

Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Local authority

Inspection dates		25-27 March 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
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:

- Outcomes for apprentices and class-based learners have improved and now they are good.
- The rates of progression between levels of training and into full-time employment are good.
- Learners develop good personal, social and work skills.
- They are very effective at tailoring how they deliver English and mathematics in order to meet the individual learners' needs and work requirements.
- The standard of learners' work is generally good. Tutors have high expectations for all learners and motivate them well.
- The leadership and management are ambitious and have a clear strategic vision and mission to improve the quality of provision and meet local community needs in Bradford.
- The service engages very effectively with employers and the local community to provide relevant training that meets their needs well.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Not enough apprentices complete their training within their planned timescales.
- Not enough teaching and learning are outstanding.
- Target-setting does not consistently challenge a small minority of learners, especially those in health and social care, to strive for high-quality work.
- The trainers and assessors do not yet fully incorporate and use information and learning technology (ILT) to enhance learning in all areas of provision.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of progress made by apprentices so that more achieve within their planned timescales.
- Continue to focus on the development of all delivery staff so that more teaching and training are outstanding.
- Ensure that target-setting for learners, especially those in health and social care consistently supports and challenges them to achieve high-quality work.
- Fully incorporate ILT in all aspects of the learner journey.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Overall, outcomes for learners are good and improving. Outcomes for the majority of apprentices are good, in particular for adult and advanced apprentices. Success rates in health and social care apprenticeships improved significantly last year and are now good. However, the achievement within their planned timescale requires improvement.
- Adult achievement of level 2 qualifications is good. Entry-level provision in preparation for life and work has been excellent for the last three years. Success rates on long qualifications in business administration improved last year and are excellent.
- Results from the revised programme of class-based learning, launched recently to replace weak provision, are good. Provider data show that in the current year success rates for all courses have improved significantly. The pass rates on all programmes remain consistently high.
- Achievement gaps between different groups of learners are narrowing. The achievement rate of learners from minority ethnic groups has improved and is now almost in line with learners of White British heritage. Females, who achieved less well than males, now achieve better and their success rates are closer to males. Although the success rates of the small number of learners with declared learning difficulties and/or disabilities are better than those without, the gap is narrowing.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills. The primary focus of the service offered by Bradford Metropolitan District Council Skills for Work (SfW) is to improve employability skills of unemployed individuals in Bradford. It links very effectively with a range of employers and has a very flexible approach to delivering a variety of programmes to help their staff develop good workplace skills. The service is also very effective in overcoming socio-economic barriers to learning and employment. Tutors develop and improve individual confidence, self-esteem and the motivation of learners who often come onto the programme because they are required to do so. Employers recognise and value the significant improvement in their employees' ability to apply their customer-service skills in the workplace.
- Learners on the work-choice programme achieve good rates of progression into employment. Ten of the 30 learners progressed from the pre-apprenticeship programme onto full apprenticeships. Nearly half of the learners in the current year have progressed to a higher-level qualification.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
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- Most learners experience good teaching, learning and assessment and this is reflected in the increasingly good outcomes. The standard of learners' work is generally good. Tutors have high

expectations for all learners and motivate them well. Improvements in learner attendance and retention are supporting rapid improvement in achievements in accredited learning programmes.

- Tutors use their skills and experience to raise learners' interest and encourage independent learning. Learners are generally confident, develop good skills and enjoy their sessions. There are good examples of learner progression into work and from intermediate to advanced level qualifications. Tutors liaise closely with employers to tailor learning programmes to the needs of apprentices' job roles, experience and interests.
- Tutors plan lessons well and ensure each one meets the needs of the group. Teaching, learning and assessment in health and social care have not improved so rapidly; staff are currently reviewing schemes of work and lesson plans and providing revision sessions to enhance learners' technical knowledge.
- Skills for Work has recently invested in ILT including electronic portfolios for learners' accredited learning. Unemployed learners apply for jobs online. However, ILT is generally underutilised by staff and learners. Learners are now being encouraged to submit digital evidence directly to their e-portfolio. Few learners in health and social care monitor their own learning and progress by accessing their e-portfolio.
- Initial assessment is generally effective and is especially thorough for English and mathematics skills. For English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses, tutors are reviewing initial assessment practice. For a minority of unemployed learners, agencies place them onto inappropriate entry-level vocational courses when they struggle with spoken English, reading and writing skills. Skills for Work offer these learners additional learning support to achieve their qualifications.
- Tutors usually set individual targets based on assessment results that are highly relevant to each learner. For some learners on health and social care programmes, targets set are not always clear and measurable, and lack timescales for achievement. There is insufficient recording of completed targets on visit reports and contact diaries.
- Assessment methods are adequate and meet the requirements of the awarding body. However, the written feedback sometimes lacks detail and does not inform learners how to improve. Trainers do not always correct spelling and grammar of learners on employability programmes. Significant improvements in verification practices have enabled very close monitoring of learner progress to achieve better overall and timely success rates. Feedback from verifiers to assessors is comprehensive and leads to improved performance. Notes of standardisation meetings are not sufficiently detailed.
- Apprentices receive systematic and thorough support to help develop their English and mathematics and as a result, achievement in these skills is good. Tutors provide good levels of stretch and challenge to enable many apprentices to achieve higher levels of English and mathematics skills than is required by their framework. The service has supported work-based assessors very well to develop their own functional skills to build their confidence and competence.
- Good information, advice and guidance are available for most learners. There are good examples of learners progressing into work and moving from entry to intermediate and to advanced level. Learners with significant social and behavioural difficulties are encouraged to raise their aspirations for learning and employment. Well-qualified staff provide good relevant careers advice to learners.
- Staff promote equality and diversity very well through teaching and learning. Learners and tutors are very respectful and supportive of each other and learn in safe learning environments. Tutors are sensitive to all individual needs and in their selection of teaching materials. Learning resources include references to cultural diversity in society. Tutors use an equality and diversity handbook to deepen learners' understanding at induction and throughout learning. An equality and diversity 'key ring' holds a variety of innovative questions to support the learner to think more deeply about the topic.

Foundation English and mathematics and English for speakers of other languages

Good

19+ Learning programmes

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good as demonstrated in the good outcomes for learners. Tutors have high expectations for all learners and motivate them well. Learner attendance and retention are supporting good achievements in English and mathematics skills. Some learners successfully progress to higher levels of study.
- Tutors use their skills and experience well to develop schemes of work and lesson plans that raise learners' interest and encourage independent learning. Learners are generally confident, develop good skills and enjoy their sessions. Skills for Work tailor English and mathematics programmes for apprentices to the needs of their job role, experience, interests and skills. Individual learning plans support learners well and are both easy to follow and understand. Classroom activities encourage the good development of team working, communication and problem-solving skills.
- Learning resources are good. Skills for Work has recently invested in ILT. Learners are encouraged to monitor their own learning and progress in English and mathematics skills through access to their e-portfolio. In most functional skills and ESOL sessions, trainers use ILT and other resources well to support learning.
- Arrangements for initial assessment are good. Learners benefit from thorough initial and diagnostic assessment that informs learner individual learning plans well. Tutors assess learning well during taught sessions with good use of questioning techniques. They offer further challenge to learners regularly, once initial learning has taken place. Feedback to learners is clear and helpful and informs them clearly on what they need to do to improve further. For example, a trainer presented detailed summaries of what learners needed to do to improve in a helpful action plan format.
- The development of students' literacy and numeracy skills is good. The standard of English in the majority of written work is good. On employability programmes, where the quality of completed work from learners is not as high as in other areas, trainers do not always correct spelling and grammatical errors routinely.
- English and mathematics courses support learners to develop their functional skills well and achieve their learning goals. Learners are able to describe how their learning supports their career aims in gaining work or progressing to a higher level in work.
- Learners receive good information, advice and guidance. Careers advice is comprehensive and encourages learners to aspire to progress further or gain employment. For example, learners accessing provision for English and mathematics in a nursery school are encouraged to apply for an advanced childcare course.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is very good. Trainers embed equality and diversity in lessons through discussion and meeting cultural needs of the learner groups. The working relationships between students and staff are excellent. Students' behaviour in and out of lessons is good.

Administration and business management

Good

Apprenticeships

19+ Learning programmes

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, as reflected in the outcomes for learners and the good rates of progress for the vast majority of learners who are ahead of their agreed targets. Staff set high expectations with learners and provide good support and

assessment. Learners are very well motivated and relish the challenges presented by the course. All learners accomplish good technical learning and confidently demonstrate their application of this at work. Many of the apprentices have progressed from employability programmes into permanent jobs.

- Learners are able to speak confidently and knowledgeably about important aspects of their work environment such as data protection, prioritising work and meeting customers' needs. Employers are impressed with the pace of learners' grasp of new technical and personal skills such as confidence in expressing their ideas and communicating with customers.
- Learners are progressing well in functional skills' learning and a significant proportion are taking higher-level qualifications and additional subjects than their frameworks require. The quality of learners' independent work is very good and demonstrates careful research and consideration of topics.
- In some instances staff and learners make good use of textual and internet resources to support their learning. Trainers discuss learners' independent study at frequent one-to-one assessment sessions during which assessors use good questioning techniques to check learners' understanding. Assessors make very effective use of technology to record learners' personal accounts. Learners, however, do not make full use of this technology to record their work and capture evidence for themselves. Trainers' and assessors' use of interactive learning tools, such as smart-boards, mobile and tablet computer applications is not sufficient to enhance learning.
- Trainers manage time very effectively during one-to-one coaching and assessment. This promotes good progress and achievement. Learners develop good communication skills during these sessions. A particular strength is assessors' engagement of employers in many learning sessions. Employers participate willingly in reviewing the progress of their learners, providing feedback for assessment and in agreeing projects. Assessors invest significant time and care in keeping learners fully informed about their progress and work to be completed.
- Initial assessment of learners' starting points by staff is broadly effective. Learners acquire a sound awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in functional skills in particular. Employers participate in negotiating learners' optional units and discussing work-based learning opportunities, for example, training in equality, diversity and technical knowledge.
- Learners take appropriate initial assessments of their functional skills abilities that provide clear indications of their support needs. The vast majority of learners begin work on their functional skills at an early point in their programmes and a small minority receive help from a specialist tutor. Learners benefit from a suitable mixture of one-to-one coaching and practice tests to prepare them for functional skills tests.
- Learners participate in good periodic reviews of their progress and receive very detailed information on their achievements. All learners are encouraged to aspire to higher levels of qualification. Because of this, they are given greater responsibility at work from an early stage. Assessors explain very clearly to learners how component parts of their apprenticeship programme apply to their work so that they make rapid progress.
- Staff promote equality and diversity through regular and interesting discussions that extend learners' understanding. For example, learners engage in research and discussions about mental health matters and national awareness days. However, assessors do not always make these subjects sufficiently relevant to the learners' personal and work contexts.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers within SfW are highly ambitious for the service and have a clear vision for the future. The strategic and action plans are detailed and they articulate the overall aim of the council to increase employment opportunities and promote the economic well-being for residents well. The service contributes significantly to council and local priorities. Its role in delivering provision to adults and young people with significant barriers to learning and/or employment is highly valued by leaders within the council and other stakeholders.

- Since the last inspection, SfW has reviewed and restructured the service significantly. The impact of the changes has been positive and led to a more targeted service that is better equipped to meet the needs of employers and learners. The process of managing changes to the previous structure has been successful.
- It continually monitors whether the service it provides matches the needs of employers and clients. As part of a well-defined marketing strategy, the service actively seeks to forge productive relationships with a range of employers. Employer engagement is therefore good. Employers are highly positive about the outcomes and impact of the work of SfW in meeting their needs.
- Performance management arrangements are good and deliver at all levels. Managers monitor staff performance against overall council objectives, service priorities and targets well. They use data effectively to monitor and track performance against targets. Staff appraisals include key objectives and personal targets that link well to the overall objectives of the service.
- Arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are robust and include a moderation process that involves other providers. Observation reports are evaluative and cover all aspects of the 'learner journey'. Reports include action plans to ensure teaching practice improves but also to ensure tutors have regular opportunities to share good practice.
- Managers are highly committed to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and as part of a 'Journey to Outstanding' strategy; they plan activities to promote excellence in teaching and learning. Managers also take decisive action to deal with underperformance by staff and link the outcomes of staff observations to performance management.
- The service actively promotes the personal and professional development of staff. As part of a council-wide strategy, all staff are being supported to achieve, if necessary, functional skills qualifications at intermediate level. This ensures that teaching staff and assessors are qualified to support learners with the development of their English and mathematics skills. Effective planning for other aspects of staff development and training matches well with the priority needs of the service. Staff participation in formal and informal training activities is good.
- The self-assessment process is thorough and generally accurate. It is a key part of the quality assurance and quality improvement process. It incorporates feedback from employers, learners and includes reliable data. It accurately identifies areas for development and forms the basis of a detailed quality improvement plan. The improvement actions result in improved attendance and retention rates, a more rigorous internal verification process and improving rates of achievement within health and social care.
- Curriculum management is good. Managers regularly review the quality and content of programmes and incorporate feedback from learners and employers. However, the learner evaluation surveys do not focus enough on what learners feel the service can do to improve. Planning for programmes also takes good account of future trends for employment and labour market needs. Local data are scrutinised well to ensure that SfW continually provides a service that is responsive to local priorities.
- Partnership working is a key strength of the service. It has productive relationships with a range of partners within the council, with employers, with community groups and with other councils. Through representation on a local training providers' consortium, staff also work well with other local training providers to share good practice, strengthen quality improvement practices and develop resources for use across the sector.
- The provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. The service works closely with other partners within the council and with the local police to ensure risks to the safety of learners are minimised.
- Managers and tutors actively promote equality and diversity and the service is inclusive. Staff routinely access different aspects of equality and diversity training and have all achieved or are planning to achieve an equality and diversity intermediate level qualification. Policies and action plans to promote equality are detailed and equality data are scrutinised to identify any gaps in achievement. Resources to promote equality are also good and used well by tutors.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Provider name

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2	N/A	2
Outcomes for learners	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2	N/A	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2	N/A	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2	N/A	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Foundation English and mathematics	2
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	2
Administration	2
Business management	2

Provider details

Type of provider	Local authority
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: N/A
	Part-time: 311
Principal/CEO	Mr David Shepherd
Date of previous inspection	November 2011
Website address	www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc/education_and_skills/training_and_development/skills_for_work

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	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Part-time	N/A	121	N/A	36	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18		19+	
	24	29	1	15	N/A		N/A	
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	53							
Number of employability learners	132							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<div> <div></div> <div>N/A</div> </div>							

Contextual information

Bradford Metropolitan District Council Skills for Work delivers employment and skills training support for adults as well as young people facing the most significant barriers to learning and/or employment. They provide training in the Bradford and immediate surrounding areas. Bradford had a population of 523,100 in 2011. The district has a large and established Asian Pakistani community and a significant number of more recent immigrants from Eastern Europe. The most deprived local authority in West Yorkshire, the population includes a higher proportion of people recorded as economically inactive than for the country as a whole, and an average weekly take-home pay lower than the national average. The proportion of residents with no qualifications is higher than for Yorkshire and Humberside and for England as a whole.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Tim Gardner HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the employment and skills delivery 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 and the current year 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 relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the majority 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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