Further Education and Skills inspection report

Date published: 18 December 2013 Inspection Number: 423725

URN: 58179



# Veolia Environnement Development Centre Limited (Veolia) Employer

Inspection dates		11-15 November 2013		
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3		
Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good-2		
Outcomes for learners		Good-2		
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 planning and delivery of theory sessions and off-the-job training are underdeveloped. Resources used by learners are uninspiring and trainers do not check frequently enough that learners have understood the concepts being taught. Many learners have too few opportunities to take part in group activities with other apprentices in the later stages of their programme.
- Not all learners are encouraged to complete work quickly. Progress reviews often lack the information learners need to understand what they have achieved and the work they still need to complete.
- Technology is not used well on many programmes. Few resources or learning activities are available via computers or mobile devices and little use is made of technology to assess, monitor and record learners' progress.
- Many learners make too little progress in developing their English and mathematics skills.
- Equality and diversity are not promoted consistently through progress reviews and training.
- Strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning have yet to be fully developed and observations of teaching, learning and assessment are not used effectively to identify areas for improvement.

#### This provider has the following strengths:

- The proportion of learners completing their apprenticeship has increased significantly over the last four years and is now good.
- Apprentices develop and demonstrate high levels of skills in the workplace as a result of the good care and support provided by managers, assessors and workplace mentors.
- Leaders in Veolia have a strong commitment to training and developing employees. They provide a wide range of additional courses that support learners' development of workplace skills. Learners are enthusiastic about these and are encouraged by managers to take up the opportunities for training.

#### **Full report**

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

- Improve the teaching and learning in theory sessions and off-the-job training by:
  - training trainers to use a wide range of teaching and learning methods that best help each learner to make good progress
  - developing more interesting and interactive learning materials
  - stretching the most able learners by setting more difficult work
  - reviewing learning materials used by less able learners to ensure they are written in plain English
  - improving the planning of sessions and programmes of learning
  - reviewing the amount of time that learners spend in taught sessions to ensure it is sufficient for all learners to develop the knowledge that underpins their apprenticeship
  - ensuring trainers frequently check learners' understanding of the knowledge learners acquire in their studies.
- Improve the quality of progress reviews by recording more information about what learners have learned and setting short-term targets that encourage learners to complete their programme more quickly.
- Develop a virtual learning environment that provides learners with materials and learning activities that make learning more interesting and more accessible outside of taught sessions.
- Challenge learners to improve their English and mathematics skills by providing more training to learners that focuses on addressing specific areas for improvement in each learner's knowledge.
- Ensure trainers and assessors promote equality and diversity by:
  - using examples drawn from learners' vocational areas to make equality and diversity relevant to their jobs
  - building on the effective induction that learners receive by continuing to encourage learners' understanding of equality and diversity throughout their programme.
- Increase the quantity and quality of observations of teaching, learning and assessment and ensure they clearly identify areas for improvement and areas of good practice to share. Provide observers with guidance that ensures consistency in grading observations.

#### **Inspection judgements**

# Outcomes for learners Good

- Success rates for apprenticeships have risen from being very low in 2009/10 to slightly below the national average in 2011/12. In 2012/13 the company's own data indicate that success rates for apprentices have continued to rise and are now slightly above the national average. Most apprentices are on long programmes, lasting between 18 and 24 months, and a high proportion of them complete their apprenticeship within the agreed timescale. However, some learners, particularly those on apprenticeships in driving heavy goods vehicles, make slow progress.
- In 2012/13 approximately two thirds of the apprentices were on engineering programmes that have a very high success rate. A small minority of learners were on apprenticeships in business administration. Many of these did not achieve when they withdrew from the programme as a result of changes of role in the company or the closure of a site. The achievement of learners on apprenticeships in street cleansing and sustainable waste management is similar to that in other providers.

- Learners aged 25 and over are more successful at completing their apprenticeships than younger learners. The larger number of learners on intermediate-level apprenticeships is significantly more successful than those on advanced-level apprenticeships.
- Over the last four years the number of employees completing an apprenticeship has increased considerably from 48 in 2009/10 to 168 in 2012/13. Over the same period the number of learners on National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) courses has dropped significantly. Success rates for learners on NVQ courses have dropped from being very high at the time of the last inspection to around the national average.
- Standards of learners' work in the workplace are good. Engineering apprentices carry out a wide range of repair work on heavy goods vehicles and learners on business administration apprenticeships use their knowledge of a wide range of business models to develop their effectiveness as administrators and adopt a good level of responsibility. Sustainable waste management learners provide good advice to customers about recycling. However, learners' knowledge of the principles that underpin their industry is not as well developed as their practical skills.
- Learners have excellent opportunities to take additional qualifications which are designed well to meet the business needs of the company. These complement their apprenticeship well or provide further training once the learner has completed their apprenticeship. Workplace managers actively promote these opportunities to their employees and ensure that training needs are identified in staff appraisals. Health and safety are promoted well by all staff and learners work safely.
- Learners' English and mathematics skills are assessed at the beginning of their programme and a high proportion achieve their functional skills early in their apprenticeship. Learners with very low English and mathematics skills are given the opportunity to take an entry-level functional skills examination. Some learners take this opportunity but, given the low qualifications of many employees, this number is very small.
- Veolia has many employees who have progressed from low level, unskilled jobs through to managerial jobs as a result of training the company has provided. Progression from intermediate- to advanced-level apprenticeships is good in business administration, but the company does not have information about progression in other subject areas.

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

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, which is reflected in the variations in outcomes for learners and the significant change in provision as the company has increased the number of apprentices. Managers in Veolia develop a culture of training and development to ensure that apprentices acquire the appropriate skills and knowledge required to improve the business' performance. Apprentices are allocated an effective workplace mentor and most receive good support from managers and assessors.
- Classroom facilities in the training centres are of a high standard. Apprentices value the theory workshops and enjoy working with other learners from different regions. However, the teaching and learning in taught sessions require improvement and the planning of theory sessions is weak. As identified in the last inspection, there is an over-reliance on tutors presenting information without checking learners' understanding. Teaching and learning resources are not tailored to different subjects and information and learning technology (ILT) is not used to provide a greater range of stimulating activities.
- Theory workbooks that learners use to acquire knowledge and present evidence for apprenticeships, particularly in business administration, are dull. They lack activities and tasks to challenge and stretch apprentices and learners have too few opportunities to have their knowledge checked by trainers. More able learners are not provided with resources that enable them to progress more quickly or extend their learning and many have few opportunities to learn collaboratively, either in sessions or through the use of technology.

- Most apprentices develop good skills in the workplace through close supervision and guidance from experienced and knowledgeable staff. For example, engineering apprentices use tools and equipment confidently in well-equipped depots. Learners study a good range of additional courses that improve their workplace skills.
- Veolia's approach to the planning and delivery of the apprenticeship programme requires improvement to ensure off-the-job training allows learners to develop, explore and assimilate new underpinning knowledge. Training plans are not sufficiently detailed and individualised to provide a structured programme that enables learners to complete their apprenticeship rapidly. However, engineering apprentices attending specialist training at a college benefit from good off-the-job training.
- Most assessment practices are good and meet awarding body requirements. The majority of assessments are well planned and use a good range of relevant evidence, including direct observation, witness statements and professional discussions. Assessors provide good support, quidance and oral feedback.
- Progress reviews are regular and apprentices' progress is discussed well. However, trainers do not set targets that encourage learners to complete work quickly enough and many written targets are too vague. The information recorded in reviews does not fully reflect what apprentices have achieved and what they still need to do. ILT is not used effectively in all subject areas to monitor learners' progress.
- The teaching and learning of English and mathematics require improvement in most areas. Learners' current levels of English and mathematics are identified well at the beginning of their programme, but apprentices who need to improve these do not receive enough teaching to prepare for the examination. Some learners receive English and mathematics tuition from tutors at a college but the majority, who do not attend college, do not have access to staff who are qualified to provide support in English and mathematics.
- Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Induction to the workplace is thorough and promotes health and safety and equality and diversity well. Learners receive good information about the wide range of additional courses they can study.
- Apprentices complete a useful course on 'diversity at work' and most also complete a 'dealing with negative people' course. Regular 'tool box' talks, given by managers, sometimes include topics relating to equality and diversity. However, trainers and assessors do not routinely review learners' understanding of equality and diversity or challenge learners to reflect on how equality and diversity could be better promoted in their workplaces.

# Public Services Good Apprenticeships

- Teaching, learning and assessment in sustainable waste management and street cleansing are good, leading to learners achieving well. Learners' acquisition of practical skills at work is particularly strong and learners demonstrate good knowledge of their subject in the workplace. However, classroom teaching and learners' English and mathematics development require improvement.
- Learners achieve high standards of work in the workplace as a result of supervisors and assessors working well together to provide relevant and well-supported training. Early in their training, learners are able to identify waste types that cannot be processed at domestic sites. They safely organise many different types of waste and are able to give members of the general public helpful and accurate advice on the correct way to dispose of banned waste.
- Assessors prepare learners well for practical assessments and encourage them to use a good range of relevant workplace evidence, for example witness testimony and photographs. Learners are mostly given good feedback which ensures they know exactly what they have done well,

what they need to do to reach the correct standard, and when their next assessments will take place.

- In the better classroom sessions, learners complete worksheets and take part in detailed discussions about the answers. In weaker sessions these discussions are superficial and trainers do not encourage learners sufficiently to refer to resources found in their workplaces to help them with their research. Sessions are often long with much unsupported reading. Many learners lack confidence in their reading skills and trainers do not adequately take this into consideration.
- English and mathematics teaching is started early in the programme. Learners are enthusiastic and they achieve functional skills well. A basic skills test early in the programme identifies what help they may need. However, learners do not spend enough time practising the skills they need to improve and trainers do not give sufficient feedback to them on the progress they are making.
- For many learners this is their first opportunity to achieve a vocational qualification and they are very positive about their experiences. They are given good opportunities to take additional courses and staff help learners identify the most suitable ones to enable them to develop their careers and progress to higher-level programmes.
- Assessors monitor learners' progress well and act quickly to address any concerns. Assessors set clear targets for the completion of each part of the apprenticeship programme and monitor these at the frequent reviews between assessors and learners. Assessors provide good support via telephone or email if learners have questions. Workplace supervisors contribute enthusiastically to ensure learners have jobs that provide good evidence for their portfolios, and learners are encouraged to continue their learning once the apprenticeship is completed.
- Learners have a basic understanding of equality and diversity and questions to reinforce these are discussed during assessments. Mutual respect is evident in the classroom but there is little reinforcement of wider cultural and workplace issues within taught sessions or learner reviews. Trainers and assessors do not have the confidence to challenge inappropriate behaviour or literature that they encounter in the learners' workplaces.

#### **Warehousing and Distribution**

#### **Apprenticeships**

- Teaching, learning and assessment on the driving goods vehicles apprenticeship programme require improvement, as reflected in the slow progress that learners make towards achievement.
- Managers in Veolia initially set high expectations for learners. They effectively identify those who wish to progress in their jobs, and who demonstrate a good aptitude for driving roles. However, most learners make inadequate or slow progress towards achievement. In too many cases learners do not spend enough time revising and planning for their theory test and managers and trainers do not give them sufficient encouragement or develop their independent learning skills. Many learners are unable or unwilling to incur the expense of the required medical and theory training even though the company later reimburses this. Veolia has very recently decided to pay for these at the outset of the programme.
- The small number of learners who have passed their theory and driving tests develop good driving skills and knowledge. They become more confident, learn much more about driving requirements of heavy goods vehicles, and make good progress in their job roles and in their longer-term employability prospects. They also work well independently by using the available textbooks for effective revision, as well as sometimes purchasing additional resources such as apps to study on their mobile phones.
- Learners value the small group workshops that provide good opportunities for support from assessors and peers and where they can share knowledge and experience. These workshops

provide time for learners to complete workbooks and prepare for functional skills and theory tests. However, most learners only attend a small number of these workshops in the early stages of their programme, rather than being able to continue receiving such useful support throughout.

- Where assessment happens, it is good. Assessors plan assessments well and check learners' progress in their driving job thoroughly. Assessors provide good verbal feedback that clearly identifies areas for improvement, but provide little written feedback until the final assessment. Too many learners do not receive sufficient assessment, which leads to slow progress, even where learners already hold a licence and are exempt from theory and practical tests. Learners' progress reviews provide an insufficient overview of progress, and action planning and target setting are weak.
- The development of English and mathematics skills is satisfactory, but slow for a small number of learners who wait a long time before taking their functional skills examination. Learners' current skills and areas for improvement are identified well early in the programme. They use internet resources well to develop their skills, either in workshops or at home, in preparation for examinations.
- Information, advice and guidance at the start of programme are mostly effective. Learners receive clear guidelines as to the requirements of the apprenticeship programme and have a good awareness of the positive career opportunities that are available upon successful achievement.
- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. Learners attend regular group training events, in the form of 'tool box' talks, that cover a wide range of job-related topics, including issues such as dignity at work and racism. However, these are often in large groups and learners' individual knowledge is not sufficiently checked. In addition, assessors miss opportunities to further check and reinforce learner awareness of different aspects of equality at the regular reviews of progress.

#### **Administration**

#### **Apprenticeships**

- The improvement required in teaching, learning and assessment reflects the high proportion of apprentices who do not complete within the planned timescale. Experienced and qualified assessors, mentors and managers provide effective support for learners to complete their learning programmes, which ensures most learners make good progress with their vocational qualifications. However, some trainers are not specialists in administration and are not able to provide as much support for learners preparing for their technical certificate tests as the specialist trainers.
- Learners develop a high level of skills and knowledge that ensures they do a good job. Learners use newly developed computer skills to provide useful monitoring and analysis of business performance which managers value. For example, a learner used an improved knowledge of spreadsheets to monitor fuel usage in detail. The learner identified wastage and significant savings were made.
- Trainers thoroughly assess learners, prior to starting their apprenticeship, to identify the skills they have already acquired in their job. The training they receive builds on these skills well. Learners take a wide range of courses to supplement their apprenticeship and to ensure they can do their job well. Learners' specific English and mathematics development needs are identified well at the beginning of their programme and learners are encouraged to use online resources to improve their weaker areas. However, learners are not sufficiently prepared for external examinations in English and mathematics and do not always understand the examination questions.

- Learners quickly develop effective independent learning skills by researching information within the organisation and using the internet. They have a thorough knowledge of employees' rights and responsibilities, as well as of relevant legislation.
- Many learners progress from intermediate- to advanced-level apprenticeships and gain further responsibilities at work. Apprentices' business administration skills and knowledge are developed well as a result of the guidance they receive from their manager or mentor.
- Apprentices' learning programmes are well structured to allow learners to complete within the planned time and are adapted effectively to meet individual learners' needs. However, little classroom training for the technical certificate is planned into the programme which inhibits apprentices' learning, and progress on English and mathematics is slow.
- Assessment practice is good. Learners take comprehensive notes during discussions and demonstrate and discuss the expertise used in their daily work confidently. Assessors give good feedback that confirms what learners have achieved and informs improvements.
- Records of progress reviews are too brief and managers and mentors receive information about learners' progress after the review, rather than contributing their views during the review. Learners agree clear, appropriate targets to complete work between meetings with assessors. However, some learners have more than one assessor for different components of their learning programme and become confused about their progress.
- Trainers and assessors use little technology to ensure learners' work and records of progress are accessible to learners. Assessors hold some electronic evidence in a format that cannot be accessed by learners, while some paper evidence is disorganised. Learners are frequently unable to access their records until the end of their programme.
- Learners are encouraged to attend a 'dignity at work' course, but discussion about equality and diversity is not continued during progress reviews to reinforce and extend learners' understanding.

#### The effectiveness of leadership and management

- Veolia has very successfully promoted the benefits of education and training to the different businesses within Veolia Environnement UK. Directors and managers in the businesses demonstrate strong commitment to the development of all employees. Training is highly valued and seen as a worthwhile investment of time and money, although operational priorities can disrupt training.
- Veolia staff fully appreciate the significant changes required as they move from standalone vocational qualifications to apprenticeship frameworks. However, many of the current policies and procedures do not focus on the different approaches needed to ensure apprenticeships are effective. Too much variation exists in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment between the different programmes.
- Strategies and guidance to improve teaching, learning and assessment are unclear and observations of teaching, learning and assessment are not yet rigorous enough to support improvement. Verifiers routinely observe assessors to ensure compliance with awarding body standards. However, observations of assessors' teaching and coaching activities do not identify areas for development. Observations of trainers are insufficiently evaluative and, until very recently, lacked action plans for improvement.
- Veolia offers effective training to managers on how to mentor apprentices. Trainers and assessors have relevant and good occupational knowledge and backgrounds which they use well to support learners. Good opportunities exist for continuing professional development and all assessors have completed an introductory course in training. However, assessors and trainers need to improve the quality of delivery by using a wider range of teaching strategies and improve their skills in training learners of differing abilities.

- The company's evaluation of the quality of its training programmes is underdeveloped. Although managers review the programmes regularly they do not fully evaluate the whole provision. Managers make insufficient use of data to evaluate the effectiveness of the apprenticeship programmes and management information is not routinely analysed to identify areas for improvement or trends over time.
- Quality improvement plans identify the main areas Veolia are working to improve. However, the plans lack detail and it is difficult to ascertain the impact proposed actions will have or the progress being made. Systems to gather learners' and managers' views are in place, although they do not effectively identify areas for development or routinely analyse trends in the level of satisfaction.
- Veolia has developed a good range of apprenticeship programmes to meet the constantly changing needs of the company. The company now offers apprenticeships in 14 subjects and at different levels to allow for progression. Veolia clearly distinguishes the different training required by employees who are new to the business and established employees who are acquiring new skills to develop their careers. However, insufficient information is available for employees on the structure and range of apprenticeships available.
- Managers have established extensive and effective links with a wide variety of external stakeholders to promote learning and development, and in particular apprenticeships, across the environmental services and waste management sectors. The Managing Director works effectively in partnership with local and national institutions. Regular meetings and effective communications ensure good working relationships with subcontractors.
- Managers and staff value diversity at work and learners reflect the cross-section of all ages, genders and ethnic groups employed by Veolia Environnement UK. However, managers do not routinely use data to analyse differences in success rates between groups of learners or to inform actions to close any gaps.
- Veolia meets its statutory requirements for the safeguarding of learners. Appropriate safeguards are in place for the small number of 16- to 18-year-old learners, especially when living away from home during block release at college. Health and safety have a very high priority as many learners work in complex and difficult environments, handling hazardous materials and equipment. All learners complete an Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) safety passport as part of their programmes.

# **Record of Main Findings (RMF)**

# **Veolia Environnement Development Centre Limited**

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	Apprenticeships
Overall effectiveness	3	3
Outcomes for learners	2	2
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	
Public Services	2
Warehousing and distribution	
Administration	3

# **Provider details**

Type of provider	Employer							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous	Full-time: 0							
full contract year	Part-time: 1880							
Principal/CEO	Mr Roy Fairweather							
Date of previous inspection	April 2009							
Website address	www.veolia.co.uk							
Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level bel	_	Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-1	.8 19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Part-time	-	-	_	-	-	-	-	-
Number of traineeships	:	16-19		19	19+ Total			
	-			-		-		
Number of apprentices by	Intermediate Advanced			Higher				
Apprenticeship level and age	16-18	19	-	16-18			5-18 19+	
	27	62		15	149			
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the	Stephenson College							
provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul><li>Highbury College</li></ul>							
	■ Wirral Metropolitan College							
	<ul> <li>Guildford College of further and higher educate</li> <li>Askham Bryan College</li> <li>Central Sussex College</li> </ul>				ation			

#### **Contextual information**

Veolia Environnement UK encompasses the four United Kingdom (UK) divisions of the large international company, Veolia Environnement. Veolia Environnement UK employs 13,500 people providing environmental services to industrial customers and local authorities throughout the UK. Veolia Environnement Development Centre Limited (also known as Campus Veolia) provides government funded training to employees at 126 of Veolia Environnement UK's depots and work sites in England. Most learners are on apprenticeships in sustainable waste management, street cleansing, heavy goods vehicle driving and business administration. Learning programmes are managed in a training centre in Wolverhampton and largely delivered in the workplace. Engineering apprenticeships are delivered by subcontracting further education colleges. Veolia Environnement UK employs a high proportion of people with low levels of educational attainment.

#### Information about this inspection

#### **Lead inspector**

Steven Tucker HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the Senior Consultant: Education and Training 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 If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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

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 <a href="mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk">enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk</a>.

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
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk
© Crown copyright 2013