

# In Touch Care Limited (ITC)

## Independent learning Provider

Inspection dates		13-17 May 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

## Summary of key findings for learners

### This provider is good because:

- The number of learners successfully completing their qualifications is steadily improving and success rates for dental nurses are outstanding.
- Learners develop good employability skills; they gain in confidence, improve their vocational skills and progress to higher level courses and more responsible jobs.
- Staff at all levels are highly committed and enthusiastic.
- The quality of teaching and learning in lessons is good.
- The personal support for learners is good.
- ITC works particularly well with partner organisations and is highly responsive and flexible to employer needs.
- Learners' needs are met particularly well by innovative curriculum models.

### This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Progress is slow, particularly for learners on teaching and lecturing courses.
- Target-setting to meet the individual needs of learners requiring additional support is inconsistent.
- Key quality improvement processes lack sufficient rigour.

## Full report

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

- Increase further the proportion of learners completing their qualification within the stated time through more frequent, timely and effective assessment, greater involvement of employers in planning learning and reviewing progress, and effective identification of the learners most at risk of falling behind.
- Enhance target-setting by providing clear interim targets that are specific, measurable and challenging, to help learners with additional needs to complete their programmes by the due dates.
- Implement rigorous quality assurance and improvement processes that lead to meaningful improvements in teacher performance, as measured critically through learners' achievements in lessons and assessments.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
------------------------------	------

- Outcomes for learners are good. For learners on all apprenticeship programmes, success rates have increased steadily over the last three years and are just above the national rates for all providers. Overall success rates for dental nursing learners have seen a continual improvement and are now well above the national rates. Success rates are good for young learners on the BTEC two year diplomas in health and social care. Historically, many learners have made slow progress. However, the pace of progress has improved more recently.
- The success rates for learners on the teaching and lecturing programmes have been below the national rates historically. Current in-year data shows improvement, but learners continue to make slow progress.
- Learners with identified additional learning needs do as well as their peers. The number of learners from minority ethnic groups is small. There are no noticeable differences in outcomes between ethnic groups.
- Learners on dental nursing programmes develop good employability skills including teamwork and problem-solving skills. They are able to work unsupervised, assisting dentists in their surgeries at the early stages in their training. Learners can describe in detail the skills they have learned and used in their clinical practice.
- Learners on health and social care programmes, particularly those on the Innovation Code courses, improve their knowledge of legislation and how it links to practice. They use reflection and evaluation skills effectively to improve their performance and knowledge. Learners gain in confidence, work well in teams and become able and reflective practitioners. Learners develop new skills, such as forward-thinking, and progress onto higher level courses and supervisory job roles.
- Learners on teaching and lecturing programmes develop good skills and can see how their training will improve their employability and efficiency at work. Learners gain an improved knowledge of the role of a teacher and a heightened awareness of the planning and management of learning that is required for delivering successful learning sessions. Learners talk enthusiastically about the skills they have gained: these include applying different and sometimes new approaches to their current teaching practice.

**The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and underpins the improved outcomes for learners. The majority of observed teaching, learning and assessment sessions are good and in dental nursing, assessments contain outstanding features. However, in a few sessions, the pace of learning is slow, particularly on the teaching and lecturing programme.
- In the better learning sessions, tutors have high expectations of learners and use their good levels of experience and skills to provide effective individual help and support for learners. Tutors plan carefully to ensure learners are thoroughly engaged in activities and discussions.
- Tutors make good use of a wide range of teaching and learning techniques to engage and involve learners. They make learning interesting and good attention is given to ensuring learners develop greater understanding of the importance of high standards, legislation, hygiene procedures and new ways of working. This enables learners to become more confident and to work more effectively in teams.
- In the few less successful learning activities, tutors and assessors use a narrow range of methods, relying too heavily on handbooks and printed information sheets that fail to inspire learners. In these activities, challenge is insufficient and slows progress.
- Assessment practice is good. In dental nursing, there are instances of very effective assessment practice with prompt and helpful feedback to learners. Tutors provide helpful information to ensure learners know what progress they are making.
- Across all programme areas, initial assessment is comprehensive, but its use to plan individual learning is not always effective. For some learners, learning targets contain insufficient detail and do not accurately record their learning and development needs. Not all assessors correct spelling and grammar in learners' written work to support the improvement of learners' English and mathematics skills.
- In health and social care, tutors provide particularly good teaching, learning and assessment for employed workplace learners through the Innovation Code initiative. Very effective partnerships with schools and employers ensure the needs and interests of these learners are met very well.
- Tutors in dental nursing make good use of technology to support learning with well-developed and very effective online teaching and assessment resources. However, on teaching and lecturing programmes, insufficient use is made of technology and learners do not receive appropriate support to understand how to harness technology as they develop their own teaching skills.
- Tutors provide good support for learners. In dental care, learners benefit from good support from workplace mentors. Tutors provide helpful initial advice and guidance but this is particularly underdeveloped on the teaching and lecturing programme.
- Tutors generally establish effective relationships with employers, which helps to ensure that learners develop good practical skills. However, employers are not always aware of the progress made by learners.
- In the bespoke Innovation Code health and social care programmes, tutors' promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Tutors in health and social care and dental nursing generally have a good understanding of equality and diversity. Learners generally have satisfactory awareness of issues such as the importance of dignity and respect for other people, particularly within care settings. However, broader issues relating to the wider aspects of inequalities and difference such as faith, race and gender are not always explored sufficiently, which limits learners' understanding of themselves and the wider society.

## **Dental nurses Apprenticeships Learning programmes for 19+**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall, with some outstanding features in dental nursing matching the outstanding and steadily improving overall outcomes. Assessors challenge learners to develop their knowledge and understanding alongside the development of their practical skills. Assessors have good vocational qualifications and occupational experience, but do not always plan their assessment visits well.
- Assessors make good use of their knowledge to set and review targets for learners to motivate and encourage progress. Targets are not always challenging. Good support is available to learners and some have a workplace mentor.
- Assessment practice is generally effective. In the best assessments, learners' knowledge is thoroughly checked, resulting in good in-year progress. However, some assessments have insufficient stretch and challenge to extend and develop learners' knowledge. Employers are not always included in feedback to learners, so they do not always know how well their learners are progressing.
- There is a good recruitment process for dental learners including an interview and initial assessment. The results of the initial assessments are not consistently effective in producing personalised learning plans. Employers refer learners to the training provider and those few who do not have an employer have a work placement so that they can develop their practical skills. Many of these learners progress into employment.
- Learners have access to a good range of industry standard resources to aid their learning. Online learning materials are well developed and support learning. Resources include online teaching forums and videos of teaching sessions which learners find very useful in developing their knowledge and expertise.
- Assessors generally offer good accurate oral and verbal feedback to learners enabling further development of their knowledge. In some instances feedback is less detailed, so learners do not know why they have done well, or what they can do to improve their work. Tracking of learner progress is by the e-portfolio, accessible by learners, assessors and in some instances employers. Managers monitor progress monthly; however, systems for monitoring learners' progress are incomplete and are unable to accurately show learners' progress.
- Systems to support the development of mathematics and English are effective, and include taught sessions, online resources and work packages. All learners have an allocated functional skills tutor. Functional skills are linked to employee rights and responsibilities, and personal, learning and thinking skills.
- Learners receive effective initial advice and guidance prior to, and after, enrolment, to ensure that they are on the correct programme and are aware of progression routes. A new Pathway programme enables learners to attend a short work placement in a vocational area of the learner's choice to help them choose an appropriate apprenticeship pathway.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is adequate during assessment and reviews. Learners have a mixed understanding of equality and diversity, with some demonstrating a thorough knowledge and application of the terms, while others have just a superficial understanding.
- Learners have a varied knowledge of safeguarding issues with some having a good understanding and others superficial knowledge. Many learners can identify health and safety issues and know how to deal with them, including amalgam and blood spillages.

## Health and social care Apprenticeships Learning programmes for 19+

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment in health and social care are good and support the improved outcomes for learners, although progress has been slow. Learners gain a clear knowledge of sector-specific terminology such as 'end of life care'. Learners on the Innovation Code courses make good progress developing deeper insights into their roles. Learners develop new skills such as forward-thinking and progress onto access to nursing courses and gain promotion to senior job roles.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is very effective overall. Enthusiastic staff provide clear advice and guidance to motivate learners. Easily accessible assessors offer helpful additional support. Learners benefit from a range of training methods that meet most learners' needs, such as coaching. Innovation Code learners develop a greater understanding of their individual value to their employer and gain reflective thinking and learning skills. However, a few higher-ability learners lack sufficient challenge to advance their knowledge and understanding further.
- Well-qualified, vocationally expert assessors visit workplaces at times to suit learner work-shift patterns. Some learners independently use e-portfolios particularly well, enabling them to track their own progression through their qualification or learning aim. However, for a few learners the routine use of information and communication technology to extend learning and independent study is insufficient.
- A thorough initial assessment of English and mathematics skills, prior knowledge and qualifications, additional learning needs and vocational experiences captures learners' starting points particularly well to inform individual learning plans. However, the completion of a few plans lack sufficient detail to help tutors design learning sessions that build on learners' strengths and support the development of skills to remedy their weaknesses.
- Most assessor feedback is detailed and constructive, supporting learner development. Learners are very positive about their assessors and the support they receive from them. However, although informed of developments, not all employers are involved in progress reviews to support employees' learning and progression.
- Training for functional skills on apprenticeships is flexible and greatly appreciated by employers and learners; allowing learners to attend classes or receive training from a functional skills assessor at work or in the classroom.
- Good, clear guidance on career pathways is effective and provided throughout training. Most learners can access information, advice and guidance from their assessor, for example about their eligibility to progress to the advanced health and social care programme. Learners who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to advance their skills and attend English for speakers of other languages training in order to progress onto higher-level programmes.
- Innovation Code learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity, the promotion of which is excellent. However, although adequate, for the remaining learners there are missed opportunities to broaden their knowledge and understanding further.

## Teaching and lecturing Learning programmes for 19+

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, reflected in poor learner outcomes. Too many learners do not achieve within their planned end date. Learners improve interpersonal skills such as listening, and become more confident. Learners enjoy the programme.

- Tutors are committed and enthusiastic. They generally plan learning sessions with a good variety of practical activities to make learning interesting for learners. However, activities do not always match or challenge learners' abilities, or take into account their level of experience to ensure they are all able to get the most from the sessions. Most tutors and assessors regularly correct spelling and grammatical errors in learners' completed work. Most tutors do not routinely emphasise the importance of these aspects as an integral component to general teaching practice. Most tutors are appropriately qualified.
- Learners receive good in-session support. Tutors readily provide learners with attention as they work individually or in small groups. Staff are approachable, friendly and provide learners with encouragement, which motivates them well. However, support for learners is not sufficiently flexible to accommodate some learners' needs outside sessions. For example, learners are unable to get additional support to complete written assignments once the taught sessions are finished.
- Learning resources include a wide range of professionally produced materials, which learners find interesting. Comprehensive workbooks help them to complete the programme units. There is too little use of technology to support the teaching and learning process, and learners do not have regular access to information learning technology in lessons to enhance their learning.
- Information gathered during the initial assessment process is not used effectively to plan individualised learning. Individual learning plans are not used sufficiently to track learners' progress, or to set interim targets to help them to work towards completing their qualification. There is insufficient planned support for learners who self-identify as requiring help in spelling and writing.
- Some tutors make effective use of coaching skills to confirm individual learning. However, this is not well planned to ensure all learners' progress is checked regularly. Monitoring of learners' progress is poor. Learners receive prompt and helpful feedback from their assessor for written assignments, which enables them to improve their work further.
- Learners access helpful pre-course information and guidance about the programme from the provider's website, and receive an intensive induction session on the first day of the learning programme. However, many learners do not fully understand the intensity of commitment required from the learning programme, and some struggle to meet the workload demands.
- Promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity are satisfactory overall. Tutors create a feeling of trust and respect within their learning groups. Learners demonstrate respect for their peers and tutors, and have an adequate understanding of equality and diversity within the context of their workplaces. However, tutors do not always plan activities for learners to develop their knowledge of equality and diversity, key issues within the teaching and lecturing sector.

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

**Good**

- ITC benefits from inspirational leadership, and works collaboratively with many other organisations. Staff work closely with peer review partners to develop new approaches to teaching, learning and assessment which are shared with other training organisations effectively. ITC works closely with a Centre for Excellence and other providers to develop bespoke programmes to meet employers' and learners' needs. Staff are committed and enthusiastic and work hard to balance and support company priorities, learners' welfare and employers' needs.
- The company makes increasingly good use of technology and the creation of a 'Virtual College' with useful learning activities especially for functional skills, helps learners progress more quickly and complete the required knowledge component within their frameworks. A revised initial assessment has been recently introduced to help reduce the number of learners with undeclared learning needs, and to help ITC to support them more effectively. Some early indications show significant improvement in completion rates, for example of key skills and functional skills.

- High-quality interactive learning and assessment materials are increasingly available online for the benefit of learners based in distant parts of the country. However, the use of information technology resources to support learning is inconsistent across programmes. Within health and social care, specialist simulators and software are available, but not all learners on the programme have easy access to them. Within teaching and lecturing, little use is made of information technology to enhance learning.
- A recently established functional skills team provides good support for learners and early indications show that this is effective in raising success rates. Slow progress had been a concern identified in the self-assessment report. To help learners meet their expected qualification end dates, ITC now offers off-the-job training.
- Observations of teaching, learning and assessment are supportive and encouraging for teachers but judgements are sometimes overgenerous and focus on teacher delivery rather than on learning. A recently introduced revised staff appraisal system more closely linked to teaching performance is more effective. It highlights current performance and specific actions designed to improve future performance. However, observation records lack sufficient useful information to inform improvement, and so action plans are of limited value.
- On-going staff development activities are well organised and prioritised with some individual staff undertaking extensive development, helpful both to the company and to their individual future. Even after completing full teaching qualifications, relevant staff are expected to undertake further training to aim for excellence in their teaching practice.
- The self-assessment report is succinct, and accurately identifies some areas for improvement. The quality improvement plan includes appropriate actions to improve priority areas identified in the self-assessment report, although not in all areas identified by inspectors. The company works hard to accommodate employers' perceived needs including for any learners who struggle to attend training or assessment at short notice. The arrangements for gathering and evaluating views from learners, employers and others have yet to result in comprehensive data to use as a basis for improvement actions. Learner surveys sometimes receive very few responses. Further evaluations completed after individual training sessions do not provide a suitable overview of provision.
- ITC offers a creative range of provision, exploring funding possibilities and developing new routes to provide training for both employed and unemployed learners. For example, ITC has recruited employers directly and then engaged with Jobcentre Plus to attract eligible candidates to their sector-based work academies in childcare, teacher training, social care, dental nursing, and business administration.
- Staff, learners and employers receive appropriate guidance to promote equality and diversity. The promotion of equality and diversity themes for learners in the Innovation Code health and social care programmes is outstanding; learners are able to explore themes in a safe learning environment. However, there is insufficient reinforcement of equality and diversity during learner reviews. ITC works proactively to recruit learners from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements. Staff attend regular updating sessions to maintain their knowledge and understanding of current requirements.



## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Provider name			
<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	2	2	2
Outcomes for learners	2	2	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	2	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Nursing and dental health</b>	2
<b>Health and social care</b>	2
<b>Teaching and lecturing</b>	3



[illegible]

## Additional socio-economic information

ITC is a privately owned training provider based in Sheffield. It was established in 1994. The executive director is the company's joint owner in partnership with her husband. ITC offers its programmes nationally throughout England; however, the majority of learners come from the Sheffield area. ITC directly employs 41 staff. Since the last inspection, the provider has developed its provision and now offers programmes in teacher training, business administration and customer services. In Sheffield, the number of pupils attaining five GCSEs at A\* to C is slightly below the national average. The unemployment rate is just above the national rate. The city is ranked 56th on the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Deavon Baker-Oxley HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's executive 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>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to [www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013