

Romney Resource 2000 Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		8-11 October 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
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:

- The progress made by learners is what may be expected from their starting points, but is not yet good. A minority of learners do not attend often enough to develop suitable work habits and skills.
- Not enough teaching and learning sessions are good or outstanding. Staff development does not fully support staff in improving teaching and learning.
- Lessons develop English, mathematical and information and communication technology (ICT) skills well. These skills are further enhanced through vocational workshops, although these are limited in scope. However, learners cannot, as yet, apply their newly-developed skills at suitable work experience placements in order to make good progress.
- Targets in marked work and reviews are not always specific enough to detail fully the improvements learners should make.

This provider has the following strengths:

- The proportion of learners successfully completing the previous foundation learning programme, which ended in August 2012, was high; the achievement of qualifications in English, mathematics and ICT was also good.
- Learners on the current employability skills programme develop their English, mathematical and ICT skills through a well-planned curriculum, with individually planned qualifications to aid their progress.
- Good care and support from the provider's staff at the Romney Resource Centre (RRC) ensure learners with complex problems gain the specific help and support they need.
- Good individual coaching and mentoring improve learning in sessions, motivating learners and allowing them to enjoy their learning.
- Well-qualified staff and an experienced trustee board have been successful in maintaining RRC's vision to provide opportunities for those young people who are not in education, employment or training in the South Kent region.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Expect higher standards of learners, particularly in relation to their attendance and punctuality, so that outcomes continue to improve.
- Quickly establish further vocational and work experience opportunities for learners to meet their needs and interests fully.
- Improve the range of teaching methods to increase participation and develop more ways of assessing learning in lessons so that staff increase learners' active involvement.
- Record feedback and implement the use of short-term targets to enhance learners' progress.
- Manage and support staff to help them develop and improve their teaching, learning and assessment. Improve the feedback of lesson observations to reflect more accurately the judgements and numerical grade and set specific performance targets for improvement. Ensure that evaluations focus more on how well learners are learning, rather than on what tutors are teaching.
- Produce a formalised, systematic process to record information and provide more up-to-date data. Analyse and interpret these data to provide a clearer picture of the RRC's performance.
- Devise a robust quality improvement plan to tackle all areas for improvement vigorously. Monitor improvement actions regularly and rigorously to bring about improvements.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outcomes for learners require improvement. The provider's previous Foundation Learning contract ceased in August 2012. Romney Resource 2000 Ltd data show that there was a rising trend in success rates over the last two years of that contract, with most learners successfully completing their programmes. ▪ Achievement rates for 2011/12 were high and most learners achieved their English, mathematics and ICT qualifications. The number of learners who progressed from the programme into employment, further education or training was good. However, attendance and punctuality problems meant that a small minority of learners did not fully develop their work ethic and skills. ▪ RRC started the new employability study programme in September 2013. Learners on the programme are clear about their pathways, which are well planned for them to attain their English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) qualifications. RRC has started to provide some access to vocational catering workshops for its learners, although this is limited. The programme does not currently include the required work experience necessary for them to make good progress into employment. The provider recognises the need for increased vocational experiences and will be including work experience at a later point in the year. ▪ The personal, social and employability skills of learners are developed adequately. These learners are challenged to improve their behaviour; they demonstrate improved communication skills and acquire teamwork capabilities resulting in improved confidence. ▪ The attendance and punctuality of a minority of learners require improvement. Staff do not have sufficiently high expectations for these to be improved. These learners do not improve their work skills sufficiently rapidly. As a result, although learners are making the level of progress expected from their starting points, their progress is not yet good. 	

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement, as reflected in outcomes for learners. The majority of learners make good improvements in English, mathematics, and ICT. These learners demonstrate their understanding and use of multiplication and addition well, and many are now able to write formal letters and create their own curriculum vitae on computers.
- Learners make an expected level of progress and improvements in confidence and social skills. Learners benefit from opportunities to apply their newly acquired skills in vocational catering workshops, although these opportunities are limited. However, repetitive teaching methods do not consistently challenge learners fully, or enable them to participate in a wider range of learning activities in readiness for the later planned work experience.
- Learning environments are good, particularly for ICT. Learning resources are adequate, but there are missed opportunities to use technology to promote learning. Staff are appropriately qualified, knowledgeable, experienced and enthusiastic to support learners' progress and development. They interact well with learners in a sensitive and responsive way to meet their needs. However, no teachers have relevant specialist qualifications to support the high number of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Assessment requires improvement. Staff ask probing open questions to challenge and check learners' understanding, but direct questions to further stretch learners' learning are rarely used. Staff mark learners' work satisfactorily to check their learning. Peer assessment is sometimes used successfully to involve learners more effectively in assessment activities. However, grammatical and spelling errors in learners' work are not always corrected.
- Staff provide encouraging feedback which tells learners what they have achieved and identifies the skills required to develop further. However, they do not record feedback sufficiently, and do not provide learners with targets developed from their feedback which are specific and detailed enough to promote improvements.
- Tutors conduct reviews regularly to monitor the overall progress of learners. Reviews record tasks completed and skills learnt, together with information on improvements in attendance. However, tutors do not set short- and long-term personal, social and attendance targets for learners which are specific and time bound, to enable improvement to be measured.
- Staff use initial assessment appropriately to plan learning and meet learners' needs. Literacy and numeracy assessments are routinely in place for all learners, to determine their initial starting points and support requirements. However, no formal dyslexia support is available.
- Learners benefit from good individual coaching and mentoring to improve their learning in sessions, which motivates them to enjoy their learning. Care and pastoral support are very good. Staff are caring and help learners with often very complex or difficult problems to gain the help they need to progress. Partner organisations are highly appreciative of the care and pastoral support for learners.
- Information, advice and guidance are adequate to meet learners' needs. Pre-course information for learners gives sound advice on the support and advice available on the course, with information on local partner organisations which can provide further support. Induction satisfactorily covers all relevant policies and procedures on important matters, including equality of opportunity, bullying and harassment, as well as codes of behaviour, policy on misconduct and contingency plans. Learners have good access to confidential advice and practical support on problems relating to drug and alcohol abuse, and housing.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well during teaching and learning. A culture of mutual respect is evident and is highly valued by learners. This is reinforced well in the learning contract which learners complete at induction. Learners are treated as individuals; their own views are respected by staff and other learners, and everyone is accepted for who they are,

including, for example, learners with learning difficulties such as Asperger's syndrome. Staff respond quickly and effectively to incidents related to bullying and harassment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. Romney Resource 2000 Ltd has been successful in fulfilling its strategic vision to attract young people not currently involved in a positive activity, to stop them joining those who are not in education, employment or training in the South Kent region.
- Partnerships with other organisations are effectively used to enhance opportunities for young people. For example, partners comment positively on how the RRC's active and inclusive approach benefits them in meeting local educational needs within the Romney Marsh community. They value highly the care, support and guidance the RRC offers to referring agencies and their young people who often have very complex problems and personal circumstances.
- The employability study programme successfully engages young people to improve their attainment of English, mathematical and ICT skills. Managers have recognised the need for realistic work experience, and also enhanced vocational studies for the employability study programme. Plans are in hand to provide these. Trustees have recently become involved in a governance role to challenge senior managers, but it is too early to evaluate the impact of this development.
- Managers have successfully maintained targets for staff to improve their skills through appropriate professional development programmes that enhance the learners' experience. For example, training in behavioural management, safeguarding and defusing confrontations has helped staff to improve learning outcomes. However, managers accept that continuous professional development requires further development to improve classroom practice and increase the range of teaching methods.
- Observations of teaching and learning are inconsistent in securing improvement. They focus too much on teaching, and too little on learning. The judgements and grades are generally accurate, creating a profile of grades which realistically reflects the provision. However, feedback to staff does not always match the grade awarded or set ambitious enough targets for improvement. Managers are aware that they need to devise a more formalised action plan to improve tutors' skills.
- Curriculum management requires improvement. Managers secured improvements in foundation learning outcomes, and continue to take responsibility for overall decisions on the new employability programme. They are taking steps to provide suitable work experience and improve learners' attendance. However, many management processes are informal, not sufficiently recorded and not formally reviewed. As a result, work experience planning has been slow, and attendance and punctuality remain problematic in a small number of cases.
- The self-assessment report is sufficiently critical and analytical to evaluate the provision at a basic level, but requires improvement. Learners' and users' views have been used to improve a few areas of the programme. An example is the introduction of a range of English, mathematics and ICT qualifications which provide suitable stepping stones in attainment, tailored to individual learners' needs. Evaluation has been used to set and monitor targets leading to improvements in the provision. However, the current self-assessment report did not fully identify all weaknesses found by inspectors; it did not make use of up-to-date data or of a sufficiently formal evaluation process.
- Employability study programmes at RRC increase learners' employability prospects through the provision of an individually-planned programme of English, mathematics and ICT qualifications. Learners benefit from increased social, communication, behavioural and practical skills which increase their confidence. However, with the current low attendance of a small number of

learners, and the slow development of work experience opportunities, the study programme is not yet fully meeting the needs and interests of all learners.

- RRC meets its statutory requirements for keeping its learners safe. Safeguarding policies are comprehensive and their influence permeates all activities. Romney Resource 2000 Ltd conducts criminal records checks on all staff. Staff have a good understanding of matters relating to the protection of children and young people. They recognise and deal with problems promptly and effectively. All staff know to whom they would report a safeguarding matter should the need arise.
- Learners are protected well from bullying and harassment, and they feel safe. The RRC makes good arrangements for learners with complex problems to participate in learning. It provides exceptional support where appropriate, for example in referral to counselling services or support with other social and domestic problems encountered by young people.
- Staff and learners have a good awareness and knowledge of equality and diversity and learners demonstrate respect to their tutors and peers. The RRC conducts an effective analysis of levels of achievement by different groups of learners in order to identify and tackle underachievement by particular groups.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Romney Resource 2000 Ltd

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Employability training	3

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Additional socio-economic information

Romney Marsh has a total population of just over 21,000. Over 28% of the population is aged over 50, some seven percentage points above the national average. Youth unemployment is the fourth highest in the country at 10%. The largest group of young people in the not in education, employment or training priority groups for young people aged 16 to 24 are teenage parents. Romney Marsh is among the worst performing districts economically within the South East. Levels of unemployment are higher than the average for rural Kent. Residents of Romney Marsh are at a disadvantage when trying to gain access to training, education or employment as the district is 16 miles from the nearest major towns of Ashford and Folkestone.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Rob Purchase
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One lead inspector and one additional inspector, 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. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last two 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 directly contracted provision. 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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