

JACE Training and Assessment Centre

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		25–29 November 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:

- Learners make very good progress from their starting points and develop excellent vocational, employability and personal skills.
- Teaching and learning are good across all vocational areas and programmes, with some outstanding observed sessions.
- Tutors and assessors are occupationally well qualified, with current industry experience. They are skilled at using their commercial experience to develop learners' understanding of the workplace.
- Workplace learning is good and employers are highly experienced and work closely with JACE.
- Learners have very good support, including very effective information, advice and guidance to help them consider their future options confidently.
- The new management structure has good capacity to build the quality of the organisation and the learners' experience.
- Work with a wide range of partners is particularly strong in attracting and developing skills and confidence in vulnerable young people.
- The arrangements to ensure the care and well-being of staff and learners are particularly effective.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- In 2012/13, success rates for apprenticeships were low, but improving, with the provider's data showing a good improvement in the first three months of 2013/14. Timely success rates are still too low.
- The teaching of, and support for, the development of English and especially mathematics, require improvement.
- Some aspects of quality improvement require further development.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates by developing and implementing an effective strategy for the delivery of high quality English and mathematics provision.
- Develop the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and review through effective observation of all aspects of learners' programmes, which give tutors and assessors clear guidance on how to improve.
- Further improve the quality of provision through refining the quality improvement activity, particularly by developing an effective self-assessment and quality improvement planning process which fully engages all staff.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners make very good progress from their starting points and a significant proportion of apprentices move through qualification levels and take on greater responsibility at work. In 2012/13, 46 advanced apprentices progressed onto an externally-funded National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4. In early years and playwork, in particular, learners develop a very good understanding of career and progression opportunities and the available qualifications. ▪ In 2012/13, a high number of learners progressed successfully from the Foundation Learning programme, which was the predecessor of study programmes. The majority of these progressions were into apprenticeships, with a small number into further education colleges or employment. Tracking of learners from the Foundation Learning programme, and the previous Entry to Employment programme, shows that a majority of these learners progressed through their apprenticeships and many gained promotion in the workplace. ▪ Overall success rates for apprenticeships across all subject areas in 2012/13 are low, but improving, and the provider's data show that there has been a good improvement in the first three months of 2013/14. This coincides with the good progression from the Foundation Learning programme into apprenticeships. Timely success rates are still too low. ▪ There were no significant differences in the achievement of learners from different groups in 2012/13. Centre coordinators monitor the data regularly and put effective additional support into place to meet any requirements. ▪ Learners develop very good vocational and employability skills, both in their work in the training centres and out in the workplace. They demonstrate effective research skills and reflect on how research outcomes may affect their development. They are developing as independent learners. Some good use is made of electronic portfolios, where learners are following a main vocational qualification, and most learners are confident in word processing their work. Learners work particularly cooperatively and develop good skills in supporting each other, both in taught sessions and in social situations. Punctuality and attendance are good. ▪ Work experience placements for learners on the study programme and traineeships are chosen carefully to ensure they meet individual interests and needs. Learners become highly confident and self-assured in their work activities and demonstrate clear improvements in their personal confidence and motivation. Retention for learners on the first four months of the study programmes and traineeships is very good. ▪ Overall, the success rates for functional skills English are good, but for mathematics require improvement. A few learners take a long time to achieve their qualification. On the Foundation Learning programme in 2012/13, functional skills achievements for entry level English and mathematics were good, but were low for level 1. 	

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of most teaching, learning and assessment is good, and some is outstanding. Achievement of personal, employability and vocational skills is good. Learners enjoy their time at JACE and demonstrate clear improvements in personal confidence and motivation, with punctuality being particularly good.
- Tutors and assessors are well qualified and have recent industry experience. They use this well to motivate learners and use real work examples to enhance the training. They fully understand the work and challenges in the workplace and are able to prepare learners really well. They work in close partnership with employers.
- Tutors and assessors plan sessions well, using a variety of teaching methods and activities. However, questioning techniques in some group training sessions need to improve to ensure that learners existing knowledge and experiences are used to introduce topics and illustrate their relevance.
- The well-planned assessments are thorough and good. In most instances, assessors give good, comprehensive feedback that helps the learners to understand what they need to do to improve and progress.
- Learners and assessors use the e-portfolio system successfully as an effective communication tool for the submission of assignments and to receive feedback. Use of the new bespoke virtual learning environment is limited and is still being developed.
- The initial assessment is comprehensive and ensures that learners' individual needs are met. Learners have an interview and initial assessment to plan their individual learning programme. Of particular use is the detailed guidance on the initial interview form, which gives a sound basis for the identification and recording of any additional support needs. Learners have a second interview at four weeks to ensure they are on the right programme and at the correct level.
- Tutors and assessors give regular feedback on written assignments, which helps learners to understand what they need to do to improve. However, although the standard of most work is good and shows evidence of reflective and independent learning, tutors and assessors do not often correct grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. This does not help learners to improve their skills in written English.
- Reviews are carried out on a regular basis and are very effective in keeping learners motivated. They cover progress in the vocational area as well as in personal and employability skills. Learners have the opportunity to discuss their own progress and talk about any areas of concern.
- The teaching and learning of English, and particularly mathematics, require improvement. They are integrated into teaching sessions with some discrete lessons. Mathematics sessions observed during the inspection were overly long, with too little variety in teaching content and learning activities. There are insufficient specialist tutors to support the vocational tutors and assessors and help them in the planning and delivery of stimulating topics supported by a wide variety of resources.
- Very good information, advice and guidance arrangements help learners to consider future options confidently. Learners receive accurate information, both through pre-recruitment literature and verbally, which enables them to make informed choices about their planned programme. Centre coordinators use very effective questioning to engage learners in one-to-one guidance sessions.
- Learners have a good awareness of equality and diversity gained through induction and the requirements of their main vocational area. However, there are missed opportunities to reinforce this during teaching and learning sessions by making use of naturally-occurring opportunities, for example by considering why certain information should, or should not, be required on job application forms. Records of reviews do not always record learners' increased understanding of equality and diversity.

Early years and playwork

Apprenticeships

19+ Learning programmes

16-19 study programmes

Traineeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment for early years and playwork are good which have led to improved outcomes and higher achievement of qualifications than in the previous year. Current learners are progressing very well, both in their training programmes and in their careers, many gaining promotions within their workplace.
- Tutors use their considerable and recent industry experience to plan sessions, which very effectively meet the needs of individual learners. They work in close partnership with employers, who also make a significant contribution to the assessment and review process. Tutors make excellent use of learners' varied and high quality workplace experiences to illustrate key points during training, and learners are encouraged to share their experiences which helps to consolidate their understanding.
- Learners receive good support, including advice and guidance at the start of, and during, their training programmes, as well as support with any personal issues they may have. Workshops and study support sessions planned for evenings and weekends provide excellent support for the completion of assignments. Learners with additional needs receive effective support through individualised adaptations, such as oral submissions. Learners feel safe and fully understand positive safeguarding practices within their settings.
- JACE develops and maintains strong relationships with employers, who feel part of the training activities and value the improving skills of their employees. Employers value the good support they receive from JACE, particularly with the recruitment of learners, and many use JACE as their sole provider. Learners are effectively supported by their employers for the completion of their learning assignments, often being supported by colleagues who have already successfully completed their qualifications.
- Assessment of learning is good. Initial assessment is thorough and ensures that all learners are placed on appropriate programmes of study. The assessment plan is successfully adapted to meet individual learners and their employer's needs. Progress reviews are held regularly and are effective, motivate learners well and reinforce the linking of theory to workplace practice. Agreed targeted action plans ensure learners know what they have to do to complete their programme. Learners and assessors use the e-portfolio system successfully as an effective communication tool for the submission of assignments and to receive feedback.
- Feedback to learners is good in many instances. Feedback following workplace assessments is immediate and supportive and of a high standard. In the best practice observed, written feedback on assignments signposts learners as to what they need to do to improve, is constructive and is often reflected upon during reviews. However, in some instances, a learner may reach the prescribed criteria and there is acknowledgement of a completed unit, but feedback does not always stretch or challenge.
- English and mathematics need further improvement. Correct English is not always prioritised within sessions and spelling and grammatical mistakes are not always corrected within assignments. Mathematics teaching is not sufficiently related to the workplace nor contains enough work-related activities.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well. Learners' knowledge and application to the workplace are checked and reinforced during training and at review meetings, and the good links made to the learners' experiences at work enable them to develop the skills they need to become reflective practitioners.

Employability**16-19 study programmes
Traineeships**

Good

- Most teaching, learning and assessment are very good, and this has contributed positively to learners' achievements, their personal and social development and employability skills. Although both the study programme and the traineeships are new, retention is very good and progression is positive to date. Attendance is good and there were no latecomers in any of the sessions observed during inspection.
- Tutors and assessors have high expectations of their learners, motivate them through energetic session delivery and support them particularly well. They make good use of project work to develop a wide range of skills including planning, teamwork, problem solving, decision making and negotiation. Learners on traineeships have a similar programme but focus on moving into a work placement. Learners are encouraged to reflect on their learning and identify if they could have done better. However, questioning techniques in some group training sessions need to improve.
- Tutors are occupationally well qualified and have good current industry experience. They are skilled at using their commercial experience to develop learners' understanding of workplace demands. Relationships with external organisations are effective in identifying local needs and in ensuring that JACE's provision meets local needs.
- Learning in the workplace is good. Learners on study programmes and traineeships understand that work experience will be an integral part of their programme and most are either in placement or being supported in finding suitable opportunities. Learners participate in very relevant work experience placements in a range of realistic and high quality settings, with additional courses available both through employers' in-house arrangements and through external courses in areas such as play, food hygiene, safeguarding and behaviour management.
- Good, wide-ranging initial assessment enables tutors to make reference to learners' individual goals and circumstances during teaching sessions, resulting in learning being seen as relevant to learners' individual needs.
- Tutors and assessors give regular, detailed feedback on practical work in sessions and written assignments. This helps the learners understand what they need to do to improve. English is integrated into teaching sessions and, although tutors encourage learners to take notes and record what they are doing, they do not often correct grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. This does not help learners to improve their skills with written English.
- The teaching and learning of English, and especially mathematics, require improvement. The mathematics sessions observed during inspection were too long with insufficient variety in teaching methods and learning activities. Vocational tutors are not specialists in English and mathematics and are not fully aware of how to adequately support learners and help them develop their skills.
- Learners receive very good information, advice and guidance. This is especially important on the new study programmes and traineeships where learners have individual programmes based on a wide range of options. Induction is thorough; however, some induction documentation is too difficult for learners with low levels of literacy. The use of a second interview after learners have been on programme for four weeks is particularly beneficial in agreeing learning aims.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well through induction, vocational work and, on occasions, weekly discussions. However, they are not always reinforced during learning sessions when opportunities arise. Bullying and harassment are discussed at reviews, but there is insufficient recording of the learners' understanding of wider equality and diversity areas.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leadership in JACE is strong. Senior managers have steered the company successfully through a period of significant change and have put in place an appropriate new structure with good capacity to carry the company forward. Staff understand and champion the values of the company and share the vision of the senior team to provide the best support to ensure the success of learners.
- Management is good. Functional management is effective and where improvements are required managers and staff are fully aware of these and suitable plans are in place to address them. Communication across the company is good and staff appraisal and development systems are well developed. Managers identify and monitor poor performance and take appropriate and effective action to address it. Data management is generally effective, but JACE recognises that this is an area for development and has appropriate plans in place to improve this further.
- Resources are at least satisfactory, and in many cases good. Work settings are of a high standard and JACE is developing good virtual learning platforms to support learning. Staff are well qualified in their vocational subjects, have good experience and are very committed and enthusiastic. Meetings are regular, both at management and team levels, and address performance management well, although recording of actions and impact is often incomplete. JACE reviews policies and procedures regularly and notifies changes to all staff.
- JACE has a range of mechanisms to improve teaching, learning and assessment and these have helped to build quality. Managers use learners' views well to improve the content of workshops and group sessions. Tutors and assessors learn from each other through peer observations, and managers monitor and address performance issues effectively. However, the observation process has been ineffective in giving tutors and assessors clear guidance on how to improve their delivery. This is now being developed, but it is too new to measure its impact.
- Quality improvement activity has made a demonstrable impact on the quality of the programmes and facilitated the introduction of significant changes to provision. Audit processes are planned well, but inspectors found differences between centres and a few examples of inconsistent practice which had not been addressed. Although the company prepares an annual self-assessment report, managers recognise that the process does not involve all staff sufficiently and does not engage them in a coherent quality improvement planning process. Individual centres include quality improvement in their team meetings, with examples where specific areas, such as documentation or scheduling, are addressed well.
- JACE is particularly good at meeting the needs of its learners, employers and local needs in the vocational areas it delivers. Tutors and assessors engage employers well in learners' training and plan learners' programmes very effectively to meet their specific needs. They plan and deliver good advice and guidance to learners and work very well with a wide range of organisations to ensure their well-being. JACE has appointed an experienced member of staff to liaise with existing placements and to identify new work experience opportunities. As a result, centres are increasing their already good engagement with local employers.
- JACE does not have a sufficiently effective strategy to develop the delivery of functional skills. The delivery of English, mathematics and information technology skills provision is at the discretion of the centre managers. Staff are not sufficiently confident and resources, particularly central expertise and learning resources, are insufficient. The provision, particularly in mathematics, requires improvement.
- JACE has good arrangements for equality and diversity and staff have regular training through team meetings and specific workshops. Learners gain good knowledge and understanding through their inductions and programme content; however, opportunities are missed in the review process to enhance understanding. JACE markets its programmes well to underachieving young people, and partner organisations speak highly of JACE's work in supporting particularly vulnerable young people. Centre coordinators have a good awareness of the performance of specific groups of learners and put in place effective strategies to address these.

- Pastoral care and support for learners' well-being are particularly strong. JACE meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. It gives safeguarding a very high priority, which is reflected in the good level of staff training. Incidents are managed well and recorded appropriately. JACE has good links to local safeguarding boards and statutory agencies to ensure that learners at risk are referred promptly and they receive appropriate support. Health and safety are also a high priority and JACE has good measures in place to ensure the health and safety of all staff and learners.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

JACE Training and Assessment Centre

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2	2	2
Outcomes for learners	2	2	2	2	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2	2	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	2	2	2	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Early years and playwork	2
Employability training	2

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 380							
	Part-time: 57							
Managing Director	Chris Pritchard							
Date of previous inspection	May 2010							
Website address	www.jace-training.co.uk							
Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	90	12	-	18	-	37	-	-
Part-time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	32		10		40			
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18		19+	
	88	48	60	84	-		-	
Number of learners aged 14-16	14							
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	14							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

Contextual information

JACE Training and Assessment Centre is a privately owned independent learning provider and is part of the Jancett Group of day nurseries. The head office is in Wallington, Surrey and there are seven training centres spread throughout London, Surrey, Sussex and Kent. JACE delivers apprenticeships, training for 19+ learners, study programmes and traineeships. The majority of learners start their programmes with low levels of English and mathematics. The main subject areas are early years and playwork and hospitality and catering. JACE works in partnership with schools to deliver training to 14- to 16-year-olds and in partnership with local authorities in the area. These were not in scope for the inspection.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Jan LLoyd HMI
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One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the managing 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 individual interviews, telephone calls and feedback records 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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