training and the vocational coaches who provide literacy and numeracy support are suitably qualified.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

25. The senior management team at JLP have a good understanding of the changing climate in training provision. They strive to ensure that the organisation maintains a range of training programmes that are relevant to learners, employers, and regional and national priorities. JLP recognises that the organisation is undergoing significant change. Many recent changes are not yet fully integrated and having the intended impact. A management restructuring and reorganisation is almost complete and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. A strong focus is now being placed on developing and up-skilling staff in teaching and learning. Support for staff development is good and significant numbers have completed, or are working towards, a relevant qualification in teaching or management.
26. Actions taken to improve a decline in performance in 2008/09 have been largely successful and outcomes for learners are improving. Directors have a clear vision of the development needs of the organisation and the opportunities and threats they face in the current climate. However, these are not currently

recorded in a formal business or development plan. JLP is developing systems to manage staff performance more effectively. Smaller staff groups from multiple subject areas are allocated a team leader who has responsibility for that team. Regular meetings take place to review performance against company-wide, generic targets set by directors. Targets are sometimes too vague, lack detail and are not subject specific.

27. JLP's arrangements for safeguarding meet government legislative requirements. Appropriate CRB checks are in place for those staff in frequent contact with learners and a suitable register is maintained centrally. Appropriate risk assessments are in place to ensure new staff are supervised when they are with learners until the CRB check is returned. Staff have been well trained to level 2 in safeguarding. Some managers have been trained to higher levels, including training in safer recruitment. Staff and learners have a satisfactory understanding of safeguarding and all are aware of the identity of the managers responsible for safeguarding. JLP has well-established links with the Sefton safeguarding board and receives updates and details of training on the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Learners receive suitable information on safeguarding at induction, including information to raise awareness of internet safety. Appropriate risk assessments are in place to ensure learners are safeguarded in work placements or on employers' premises.
28. JLP's approach to promoting equality and diversity is well-established across the whole organisation. A detailed policy is used to support further developments. An equality and diversity working group monitors and reviews the outcomes of the policy implementation. A good quality training resource develops both staff and learners' knowledge and understanding. JLP also uses a good customised calendar to promote alternative cultures and festivals and to inform learners and employers of their potential impact. Staff attend a range of training activities. Reinforcement of equality and diversity at learners' reviews is satisfactory. A bank of 'topical' questions is used to check and explore further learners' understanding in their workplace.
29. A clear equality and diversity strategy identifies a range of priority groups that JLP targets for recruitment onto training programmes. Marketing materials are produced in a range of languages to support this. Under-represented groups are identified and some targets have been set. However, detailed strategies to achieve these targets are underdeveloped. JLP staff attend a range of training events to develop their knowledge and understanding further. Analysis of performance by different groups takes place but strategies to effect change are not yet developed.
30. Systems and processes to engage and link with employers are good and training needs are identified and well met. A business development director and a team of telesales staff are highly effective at engaging with both new and returning customers. A range of regular feedback mechanisms is used to gather feedback from learners and employers. Questionnaires are issued at relevant points in the programme and more recently an online survey system has been

used. Actions are taken as a result of this feedback but no formal systems are in place to inform learners and employers of changes that have been made.

31. The self-assessment process is inclusive and all staff recognise how they contribute to the outcome. The final report, however, is overly descriptive and the grades are not sufficiently supported by evidence. Quality assurance systems are effective in ensuring assessment decisions are valid and reliable. Audits of all learners' files ensure compliance and consistently good quality of completion. Data are not used sufficiently at team and management meetings to monitor progress and achievement. Internal verification is satisfactory. Sampling plans and activities such as standardisation meetings take place regularly and support assessors. JLP is currently introducing e-portfolios and promoting better and more frequent use of monthly data reports from the management information system.
32. JLP's use of resources to secure value for money is satisfactory. The company has invested in a recognised management information system that offers staff good access to reliable information. Staff are supported to work towards relevant professional development and training qualifications. Further development of e-portfolios and a virtual learning environment is taking place. Good technology resources are provided for staff use.

Subject areas

Retail and commercial enterprise

Grade 3

Context

33. JLP currently has 85 learners, most of whom are in the north west, on retail and commercial enterprise programmes in retailing and wholesaling, warehousing and distribution, or hospitality and catering. There are 22 advanced apprentices, 60 apprentices and three learners on the Train to Gain programme. All learners are employed and 35 are women. JLP delivers all aspects of the retail and commercial enterprise programmes.

Key findings

- Over the last three years overall success rates have been satisfactory. In-year data suggest that success rates and the proportion of learners achieving within the planned timescale have improved across most programmes and on some are good, except NVQ at level 3 in catering and NVQ at level 2 in retail.
- Current learners' progress is satisfactory. They gain a good range of vocational skills. Learners' work is satisfactory with some good examples of vocational practice in portfolios. Training is effective in improving learners' confidence and their ability to communicate more effectively. Learners enjoy their training with JLP and would recommend the company to others.
- The quality of training is satisfactory. Vocational coaches guide and encourage learners effectively during their frequent visits to workplaces. Learning materials for generic units support the development of learners' knowledge well. However, resources are too paper based. Employers are not always encouraged to participate effectively in learners' training.
- The review process is satisfactory but too time consuming. The effectiveness of the review documentation, the level of detail, the recording of individualised targets and the impact on learners and learning plans are inconsistent. JLP makes insufficient use of ILT and management information to monitor and improve learners' progress.
- Assessment is satisfactory. The assessment process is regular, flexible and fair in meeting learners' needs. Feedback provided to learners is positive and encourages progress. Vocational coaches use good questioning techniques to evaluate learning. However, questioning techniques are not fully used to develop learners' knowledge and understanding further.
- Support for learners is good. Vocational coaches are supportive and have a good relationship with learners, encouraging learning and progress. Literacy and numeracy support is good. Initial assessment is timely and tests completed by all learners inform literacy and numeracy support requirements.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Vocational coaches are experienced and most have good qualifications. The promotion of equality and

diversity is satisfactory. Learners are provided with relevant information on equality and diversity. Equality and diversity are promoted in their coursework and reinforced adequately during reviews.

- Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. Learners feel safe and are aware of policies and procedures. They exhibit safe working practices in their workplaces and clearly understand their rights and responsibilities. Learners are aware of safeguarding arrangements, mainly related to staying safe, and they feel protected. JLP promotes health and safety satisfactorily.
- Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. Improvements have been made to increase success rates. Vocational coaches are insufficiently involved in the quality assurance and improvement procedures to monitor key performance indicators effectively. The self-assessment of retail and commercial enterprise provision is over-generously graded and it insufficiently recognises some key areas for improvement.

What does Joint Learning Partnership Limited need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates, including the proportion completing within the planned time, by developing a more robust review process through reducing paperwork and improving the setting and monitoring of individual targets.
- Develop and extend learning and teaching materials to meet individual learners' needs, including the use of ILT to enable further development of knowledge and attainment appropriate to all learners.
- Further improve the involvement of vocational coaches in quality assurance systems to develop more robust self-assessment and action planning to bring about improvement.

Business administration

Grade 3

Context

34. JLP holds contracts in 18 regions. Currently, 56 apprentices, 108 advanced apprentices and two Train to Gain learners are following business administration programmes. Eighty-one per cent of learners are female. Learners are employed in a wide range of companies including large national organisations. All training, coaching and assessment are carried out in the workplace. Progress is reviewed at every visit by vocational coaches, usually every two weeks. Twenty-three full-time and two part-time vocational coaches are responsible for the programmes.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are now satisfactory. In 2009/10 success rates for both apprentices and Train to Gain learners were below national rates and too many learners made slow progress. However, recent data show that success rates in 2010/11 are improving significantly and so far this year they are broadly in line with national rates.
- Learners enjoy their programmes and speak enthusiastically about their progress in key skills. Many develop their confidence in mathematical tasks well. They improve their communication skills and are better able to take part in meetings and communicate with clients. Current learners are making satisfactory progress. The standard of work in learners' portfolios is satisfactory and many of the key skills assignments are completed well.
- Learners develop good work-related skills, for example contributing to meetings, dealing with clients and team work. They gain a better understanding of their working practices and routines. Many employers quickly see improvements in their work. Learners benefit from increases in their levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. Some learners are given additional responsibilities and make progress within their companies and become team leaders. Many learners continue onto further training courses. However, JLP does not record this information sufficiently to inform future planning of the provision.
- Learners feel safe and adopt safe working practices in their workplace. They have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities. Learners feel protected from bullying and harassment and adequately understand internet safety measures. JLP promotes health and safety and equal opportunities effectively.
- Coaching and assessment are satisfactory. Learners are clear about what the vocational coaches expect of them. However, coaches do not record individual learning targets in sufficient detail. Most assessment plans do not identify in enough detail what the learner needs to do between visits. Vocational coaches do not make sufficient use of ILT and interactive resources for coaching, learning and assessment activities.

- Vocational coaches provide good practical support in preparing learners for assessment. The workplace visits are frequent and vocational coaches work very effectively with learners to provide individual support in the workplace which motivates learners to succeed. Many vocational coaches spend time in the companies where their learners work and gain a very good understanding of job roles and work tasks which they use to good effect to assess learners.
- The programmes are particularly responsive to employers' and learners' needs. Employers see improvements in their business performance and in staff motivation. Vocational coaches carefully plan visits to meet the demands of the workplace, often visiting outside of normal working hours. Learners have a choice of NVQs, and the optional units are carefully selected to assist learners in the development of their job roles and for future prospects.
- The provider works particularly successfully with a wide range of employers many of whom regard JLP as their preferred training provider. Vocational coaches and business development managers work hard to forge productive relationships with employers and supervisors who feel well informed and consulted.
- Learners receive satisfactory advice and guidance. They receive sufficient information to make informed choices about their learning programmes. They receive timely support to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. However, staff do not record in sufficient detail the literacy and numeracy development learners require. Induction is satisfactory.
- Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory. Learners meet regularly with vocational coaches to review their progress. However, learners' activity plans and review records are not always used effectively. Learners do not have sufficiently detailed information on their progress and on what they need to do to achieve their individual learning targets. The level of employers' input into learners' reviews varies.
- The business administration programmes are managed satisfactorily. Managers and vocational coaches monitor learners' progress using learners' planned end dates effectively. However, the curriculum team does not use management information data sufficiently to monitor, analyse and improve performance across the regions.
- Internal verification is satisfactory and includes some quality assurance of individual learning plans, action plans and reviews. However, the quality improvement arrangements are underdeveloped and the sharing of good practice across regions is not sufficiently effective. The self-assessment report over-states strengths and the action planning to bring about improvements is insufficient.

What does Joint Learning Partnership Limited need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates and the proportion of learners who complete within their planned time by making better use of individual learning plans and reviews to set learners specific targets and provide them with more detailed information on their progress and exactly what they need to do to achieve.
- Enliven learning by increasing the use of technology to provide more interactive learning materials that learners can access remotely to support learning and assessment more effectively.
- Ensure consistency of practice across all regions by making better use of management information to analyse learners' performance and implement a more rigorous quality assurance and self-assessment process that results in clear and detailed action plans to share good practice and improve assessment practices.

Marketing and sales

Grade 3

Context

35. Currently 410 learners are on customer service programmes, of whom 89 are apprentices, 290 are advanced apprentices, and 31 are on Train to Gain programmes at advanced and intermediate levels. Two-hundred and seventy-four learners are female. Most learners work in call centres. Thirty-six staff assess, coach and manage the section.

Key findings

- Apprenticeship and Train to Gain success rates for learners are satisfactory and are broadly in line with national rates. Although some previous learners made slow progress, current learners are now on target to complete in the planned time. Learners produce work that is varied and original.
- The development of learners' occupational and social skills is good. Learners are far more confident and work-focused with a heightened perception of customer service. Many have been promoted or have been given increased responsibilities in the workplace. Learners are developing better communication and numeracy skills. Employers appreciate that staff turnover has considerably decreased and that learners are far better motivated in their work.
- Learners feel safe and work in safe environments. Employers and assessors are committed to ensuring health and safety, which form part of assessments and reviews. Learners are aware of the appeals and complaints procedures.
- JLP provides good on-the-job coaching for learners which extends their knowledge and enables them to perform more effectively in their job roles. Although target setting and advice given in reviews and assessment sessions are good, they are often recorded in insufficient detail. Employers provide good, well-structured training for learners which integrates effectively with the development provided by the vocational coaches.
- Assessment is now very effective and more focused on achieving completion targets. Vocational coaches are flexible in meeting the varying work patterns of learners and the pressures experienced by businesses during peak trading times. A variety of methods are used, including observations and sampling learners' work. Thorough questioning ensures learners' knowledge and understanding are good. JLP makes insufficient use of information technology.
- JLP provides a good range of programmes that are particularly well matched to job roles and internal training programmes. Learners and employers are very clear how the qualifications link with their job roles and how they can progress through these as they develop their careers. JLP also offers a wide range of qualifications in management and administration to which learners progress.
- JLP has good working relationships with a wide variety of employers, some of whom are current or former learners. Employers have a good understanding of learners' progress and needs, as well as a detailed knowledge of NVQs. Employers work well with vocational coaches to integrate training.

- Guidance, support and induction are satisfactory. Learners complete a carefully structured workbook on their rights and responsibilities and they have good recall of this. Assessors refer learners with specific needs to a specialist within JLP who has links with external support organisations. Recent support includes working with learners with visual impairment and accelerating or amending the assessment process to meet personal needs.
- Operational management is satisfactory, with much closer monitoring of learners' progress. Resources are satisfactory but the provision of ILT and e-assessment opportunities are insufficient. Vocational coaches are occupationally competent and provide good coaching, but they lack understanding of group teaching strategies. JLP was part of the functional skills pilot and is well prepared for the implementation of functional skills.
- The provision for safeguarding, and equality and diversity is satisfactory. Staff have been trained in these areas. Vocational coaches link equality and diversity in relevant customer service units. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of potential diversity issues but their understanding is not fully extended during reviews.
- Satisfactory opportunities are provided for learners and employers to express their views on the quality of provision through face-to-face discussions and the use of surveys. Views are analysed and improvements are made where possible. Online surveys for both learners and employers have recently been established but it is too soon to evaluate their effectiveness.
- The self-assessment process is satisfactory. Evaluation of the self-assessment report takes place at monthly team meetings and the quality improvement plan is updated but some actions to improve provision have yet to be fully implemented. The subject report failed to recognise several of the areas for improvement identified by the inspectors. The grade awarded by inspectors was lower than the self-assessment grade.

What does Joint Learning Partnership Limited need to do to improve further?

- Improve the number of learners completing within the planned time by further developing the monitoring of achievement and progress. Accelerate the implementation of e-learning and e-portfolios, together with a range of information technology training materials that include literacy, numeracy and customer service.
- Accelerate the professional development programme to ensure that vocational coaches either have, or are working towards, higher-level coaching/training qualifications to improve their range of teaching strategies.
- Improve the promotion of equality and diversity throughout the programme by ensuring that all aspects of diversity are reflected in teaching and training activities. Ensure that during progress reviews learners' understanding is thoroughly checked and discussions are comprehensive.
- Improve the recording of progress reviews and of coaching support provided to learners in the workplace to reflect more accurately the oral advice given.

Information about the inspection

36. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's operations 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 bodies, the previous inspection report, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
37. 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)

Joint Learning Partnership 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	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners				
Full-time learners	198	1	197	0
Part-time learners	3,506	6	0	3,500
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3	3
Capacity to improve	3			
Outcomes for learners	3	3	3	3
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?	2			
How safe do learners feel?	3			
<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	3	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?	2			
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?	3			
Leadership and management	3	3	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>	n/a			
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3			
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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Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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