

# Derby Skillbuild

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		<b>22–25 October 2013</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider requires improvement because:

- Teachers do not make sufficient use of information and communications technology in teaching and learning.
- The number of learners achieving functional skills qualifications has declined and achievement is low.
- Strategic and business planning are weak.
- The management and use of outcomes data are poor.
- Self-assessment and quality improvement planning are insufficiently effective in bringing about improvements.
- The observation of teaching and learning is ineffective in bringing about improvements.

#### This provider has the following strengths:

- A high proportion of learners achieve their key learning objectives, including vocational.
- A high proportion of learners on the study programme progress to employment, further education and training.
- Learners develop a range of good practical skills and produce practical work of an appropriately high standard for the level of study.
- Most learners make good progress in lessons and on their programmes. Many make better progress than might be expected from their prior qualifications and experience.
- Learners benefit from the good teaching, coaching and individual support provided by teachers.
- Derby Skillbuild offers a broad range of courses and activities to meet the needs of its learners. The curriculum and programmes of study are well-planned and managed by experienced teachers.
- Managers and staff promote equality and diversity very well, particularly, in the classroom.

## Full report

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

- Increase the proportion of learners who successfully complete functional skills qualifications by reviewing the approach to teaching and learning.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding lessons by better planning for differentiation and by using ILT more imaginatively and innovatively. Ensure that staff are trained to make better use of learning resources. Ensure that the existing good practice in teaching and learning is shared between the teachers.
- Continue to improve the links that help provide work placement opportunities for learners.
- Improve the effectiveness of the observation of teaching and learning process by strengthening follow up arrangements, including the links between performance management and observation outcomes.
- Review the collection, analysis and use of attendance, punctuality, achievement and other management data to ensure managers receive prompt and accurate reports on these aspects of provision. Ensure that managers and staff make better use of the data to inform management decisions and self-assessment.
- Improve the quality of self-assessment by focusing on judgements rather than description, and ensure that the process leads to improvements in the provision.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- Achievements for vocational studies in construction and engineering are particularly high.
- Learners fulfil the high expectations of their tutors by developing a broad range of practical skills in vocational areas such as painting and decorating, landscaping, bicycle maintenance work and bricklaying. Most learners produce an appropriately high standard of practical work and are justifiably proud of the finished projects such as planters and bird tables that they are allowed to take home.
- Learners demonstrate safe working practices and have a good understanding of health and safety topics, particularly in construction and engineering. Learners wear the required personal protective equipment and demonstrate safe techniques in operations such as moving and handling materials.
- Outcomes for the study programmes are good. Rates of progression into employment, education and training have improved significantly since the last inspection. In 2010/11, just over two thirds of learners progressed. In 2011/12, well over three quarters of learners progressed and in 2012/13 three quarters of learners went on to employment, education or training.
- A high proportion of learners achieve their key objectives. In 2010/11 and 2011/12 around two thirds of learners achieved their key objectives. In 2012/13 this rose to over three quarters of the learners.
- Learners benefit from good work placement opportunities and the work that they do to prepare them for work placement. Staff encourage learners to research and identify work placement opportunities for themselves. In doing so they develop employability, personal and social skills well.
- Most learners make good progress in lessons and on their programmes, often better than would be expected, given their levels of prior attainment; half of the learners have, at best, achieved

only entry level 3 in previous studies. Almost half of the learners have identified learning difficulties.

- Most learners develop sufficient English and mathematics skills to meet the needs of their programmes. Functional skills success rates have been high but declined in 2012/13 and are now low.
- Many learners take part in enrichment activities. Learners have access to Rolls Royce sports facilities. They enjoy regular sports sessions, including some team sports and benefit from expert coaching. Many learners take advantage of the opportunity to build, maintain and use bicycles. Lessons are supplemented by a variety of visiting speakers and media studies learners enjoy trips to the local recording studio.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, reflecting the high number of learners who gain their qualifications and progress to positive destinations. Learners develop confidence and valuable practical work skills such as brickwork, digital media imaging and podcast for the radio.
- Teachers have high expectations of learners. Many learners are not used to working in formal learning situations and they benefit from good support from teachers. Learners clearly enjoy their learning and participate confidently in lessons, contributing to lively discussions and engaging enthusiastically in their practical work. Lessons are mostly good and successfully engage learners, promoting and maintaining their interest and motivation.
- Teachers have good vocational knowledge and experience and use this well to, for example, provide good professional examples which help learners to link theory to practice. Most teachers use a good range of methods effectively to assess and develop learning. These include questioning techniques, practical activities, group discussions and self-evaluation.
- In the less effective sessions, learners become distracted. Teaching is not interesting enough and does not make sufficient use of information and learning technology. A small minority of lessons are slow to start and teachers do not sufficiently develop learners' higher order thinking skills. In general, teachers do not use interactive learning technology sufficiently or to best effect to aid teaching and learning.
- Assessment of learners' vocational work is good and helps learners learn and develop their skills. Teachers use a wide range of methods to enable learners to demonstrate vocational competency and increased employability skills. Learners are provided with detailed constructive feedback so that they know how to improve. The standard of work in portfolios is satisfactory.
- Initial assessment is thorough and uses an efficient online system to assess learners' English and mathematics skills. Teachers identify learners' current levels of attainment effectively, as well as their aspirations. They use the information appropriately to plan the learning programme and to provide relevant support. However, teachers do not always make enough use of initial assessment when planning lessons.
- Most individual learning plans are used effectively to record information and track learner progress. Similarly, progress in vocational options is often recorded appropriately and personal development targets set.
- Learners benefit from regular and frequent progress reviews which they value highly. The reviews help to motivate them and ensure that most are clear about their progress and what they need to do next. In a few reviews, learning targets lack sufficient clarity and some fail to focus sufficiently on wider skills and personal development.
- Learners develop sufficient skills in English and mathematics. The discrete functional skills sessions are related well to vocational studies. Learners develop appropriate English skills through their classwork. However, their written work is not always routinely corrected for spelling and grammar.

- The quality of information and advice provided for learners, before they join their course, during the course, and on leaving, is good and supports progression well. Induction effectively introduces learners to the expectations and opportunities open to them, but it is not always sufficiently interactive. Learners benefit from a good range of vocational programmes in a variety of settings.
- Learners have a good understanding of safeguarding and equality and diversity. They treat each other fairly and with respect. Learners feel safe in the centre and know who they would report any problems to. They quickly form good friendships. Equality and diversity are integrated very effectively into teaching and learning activities, for example the production of a radio podcast by digital media learners as part of black history month, and sign language discussion during a functional skills speaking and listening lesson. The many posters and displays on equality and diversity in the centre illustrate learners' work completed in their employability skills lessons.

### The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires Improvement

- Following a period of underperformance against organisational targets, uncertainty and instability in the management of the organisation, the recently appointed general manager and management committee have set an ambitious strategic direction to develop the already good curriculum offer and extend the client base.
- Formal strategic and business planning are weak. Strategic plans and objectives are not given sufficient attention during management committee meetings and arrangements to monitor progress against plans are not clear. This weakness in business planning was identified as a key area for improvement at the last inspection.
- Curriculum planning and programme management are good and make a significant contribution to the good outcomes for learners. Teachers have worked together very effectively to plan and manage the provision, in the absence of a permanent general manager. Senior managers have provided sufficient funding and resources to develop the curriculum and to improve the learner experience.
- Governance is broadly satisfactory. The governing body, the management committee, receives adequate financial and performance reports and provides appropriate scrutiny and challenge. However, the committee has been slow to react to developments in commercial practice and is still using some outmoded business systems such as paying staff by cheque.
- The observation of teaching and learning process requires improvement. There is no formal policy for observing teaching and learning and no procedure to ensure that observations are followed up with appropriate action plans and support for teachers. Observations are carried out but not to any formal schedule or plan. Managers do not use the outcomes from teaching observations to manage the performance of teachers or to inform staff development.
- Learners make good use of learner surveys and fora to make their views known. Managers and committee members listen carefully to learners' comments and take appropriate action when necessary. Several improvements have been made as a direct result. Typical examples include the creation of a tuck shop and changes to the timetable.
- The self-assessment report is weak. Much of the content is descriptive and there are too few clear judgements on the strengths and areas for improvement of the provision. The report is insufficiently self-critical and fails to recognise many of the improvement needs identified by inspectors. The quality improvement plan is inadequate.
- The management and use of achievement data require improvement. Although data are collected, they are not analysed and reported on sufficiently well. Managers were very slow to provide the data required for managing the provision effectively due to difficulties in generating appropriate reports.

- Staff benefit from monthly performance management meetings that allow them to discuss their targets and the support needed to achieve them with their manager. Monthly reviews are supplemented by a well-established annual appraisal system. However, there is insufficient emphasis on teaching and learning in both monthly performance management meetings and in the appraisal system. This is acknowledged under the new management arrangements. Consequently, performance management systems are currently under review.
- As a small company, management is informal and there are few sufficiently detailed, prescribed systems and procedures. Formal quality assurance procedures such as the arrangements for monitoring sub-contractors performance require improvement.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is very good, especially in the classroom. Staff and managers are guided well by the appropriate range of robust policies and procedures. They have a deep knowledge of equality and diversity issues and provide students with interesting and challenging activities to develop their understanding. Inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated. Managers and staff continue to introduce initiatives to recruit more females onto the programmes but with little success. There are no differences in achievement between groups of learners.
- Derby Skillbuild meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive and is regularly updated. Staff receive effective training on safeguarding and have a good understanding of safeguarding matters. Managers have developed good links with the local safeguarding board and share good practice through their membership of provider networks.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Derby Skillbuild

<p><b>Inspection grades are based on a provider’s performance:</b></p> <p>1: Outstanding                  2: Good                  3: Requires improvement                  4: Inadequate</p>	<b>Overall</b>	16-19 study programmes
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	3	3
Outcomes for learners	2	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Foundation Learning</b>	<b>3</b>

## Provider details

Derby Skillbuild								
Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16–19							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 154							
	Part-time: N/A							
Principal/CEO	Dianne Brocklehurst							
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2007							
Website address	www.derbyskillbuild.org.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	32	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Part-time	0	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+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	The Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Top Tec (Derby).</li> </ul>							

## Contextual information

Derby Skillbuild is a registered charity and is overseen by a management committee of five people who are responsible for the effective operation of the company. The company employs three full-time and one part-time teaching staff and a general manager.

The training centre is located on a 4.85 hectare site that is leased from the local council in a part of Derby with high levels of social deprivation, crime and unemployment. There are currently 32 learners on the study programme.

## Information about this inspection

<b>Lead inspector</b>	John Dunn
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Two additional inspectors, assisted by the general 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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