

Leslie Frances Training Limited

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		23–26 September 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:

- Success rates are high for the majority of advanced and intermediate apprenticeships and most apprentices make good progress. Their progression into employment on completion of apprenticeships is high.
- Apprentices develop good, and for some, outstanding technical and creative hairdressing and barbering skills. Staff are good vocational role models as they have very good commercial salon skills, which they use effectively to motivate and teach the apprentices.
- Apprentices enjoy mostly good, and some outstanding learning sessions. Individual coaching and demonstrations are highly effective in supporting learning. Tutors help the apprentices to link theoretical knowledge to salon work effectively.
- Apprentices benefit from a wide range of valuable opportunities to extend and further enhance their skills by involvement in competitions, shows, exhibitions and manufacturers' seminars organised by Leslie Frances Training (LFT) and/or their employers.
- Local salon employers value LFT's provision highly, and appreciate the flexible training and assessment options that meet their apprentices and business needs.
- LFT's vision to develop apprentices' skills to support sustainable employment is highly effective.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- The quality of a minority of sessions and reviews needs to improve, so that all apprentices consistently benefit from learning experiences that are good or better.
- Not all tutors are sufficiently skilled in reinforcing equality and diversity well and in developing apprentices' English and mathematical skills through vocational teaching.
- Written feedback given to staff from quality assurance observations does not focus enough on the actions to improve their teaching and assessment practice. There is an over-reliance on informal, verbal communications.
- Managers are not always able to make efficient use of time when analysing information as many processes have paper-based systems.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the standard of teaching, learning and assessment, by ensuring tutors benefit from learning from good and outstanding practices through shadowing, mentoring and team-teaching activities
- Monitor improvements and provide good written feedback to support these tutors' development.
- Provide effective staff development activities so that all tutors can reinforce equality and diversity with apprentices and employers well.
- Develop tutors' confidence in order to improve apprentices' English and mathematical knowledge and skills effectively through vocational learning activities.
- Revise the observation of teaching, learning and assessment processes to ensure all tutors receive effective written feedback. Provide good action plans that support them in making improvements. Monitor staff performance more frequently to support them.
- Research and implement systems that enable managers to analyse information more efficiently and provide better evaluation to aid the self-assessment process, reporting and action planning.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Overall success rates for apprentices are above national average and have remained so for the last three years. Success rates for advanced apprentices aged 16 to 18 years are particularly high. The number of apprentices who complete their programme within the planned timescale is well above the national average, although for some intermediate apprentices, end dates are not sufficiently challenging.
- The monitoring of current apprentices shows that they are making good progress. Retention rates are very high for those due to complete in 2013/14. The progress and achievement made by apprentices needing additional support are very similar to that of other apprentices. Progression from LFT's 14 to 16 year old school pupils' programmes onto apprenticeships is good.
- Apprentices enjoy their salon work and attending LFT's training schools. Attendance is good. Punctuality is erratic by a few apprentices despite LFT training schools being well-situated in prime town-centre locations, close to bus, tram and train routes and large car parks.
- Apprentices develop good, and for some, outstanding creative and technical skills that are above the requirements of the level of qualification. For example, in an advanced apprentices' session, superb dexterity and skill in spiral tonging long, coloured hair enabled an apprentice to produce a sleek and modern finish to a client's hairstyle. Intermediate apprentices on the barbering programme carry out traditional and modern haircuts using electric clippers, and scissor and comb techniques to produce a variety of fashionable men's hairstyles. Apprentices' customer service and communication skills are of a good standard.
- Progression into employment on completion of apprenticeship programmes is high. Apprentices' career progression in the hairdressing industry nationally and locally is varied and good. Roles include: senior stylists and technicians; salon managers, owners and franchisees; artistic team members; manufacturers' educators; and trainers, assessors and training managers. Many ex-apprentices work in salons that serve local communities and continue to support LFT, as their own apprentices attend the provision.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. This is reflected in the high numbers of apprentices successfully achieving qualifications. Tutors have high expectations of apprentices, which motivates them to complete work quickly and make good progress as they improve their skills and confidence. Employers provide good support to apprentices in the workplace and have strong levels of commitment to the apprenticeship programmes.
- Good individual coaching by tutors and effective demonstrations introduce apprentices to new techniques and reinforce learning which enables them to achieve high standards of practical work. Most practical sessions have a good number of clients for learning and assessment. Head-blocks are used effectively enabling apprentices to practise new skills and improve their speed before carrying out treatments on clients. A few apprentices do not consistently adhere to all aspects of salon health and safety.
- Tutors use their good vocational skills and expertise well to plan and deliver sessions. Most, but not all, tutors use good questioning techniques to check learning and encourage apprentices to link theoretical knowledge to salon skills. Information and communication technology is used effectively for online assessments and in functional skills sessions. Tablet-computers and mobile telephones are used in some theory sessions, which very effectively reinforce to apprentices how easily internet research can extend and enhance their learning.
- High ratios of tutors to apprentices in practical sessions enables work to be monitored efficiently and apprentices receive good individual support to improve their skills. In theory sessions, using coloured paper particularly enhances learning for dyslexic apprentices. It is not always apparent from tutors' records, especially when support needs relate to apprentices' health, how these are planned for and met.
- Good assessors ensure that apprentices are fully aware of the assessment criteria before they start their client treatments. However, some assessors do not always ensure this happens. Highly effective tutors record apprentices' formative assessment results as well as those for National Vocational Qualification assessments. This good practice helps apprentices to improve and contributes to tutors' effective evaluation of the learning session. Internal verification does not consistently identify those assessors who require support to enable them to improve their performance.
- Functional skills tutors provide good support in their sessions to help apprentices develop their English and mathematical knowledge and skills. However, learning activities do not provide all apprentices with enough challenge on how to make better use of English and mathematics in their work. Vocational tutors are aware and make use of apprentices' initial assessment scores in English and mathematics tests, when planning and monitoring learning.
- Apprentices receive good information and guidance from tutors and their employers to help them improve their employability and salon-related skills. In addition, a wide variety of careers in the hairdressing industry are promoted effectively through wall posters and discussions with tutors, by participation in the annual LFT competition and visits to other competitions, trade exhibitions and shows, and through manufacturers' seminars.
- Tutors make frequent and effective visits to apprentices' workplace salons. Reviews of apprentices' progress against the National Vocational Qualification requirements of programmes are good. Target-setting is effective in supporting apprentices in making good progress on-programme. Too often though, opportunities are missed to discuss the broad aspects of the apprenticeship programmes.
- Some tutors are particularly skilful in promoting and exploring equality and diversity with apprentices by integrating relevant topics into vocational learning sessions; other tutors miss perfect opportunities to do this. For example, when discussing treatments to develop apprentices' knowledge of how they might adapt their strategies when working with a variety of different clients or hair and skin types. In progress reviews, tutors ask questions about equality and

diversity, but opportunities are not often taken to develop discussion, especially in relation to salon work.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Directors, managers and their team show an inspirational commitment to LFT's well-established and clear strategic vision of developing apprentices' skills to a high level for sustainable employment. They are good role models and they motivate their apprentices to achieve high standards and progress into a variety of interesting careers in the hairdressing industry, both locally and nationally. LFT's team spirit is good. Tutors feel well supported and valued and retention of staff is good. Employers value highly the provision and the focus on training to high standards.
- Good vocational professional development at LFT has a clear focus on ensuring tutors regularly update their specialist subject knowledge and practice. Most hairdressing and barbering tutors work regularly in local salons and have good knowledge of the industry and commercial practice. Accommodation and resources to support teaching, learning and assessment are good, and LFT's two training schools have good commercial salon environments. Information and communication technology is used in a variety of ways, but not well enough to make all learning truly inspiring.
- LFT has a well-established process for the observation of all learning activities on apprenticeship programmes. Written feedback to tutors is useful in clearly identifying actions to improve their completion of relevant documentation, but this currently over-shadows feedback about their teaching, learning and assessment practice. As a result individual tutors do not have a record of ways they need to improve key aspects of their teaching and assessment practice. Themes for staff development from good and outstanding sessions are not identified clearly enough for sharing with other tutors. There is an over-reliance on informal verbal communications and team discussions.
- Staff performance management is supportive and effective in helping weaker tutors improve their vocational teaching skills. It does not sufficiently encourage those tutors who provide good learning sessions to improve these to be outstanding. Tutors' skills in integrating equality and diversity and the development of apprentices' English and mathematics knowledge and skills into vocational learning requires further development. Staff targets focus well on retaining apprentices and ensuring they complete their qualifications by their planned end dates.
- Self-assessment makes good use of feedback gathered from employers, apprentices and staff to support the judgements made about the quality and impact of the provision on learning. For example, apprentices' feedback confirms they value the good training and individual coaching they receive during practical sessions. However, the last self-assessment report in December 2012 made too little use of other evidence and data and was therefore unhelpful in fully informing subsequent action planning.
- Too many of LFT's processes are paper-based, resulting in an inefficient use of managers' time in monitoring and analysing information. For example, there is an over-reliance on looking through individual paper-based files to identify which tutors would benefit from which types of staff development, what support is provided for apprentices with identified additional learning and social needs, and the follow-up of incomplete health and safety checks at workplace salons.
- A good focus on local needs ensures that LFT's apprenticeship programmes meet both the apprentices' individual needs and the business needs of local employers. The strategic decision to incorporate the subcontracted provision in nearby Sheffield in December 2012 has ensured LFT's continuing support for salons over a wider local geographical area. Employers and apprentices appreciate the flexible training and assessment options LFT offers. For example, advanced apprentices who have a regular salon clientele, can receive all of their training and assessment in their workplace. The introduction of the popular barbering apprenticeship in 2012, web-based communications, summer hair club for school pupils and, from October 2013, study programmes, are in response to meeting the needs of local apprentices, the community and the industry.

- LFT have a clear, inclusive approach to promoting equality and diversity in their recruitment and induction of apprentices and staff, and in their provision for clients. Good tracking systems, including wall-charts, ensure all apprentices make good progress and any at risk of falling behind receive extra support. In learning sessions and reviews, opportunities to extend apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity are not developed. However, apprentices can discuss good examples of how they relate equality and diversity to their salon work.
- LFT focuses well on safeguarding. Apprentices and staff are clearly aware of procedures and apprentices particularly like the useful little card of information, including a 24-hour helpline. The provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners and has appropriate links to the local safeguarding board.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Leslie Frances Training Limited

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	Apprenticeships
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Outcomes for learners	2	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	2
Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Grade
Hairdressing		2

Provider details

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: 141 apprentices									
Training Manager	Mrs Eleanore Dyson									
Date of previous inspection	April 2008									
Website address	www.lesliefrances.com									
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			
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total					
	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+				
	77	15	27	26	N/A	N/A				
Number of learners aged 14-16										
Full-time	N/A									
Part-time	28 school pupils									
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency									
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	■ N/A									

Contextual information

LFT is a privately owned company. It provides ladies hairdressing and barbering training and assessment at its two training schools and at apprentices' workplace salons. The training schools are in the town centres of Barnsley and Sheffield, close to rail, tram and bus transport. The majority of apprentices attend an LFT training school one day a week while others have all their training and assessment in their workplace salons. Around every six weeks, apprentices have progress reviews at their workplace involving their employer and LFT tutor. In Barnsley, 41% of school pupils achieve five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics which is much lower than regional and national averages, whereas unemployment is higher than national averages. Only around 3% of the local population is of non-white British heritage.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Julia Horsman HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the training manager 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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