

# The Headmasters Partnership Ltd

## Employer

<b>Inspection dates</b>		19–22 November 2012
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for apprentices		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

## Summary of key findings for apprentices

### This provider requires improvement because:

- Around a third of apprentices have left their employment each year since 2009 without completing the apprenticeship programme at The Headmasters Partnership Ltd (Headmasters).
- Planning does not use apprentices' prior attainment and hairdressing experiences sufficiently to set challenging and individualised targets for completion of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) units, and the development of English and mathematics skills. Reviews do not sufficiently reflect on apprentices' progress in the academy and their salon workplace to fully plan their next steps.
- Trainers' planning and teaching of theory miss many opportunities to promote equality and diversity, and English and mathematics and how these relate to hairdressing employment.
- Work-based assessment is not used sufficiently and links between NVQ hairdressing criteria, functional skills and commercial salon activities are not reinforced.
- Performance management and professional development planning for academy staff and salon trainers is highly focused on practical hairdressing skills and product knowledge and does not sufficiently include planning, delivery and quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.
- Self-assessment and quality improvement activities are insufficiently coordinated to incorporate all aspects of the programme at the academies and workplaces to ensure that actions for improvement encompass all elements of the apprentices' experience.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- Apprentices acquire particularly high levels of commercial and creative hairdressing and customer service skills and impressive product knowledge and retail skills which significantly improve their employability.
- Progression to a range of artistic, training, management and franchisee positions within the company and onto the recently introduced advanced apprenticeships is good.
- Significant progress has been made since the previous inspection in reducing the time taken by apprentices to complete the apprenticeship programme.

- Leaders provide a dynamic and well-communicated vision for the company. They maintain a clear and highly successful focus on commercial training to provide growth, and meet company and sector needs.

## Full report

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure apprentices' experience is equitable, that achievement is improved and reduce the proportion leaving employment without completing their apprenticeship. Improve the collection and use of apprentices' views to inform actions alongside thorough scrutiny of data and information, including analysis of achievement by different groups.
- Use apprentices' prior attainment and hairdressing experience to plan individual challenging targets. Improve the coordination of assessment of theoretical and practical aspects of NVQ units and apprentices' development of their English and mathematics skills. Review apprentices' progress against targets in the context of academy and workplace successes and next steps planned with academy and salon trainers.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, in particular theory teaching, and ensure equality and diversity and English and mathematics are promoted in relation to hairdressing theory and practical skills. Use workplace assessment regularly.
- Ensure academy and salon trainers understand better how apprenticeship requirements relate to commercial salon work, for example by mapping the NVQ criteria to the company's own grading criteria. Provide support for trainers to gain teacher training qualifications appropriate to their roles and in improving their English and mathematics knowledge and skills to improve support for their apprentices.
- Ensure self-assessment and quality improvement planning are fully effective by involving all training, salon and academy staff in review, evaluation and improvement planning to secure year-on-year improvement of the apprenticeship provision.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for apprentices</b>	Good
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- Apprentices acquire particularly high levels of commercial and creative hairdressing skills through working in high quality salons with excellent senior company staff as role models. Apprentices' impressive professional hairdressing product knowledge is gained through their salon work experiences and by attending professional manufacturers' training events organised by Headmasters. Apprentices have high levels of salon retail skills and can confidently and expertly promote hairdressing products to suit clients' needs. These skills and their excellent customer service significantly improve their employability.
- Apprentices have high aspirations of progression within the company, inspired by Headmasters' senior staff in a range of high profile roles. Progression opportunities within the company are very good, and Headmasters is keen to promote its own staff. Opportunities are exciting and varied, such as joining the artistic team, stylists on photo-shoots, fashion shows and for celebratory clients and becoming academy and salon trainers, salon managers and salon franchise-owners. Headmasters successfully introduced advanced apprenticeships to the company in January 2012 to support progression; salon managers receive management training.
- The vast majority of apprentices completing in 2010/11 had a very good pace of achievement, the majority finishing all components of their apprenticeship programme within 12 months. Success rates since 2009 have been sustained around national averages through a period of significant growth in Headmasters' salon and apprentice numbers from 25 leavers in 2008/09 to 126 in 2010/11.

- Too many apprentices have left Headmasters' employment each year since 2009 without completing their apprenticeship programmes. Male apprentice numbers are low. Success rates for male apprentices are low compared to the national average and the rates for Headmasters' female apprentices.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies considerably. Examples of good teaching and learning were observed by inspectors but slow assessment affects the pace of progress and achievement of NVQ units with overall success rates currently at national averages.</li> <li>Teaching and learning for practical hairdressing is good. Apprentices develop creative hairdressing skills early in their programmes. Trainers support apprentices well through a structured and standardised approach to cutting and colouring which enables them to apply their skills confidently with good results. Blow drying skills are particularly good and apprentices demonstrate good, dextrous control of brush and dryer. Apprentices' communication and client care skills are good and their product knowledge is outstanding.</li> <li>All trainers have current hairdressing expertise and use their creative skills to inspire and develop apprentices' technical skills. However very few have relevant teaching qualifications or experience to support effective planning, teaching and learning.</li> <li>Planning and teaching of theory sessions require improvement. Learning aims are unclear and not shared or evaluated with apprentices. Lessons are uninspiring, teacher led and lack active, independent learning opportunities. The work books completed by apprentices are insufficiently challenging and are too simplistic to develop the autonomous research skills of apprentices on the advanced apprenticeship. Questioning techniques are not used effectively and fail to develop higher level thinking skills. Evaluation outcomes are not recorded which effects future lesson planning and the identification of support apprentices may require.</li> <li>Apprentices with GCSEs in mathematics and English at grades A* to C are not routinely encouraged to further improve their skills during their apprenticeship. Functional skills are often introduced late in the programme. Reinforcement of English and mathematics are not integrated into other teaching and learning activities. Trainers fail to make links to the naturally occurring incidences of English and mathematics during practical and theory sessions and apprentices remain unaware of their successful application of such skills.</li> <li>Assessment for knowledge testing for the NVQ is very slow and hinders progress and achievement. Apprentices do not complete their knowledge tests until the completion of all practical assessments, delaying NVQ unit achievement. All assessment is completed in the academy restricting further assessment opportunities that could be carried out in the workplace by the experienced trainers in the salons.</li> <li>Action plans outline the milestones for the development of hairdressing skills, but do not include all the components for the apprenticeship framework. No target dates are set for the completion of the hairdressing skills and no indication given of the support that will be provided for apprentices who fail to complete their skills within the given time. The target setting carried out during quarterly reviews lacks focus and challenge and does not adequately involve in-salon trainers. The targets are broad, not specific and it is not clear whether previously set targets have been achieved. Additional learning support for apprentices is not clearly recorded and extra support for those past their apprenticeship completion dates is not identified.</li> <li>Trainers provide good, timely and motivating verbal feedback during practical hairdressing sessions with clear guidance and advice for improving techniques. However, inconsistencies can be seen in the written and graded feedback provided. Not all feedback makes clear judgements about why learning was good, so that skills can be replicated, or how learning can be improved.</li> <li>The process of providing prospective apprentices with information, advice and guidance is thorough. The company website, visits to schools' careers events and other promotional activities such as participation in Skills London 2012 provide good information. Prospective</li> </ul>	

apprentices attend interviews and assessment sessions at Headmasters' head office to identify their prior attainment, hairdressing experience and learning. If successful they are allocated to a salon within realistic travelling distance of their home. An initial meeting with the salon manager, a minimum month's salon trial and attendance at the four-day pre-academy course provides them with a realistic experience before enrolment onto the company's apprenticeship programme.

- Planning for teaching and learning does not include the integration of equality and diversity. Equality and diversity topics regularly occur during teaching and learning activities, but trainers frequently fail to link the naturally occurring themes with the wide range and diversity of clients apprentices encounter in their training sessions and workplaces. For example, how services can be adapted for different clients and hair types or how cultural and religious influences affect hairdressing service outcomes.
- Internal verification is ineffective. Too little internal verification of observed, practical assessments takes place. Instead, internal verification focuses on the paper work completed by the apprentice and assessor for the assessment of skills, rather than the assessment itself. Internal verification is too infrequent for the number of new assessors who need support and guidance to ensure the quality of the assessment process.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

### **Requires improvement**

- Leaders provide a dynamic and well-communicated vision for the company. They maintain a clear and highly successful focus on commercial training to provide growth, and meet the company and sector needs. Directors and other senior staff communicate the company vision successfully through a well organised company intranet and at frequent engaging and motivational training events. Strong branding and operations control procedures communicate expectations of high quality hairdressing and customer service effectively to apprentices.
- Company leaders successfully harness the artistic and commercial aspirations of staff and apprentices, improving employability and encouraging and enabling their growth to become salon managers and franchise-owners. Around half of current salon managers and franchisee owner-managers have been trained by the company from junior or apprentice positions. Apprentices value the opportunities they are given, and have high expectations for their own careers.
- Academy and salon staff set high professional and vocational standards, which apprentices respect and to which they aspire. Frequent contact with senior stylists and art directors increases apprentices' confidence and raises practical and professional standards. Very frequent evaluation of performance against the Headmasters' Steps to Success grading criteria gives apprentices a good understanding of their own technical progress. However, mapping of NVQ units against the company's grading criteria is an area for improvement recognised by Headmasters.
- Significant progress has been made by managers to improve apprentices' outcomes and the pace of progress on programmes since the previous inspection. However, action to deal with a small number of areas for improvement has been slow. Managers recognise the need to give greater energy to improvement planning and were developing new procedures at the time of inspection.
- The board of directors has received insufficient routine reporting on apprenticeship performance, including reports from different salons to enable them to play a fully effective role in monitoring of the quality of provision. For example, although individual board members may have received reports on apprenticeship programme management and outcomes, the whole board did not receive or discuss information about apprentices' progress, retention or outcomes. The board has recently been restructured giving improved lines of reporting to provide more rigorous and effective monitoring of provision. It is too early to judge the impact of this initiative.

- Performance management and professional development planning require improvement in informing and raising the capacity of trainers and assessors to meet apprentices' individual needs and develop their English and mathematics knowledge and skills. Although a number of staff now has Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualifications, none has higher level initial teacher education qualifications, specialist English or mathematics or additional learning support qualifications. A useful one-to-one progress review takes place at frequent intervals between staff members and their managers, but for academy, peripatetic and salon trainers and assessors these do not focus sufficiently on pedagogical issues or teaching, learning and assessment skills and needs.
- The self-assessment report and quality improvement plan are well linked. However, the self-assessment report gives disproportionate attention to the strengths of provision and insufficient attention to areas for improvement. Self-assessment and quality improvement activities are insufficiently coordinated across salon and academy training and do not ensure that actions for improvement encompass all elements of apprentices' experience. For example, observations of training sessions at academies are carried out, but these are not graded and information from observations is not fully shared with managers of the apprenticeship programme.
- Trainers receive insufficient up-dating in equality and diversity topics. Management information is not effectively monitored to eliminate variations in working conditions experienced by different groups of apprentices, for instance in the allocation of travelling expenses for attendance at academies. Managers have recognised these variations and work is underway to standardise employment conditions for apprentices. The provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Measures to ensure apprentices' health and safety at work are good, and apprentices maintain good hygiene and safety standards in their own professional activities.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF)****The Headmasters Partnership Ltd**

<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Apprenticeships</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	3	3
Outcomes for apprentices	2	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3

<b>Hairdressing</b>	3
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Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of apprentices (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Part-time	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	105	76	7	25	0	0		
Number of apprentices aged 14-16	n/a							
Number of community apprentices	n/a							
Number of employability apprentices	n/a							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<div> <div></div> <div>n/a</div> </div>							

## Additional information

Headmasters recruit nationally, offering flexible start dates throughout the year for apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in hairdressing. The majority of Headmasters' salons and their three academies are in the Greater London area. After a minimum of a month's trial and attendance at a pre-academy course, employees are enrolled onto apprenticeship programmes. The majority attend an academy initially on a week-day, progressing to week-ends to perform under commercial salon pressures and timescales. Academy staff visits salons three times annually to provide training and assessment, additional to regular salon-based training. The Brighton salon's apprenticeship training and assessment takes place in the salon, with one-day-a-week academy staff visits. Apprentices working in the Headmasters salons in Manchester and Bath are enrolled with local providers to complete their apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

<b>Lead inspector</b>	Julia Horsman HMI
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Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by the Head of NVQ Education as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on apprentices' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of apprentices and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions. The inspection took into account all of the government-funded provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and graded the hairdressing subject areas as listed in the report above.

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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