

Woodspeen Training Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		20-24 May 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- Too many apprentices leave their training without completing all aspects of their qualification.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement.
- Planning for teaching and learning does not take the results of initial assessments sufficiently into account to ensure that the provision meets the needs of all learners.
- Written feedback following assessments is insufficient to help learners understand what they have to do to improve and insufficient attention is given to correcting learners' spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Functional skills learning resources are not sufficiently aligned with vocational training in all occupational areas.
- Too many progress reviews do not involve employers sufficiently, record learners' progress effectively and lead to targets which are sufficiently specific and challenging.
- Leadership and management require improvement.
- Equality and diversity are not sufficiently promoted in learning and teaching sessions as tutors and assessors lack the knowledge and confidence to do so.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Success rates for learners on workplace learning programmes in health and social care, and business administration are high.
- Tutors and assessors help learners improve their employability, by supporting them in developing good occupational skills.
- Assessment is flexible and well-planned to meet the needs of learners and employers.
- Senior managers and leaders have steered Woodspeen through significant change and restructuring very effectively.
- Managers have recently introduced a wide range of new procedures and processes intended to improve outcomes for learners and the quality of the provision.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of apprentices who complete all parts of their framework within the planned duration of their training by accurately monitoring individual learners' progress and better coordinating the learning and assessment opportunities within the workplace.
- Urgently plan and provide the intensive training, assessment and support that those apprentices who are already beyond the planned duration of their programme require so that they quickly achieve all parts of their frameworks.
- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning by planning group teaching and one-to-one coaching to meet the needs of all learners, through the better planned use of information and communication technology (ICT) and extension activities that maintain an appropriate pace of learning and motivation, particularly for the more-able learners and those who do not attend off-the-job training sessions.
- Make sure all employers fully understand their contribution to the training programmes. In particular, ensuring they agree detailed action plans during reviews so that learners and employers know exactly how to help learners develop their personal, academic and work-related skills and complete their training.
- Ensure all learners receive detailed, written feedback following assessments which accurately records their progress towards their main learning aims, identifies all of the skills they develop and helps them to plan what they have to do further to succeed.
- Improve the use of the results of initial and diagnostic assessments to plan appropriate programme end dates and agree individualised learning support arrangements for each learner, that help them make good progress.
- Ensure that all staff responsible for training delivery are competent and confident to deliver high quality functional skills training, using resources relevant to the work experiences of learners which enable them to achieve their learning goals.
- Ensure that tutors and assessors are sufficiently knowledgeable and confident to be able to promote equality and diversity within teaching and learning sessions to extend learners' knowledge and understanding.
- Continue to consistently apply the range of new procedures and improvement initiatives and monitor their impact on outcomes for learners and the quality of the provision.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outcomes for learners require improvement. Success rates for learners on workplace learning programmes in health and social care, and business administration are high while success rates in classroom-based learning programmes require improvement. Success rates on preparation for life and work programmes are at the national average; however, success rates for the small numbers of learners on classroom-based ICT courses in 2011/12 were low. ▪ Outcomes on apprenticeship programmes require improvement. Success rates on apprenticeships with fewer learners such as ICT, retail and commercial enterprise and advanced apprenticeship programmes in Business, administration and law are high. However, success rates on health, public services and care programmes, which make up the largest group of learners, and intermediate apprenticeships in Business administration and law in 2011/12 were below national averages and require improvement. ▪ The proportion of all apprentices who achieved their qualifications within the planned duration of their programmes in 2011/12 was low. 	

- The provider's own data for the first nine months of the current academic year show improvement in success rates in a number of programmes and the large majority of current learners on all programmes make appropriate progress towards their learning outcomes, relative to their starting point.
- Variations in success rates remain for different groups of learners, those with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those aged 25 years and over are less likely to succeed.
- Learners demonstrate a wide range of good vocational skills. Learners develop good communication skills and confidence at work. Learners on Barbering and hairdressing courses develop a range of very good vocational skills which significantly improve their employability and meet the needs of employers very well.
- Learners achieve an appropriate range of relevant additional qualifications that enhance their self-confidence and career aspirations well. Most learners develop appropriate skills in English and mathematics for their job roles and to meet the minimum requirements of their qualifications.
- Many learners progress to sustained employment, higher-level qualifications or supervisory work roles following their training. Employers value the skills and increased understanding of their job roles that learner's gain and the contribution that learners make to their businesses.
- Learners have an appropriate understanding of health and safety topics and the need to follow safe working practices in potentially dangerous work settings.
- Learners feel safe, adequately understand their rights and responsibilities and demonstrate appropriate respect and behaviour towards each other.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement and this is reflected in outcomes for learners which also require improvement.
- In the better learning and coaching sessions learners are stimulated and encouraged by enthusiastic, highly motivated and occupationally experienced tutors. Learning is thoroughly planned and learners are suitably stretched and challenged. In barbering, for example, learners demonstrate excellent skills in using cut-throat razors. Good use is made of information and learning technology, where available, to enrich and enliven learning.
- Weaker sessions are often too tutor-led and learning is not carefully matched to the needs of individual learners. Learners do not always see the relevance of theory to practice as, for example, in functional skills sessions where resources are insufficiently well linked to work experiences. Questioning is superficial and learning is not systematically checked. Attendance at some off-the-job training sessions is low.
- The quality and range of resources that support learning are limited and require improvement. In hairdressing, for example, the shortage of heated rollers, barbering chairs and live models on some occasions slows learners' progress. The quality of handouts in health and social care is not of a high enough standard. Tutors make insufficient regular use of available technology to enliven sessions and promote additional research.
- The results from initial and diagnostic assessment are satisfactorily used to identify learners' levels in English and mathematics. Tutors and assessors do not make full use of initial assessment results when planning learners' individual training programmes. Additional learning needs are not always accurately identified and fully supported.
- Assessment practices are satisfactory. The quality of learners' portfolios varies, with some containing wider ranges of types of relevant evidence, for example in hairdressing, compared to those in childcare. The quality of feedback on learners' written work is inconsistent, with a minority of learners receiving high-quality, motivating feedback. Attention is not consistently given to correcting learners' spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors and providing sufficiently detailed feedback to help learners improve the standard of future work.

- Progress reviews require improvement. Although they occur regularly, too many reviews do not capture learners' progress sufficiently. Targets are insufficiently specific and challenging and do not always include learners' personal, academic and work-related skills development and learning support needs.
- Learners receive good support from their tutors. Many learners are highly committed to their training and tutors' support makes a very good contribution to learners' motivation. The provider has very good relationships with employers and a range of external organisations, such as the National Careers Service and Jobcentre Plus, to which learners are referred for additional advice and support.
- Learners receive appropriate informal information, advice and guidance (IAG) from their tutors and assessors. One apprentice, who was facing redundancy, received very helpful advice and support in searching for job vacancies and writing applications. The company acknowledges this area for development and has planned further training for relevant staff.
- Equality and diversity are not sufficiently promoted in teaching and coaching sessions. Many tutors and assessors have insufficient knowledge and confidence to recognise and use opportunities to link equality and diversity topics with vocational and functional skills learning to extend learners' knowledge. Learners say they feel safe and would know what to do if they were bullied, harassed or treated unfairly.

Health, public services and care
Apprenticeships
Other work based learning

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, reflecting the outcomes for learners which also require improvement. Learners develop appropriate workplace skills and make effective contributions to their workplace but a significant minority of learners make slow progress. Many learners achieve additional qualifications that help them to progress.
- Planning of teaching and learning requires improvement. In the better group training sessions learners are encouraged through effective questioning to link theory to their work practice and understand the importance of good skills in English, mathematics and ICT. Tutors use a good variety of appropriate activities which enthuse and stimulate learners to extend their learning. One-to-one coaching during workplace visits is effective in supporting learners who do not attend group sessions.
- Weaker sessions do not have clearly defined learning outcomes. Results of initial and diagnostic tests are not used effectively when planning training and many learners are insufficiently challenged to extend their learning. Attainment of the session learning objectives by all learners is insufficiently monitored.
- Delivery and assessment of functional skills require improvement. Specialist functional skill tutors provide training and support to those apprentices who attend off-the-job training sessions, however, learning resources do not have sufficient, relevant vocational context. Tutors and assessors often do not ensure feedback on written work includes the correction of spelling and grammatical errors.
- Personal support for learners is good. Learners have good access to their tutors and assessors who provide very effective support through frequent visits, email and telephone contact, often outside normal working hours. Most learners are motivated and committed to their training. Assessors are approachable and flexible in meeting learner needs, for example by regularly observing those who work at night.
- The effectiveness of formal progress reviews requires improvement. In better reviews employers are effectively involved in planning training and assessment opportunities. Too many reviews fail to record learners' development of occupational, personal and functional skills.

- Target-setting is weak. Although action plans are agreed with learners, targets are insufficiently specific and challenging to drive learner’s progress. Targets do not focus sufficiently on improving working practices, academic research skills or progress with English and mathematics. Too often, action points focus on assessment planning and the completion of assignments.
- Advice, guidance and support require improvement. The planning of information and guidance throughout the apprenticeship programmes is not systematic and varies programmes considerably.
- Learners have adequate knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity. In the better lessons tutors promote learners’ understanding of equality and diversity and identify good links to practice. For example, a childcare apprentice was motivated and supported to learn Punjabi to improve communication with parents of children in his workplace. However, too few tutors and assessors recognise opportunities to check and extend learners’ understanding of relevant topics.
- Learners have an adequate understanding of their roles and responsibilities to maintain the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults in their work settings.

Retail and commercial enterprise Apprenticeships Other work based learning	Good
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- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, resulting in good outcomes for learners. Progression from intermediate to advanced level programmes is good and a high number of learners gain sustained employment, promotion in the workplace or become self-employed. The standard of learner’s practical work is very good and in barbering is particularly high; for example, exceptional competence is demonstrated when using clippers and cut-throat razors.
- Teaching of practical skills in the training centre is good. Tutors explain technical procedures very clearly and demonstrate high levels of dexterity and customer service skills in an authentic working environment. Insufficient numbers of clients and other resources in the training salon restricts assessment opportunities and slows progress for a few learners.
- Group training sessions are well planned and include a range of activities which promote good learner engagement. Tutors use skilful questioning to ensure learning is checked very well. Tutors have good vocational knowledge and experience and are enthusiastic and supportive; as a result, they effectively inspire learners. However, tutors rely heavily on paper-based resources and available technology is not used imaginatively to further enliven lessons and promote research skills.
- Learner’s prior skills and knowledge are not considered sufficiently to plan individualised learning programmes. The planned duration of the programme for most learners is the same regardless of their experience or initial assessment results. More-able learners are not challenged to achieve higher level functional skills.
- Reviews are carried out frequently, and focus adequately on progress towards short term goals. Learners’ broader development including personal learning and thinking skills are not discussed and recorded. Too few hairdressing employers are included in reviews. Target-setting is too focused on the achievement of units of the main qualification and insufficiently on occupational or functional skills development.
- Assessment is appropriate. Learners receive clear feedback on assessment decisions. Hairdressing learners are assessed frequently in the training centre and the workplace.
- The quality of feedback on learners’ written work is inconsistent. In hairdressing there is insufficient constructive comment on learner’s written work showing them how to improve, little

is done to check or correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. In retail programmes spelling and grammar are checked and corrected effectively and learners have a good understanding of the need to proofread their work.

- Information, advice and guidance are not systematically delivered throughout the training. Careers advice is offered to some learners towards the end of their learning. External agencies are effective in providing additional support for a few learners. One learner facing redundancy received very good advice and guidance after referral to a specialist adviser.
- Equality and diversity are promoted appropriately at induction. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is checked satisfactorily during reviews and learners have an adequate awareness of related topics. Tutors and assessors have insufficient confidence and knowledge to integrate relevant themes within training sessions.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior leaders and managers have steered Woodspeen through an extended period of significant change very effectively. Staff have very high expectations of learners. A wide range of new procedures and approaches have been introduced which are intended to further improve the quality of learning; however, it is too early to judge the effect of these initiatives.
- Leaders and managers have greatly improved the arrangements to collect, analyse and use management information to monitor the provision since the previous inspection. Managers use data effectively to monitor individual learners' progress and manage the performance of assessors, which has led to some improvement in the success rates in the current year. However, a significant minority of learners are already beyond the planned end of their programmes.
- Performance management arrangements have improved since the previous inspection and reflect a high priority to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Staff performance reviews and appraisals help staff focus on areas for further personal and professional development arising from learner feedback, analysis of success rates and observations of teaching and learning.
- Woodspeen has an established process for the observation of teaching and learning which requires further development to be fully effective. Insufficient importance is given to the learning taking place in group sessions or the quality of individual workplace coaching. The grades awarded are higher than those awarded by inspectors and associated actions plans have not yet resulted in consistently good standards of teaching and learning.
- The self-assessment process includes extensive consultation with the provider's staff, employers and learners to provide an accurate view on the quality and impact of training programmes. The current self-assessment report accurately identifies most of the issues that affect learning and has led to the agreement of clear, measurable; time-bound improvement targets as part of a regularly reviewed improvement plan.
- Arrangements to identify areas of best practice are effective and examples are effectively communicated across the company. Initiatives such as the use of electronic portfolios have been successfully trialled in some areas and are now being introduced into more programmes. However, it is too early to judge the effectiveness of these planned improvements and the quality of key aspects of the provision, such as the feedback on learners work varies significantly.
- Senior managers have not been successful in improving all areas for development identified in the previous inspection, particularly in improving employers' involvement in formal progress reviews and improving the inclusion of equality and diversity content in teaching and coaching.
- The provider has strong relationships with employers, leading to agreed flexible arrangements for training and assessment that suit the needs of the learners and businesses. The creation of

a learner engagement team has significantly improved the learner recruitment and induction processes to better match learners to training programmes and employers. This is achieved through strong relationships with employers and close working with the business development team.

- Woodspeen has an equality and diversity policy and action plan containing objectives and monitoring measures for the continuous promotion of equality. Provider staff and learners have an appropriate awareness of relevant equality and diversity issues. However, tutors and assessors make insufficient use of naturally occurring opportunities to develop this further during workplace visits and group sessions.
- The provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. The safeguarding policy is updated regularly in order to reflect any changes in legislation. Staff receive appropriate training on safeguarding matters.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Woodspeen Training Ltd			
Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	Apprenticeships	Other work- based learning
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3
Outcomes for learners	3	3	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3	3

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and social care	3
Hairdressing	2

Provider details

Woodspeen Training Ltd	
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 0
	Part-time: 2836
Principal/CEO	Mr S. Hussain
Date of previous inspection	July 2011
Website address	www.woodspeentraining.co.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)								
Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	1	354	0	165	0	12	0	0
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	262	200	111	301	0	0		
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractor:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ You Train 							

Additional socio-economic information

The provider delivers training in the Yorkshire and Humberside and Southern regions of England. Woodspeen recruits learners from a very diverse range of backgrounds, from areas of relatively high unemployment and socio-economic deprivation in inner city Bradford to the more affluent areas of Bournemouth.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Gerard McGrath HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the training director 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 learners' 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 learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas 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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