

Barnardo's

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		14–18 July 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- Success rates for apprentices and progression rates for study programme learners require improvement.
- Not enough teaching, learning and assessment are planned or provided well enough to meet all learners' needs.
- Functional skills tuition and learning are too variable across the programme.
- Some key quality processes are not yet having enough impact on improving teaching, learning and assessment.
- Targets for improving the overall quality of provision are not effective in bringing about fast enough progress.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Learners develop good vocational and personal skills, with some gaining promotions at work and going on to further and higher education, or gaining sustained jobs. A significant number overcome many barriers to work and learning to do so.
- Assessors and trainers are good role models, very professional in approach and have a good understanding of the employment context of learners.
- Support for personal issues is good with learners having access to a range of specialist workers and partners for very particular help.
- Information advice and guidance are good with good matching of learners to employers and into good work placements.
- Effective strategic management has enabled the employment training and skills (ETS) wing of Barnardo's to take good actions to change provision to meet learner needs.
- Equality and diversity are managed well and this leads to learners developing a good understanding of some complex social issues.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Develop teaching learning and assessment by: using planning documents; preparation and target-setting better to give structured and challenging teaching sessions, coaching and assessments. Share practice both internally and externally with staff and other learning organisations. Focus the observation of teaching and learning process on assessing the impact of actions in, for example, meeting individual learners' needs.
- Further develop the strategy for delivering English, mathematics and information and communication technology skills by: ensuring sufficient specialist tutors are available and deployed efficiently; continuing to include functional skills in vocational sessions; using specialist observers to give specific advice on development of good practice following observations of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Improve success rates for apprentices and progression rates for study programme learners to good, by: ensuring target setting and monitoring in reviews contribute to better progress; continuing to match learners to the right programme and sourcing more employer placements and planning progression routes more effectively. Improve the use of data and information from observations of learning to understand better how to improve each subject area.
- Improve quality assurance arrangements by: evaluating and revising the observation of teaching and learning process to improve the consistency of good teaching and learning across the country; focusing audit arrangements on the quality of the learners' experience rather than contract compliance; using data, including attendance and punctuality patterns to identify key issues, and take effective and prompt actions to improve them.
- Improve use of target-setting by: looking more closely at past data trends to set targets that are realistic but challenging; ensuring that targets are specific to the individual, team, subject area or centre, and based on reliable information; using action plans and supervision sessions to ensure that staff are held to account for their targets and given effective support and direction to achieve them.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall success rates for apprentices have improved in the last year although still require improvement, being below national averages. Qualifications for apprentices gained within planned timescales have also improved and now match national averages. Success rates for business administration apprentices, the largest number of apprentices, match those of similar learners across the country and require improvement. ▪ Overall success rates and those gained within planned timescales for the small numbers of apprentices on engineering and information and communication technology programmes are low. Overall success rates for retail apprentices are just above national averages, and those gained within planned timescales are good, being well above national averages. ▪ The study programme in Barnardo's is relatively new, operating for just less than a year. Learners' overall progression to positive destinations, such as training, further education or jobs, while getting stronger as the programme goes on, requires improvement. ▪ Across the range of occupational areas, geographical locations and subcontractor provision the progression rates for study programme learners are too variable to give learners an equal chance to go into further learning or jobs. For example, learners in retail do well in the North East with an excellent progression rate. However, learners in hairdressing in the same region have a poor progression rate. 	

- The provider has introduced a more stringent monitoring process that oversees learners' progress individually, on a monthly basis, and checks on issues such as attendance and punctuality. This monitoring is starting to have a positive impact on learners' progress. However, Barnardo's is not monitoring learners' attendance and punctuality rates overall to establish patterns and inform programme, centre or region action planning.
- Learners across the provision have multiple barriers to learning and employment with around two thirds of learners having significant issues in their lives that affect learning. A similar number of learners have low literacy and/or numeracy skills on starting their programmes. These learners demonstrate significant improvement from low and difficult starting points.
- Learners develop good skills they use at work and in their home life. For example, business administration apprentices supervise other apprentices and organise examination information. Construction apprentices apply their skills well in contributing to building clients' homes. Information and communication technology apprentices create menus and publicity materials for print-firm clients.
- Study programme learners on warehousing programmes work well under supervision and contribute well to sorting supplies and goods on the shop floor. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities in the Liverpool centre gain good skills and gain confidence in a range of good quality workplaces such as the football club. However, a small minority of study programme learners go on to work placements with insufficient understanding of appropriate behaviour at work.
- Apprentices develop understanding of functional English and mathematics skills at a rate appropriate for the framework. However, they are not sufficiently encouraged to challenge themselves beyond this level. Only around half of all learners on study programmes gain functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics and so this requires improvement. For learners with disabilities and difficulties, progress in functional skills is particularly low.
- Managers have prioritised improving care for individual learners through individual monitoring and action planning. As a result of this, male apprentices have narrowed the achievement gap to meet their higher performing female counterparts' success rates.
- However, while there are some examples of how the provider is narrowing the gap for learners, managers are not systematically analysing and using their data well enough to identify or remedy gaps consistently.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
---	----------------------

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement which is reflected in the outcomes for learners. Learners are well supported by their tutors, assessors and trainers. Staff encourage learners and praise them for work done well, helping them to achieve and make progress as well as improving their confidence. Learners' behaviour is good. Where appropriate, Barnardo's uses external specialist agencies to support learners and enable them to stay on their programme.
- A high proportion of learners on the study programme have effective work placements, matched to the learner's interests, very effectively preparing them for apprenticeships and the world of work. Learners develop good skills giving them the opportunity to move from a work placement on the study programme to an apprenticeship and permanent employment.
- Employers are very supportive. They provide additional opportunities for learners to help them acquire the skills needed to complete their qualification. They are flexible, recognising where learners have particular barriers to learning. Communication between employers and Barnardo's is frequent and productive.
- Tutors have a good rapport with their learners who enjoy the lessons and find the work interesting. In the better sessions, tutors very effectively engage and motivate learners, improving their vocational and employability skills. They provide good role models for learners.

- Insufficient teaching, learning and assessment are good enough. Planning of individual learning is often ineffective. Where classes contain learners at different levels, tutors often do not plan for the individual learners well enough. In these classes, there is a tendency to use generic lesson plans for the whole class. Tutors give more able learners activities that do not challenge them and they learn little.
- Initial assessment of learners' English and mathematics skills is thorough, and identifies learners' starting points well. However, this information is not used well by tutors to plan learning.
- Progress reviews require improvement. They are often not planned well enough, and targets set for learners do not always stretch and challenge them or are not sufficiently clear or detailed. Employers' involvement in progress reviews is variable with some very closely involved in the process, contributing to decisions taken and some having almost no direct involvement.
- Accommodation is generally good, giving learners a pleasant and inviting environment in which to learn. However, although information and learning technology resources are available in many centres they are often not used imaginatively to enhance lessons.
- Assessment practice is appropriate. Assessments for apprentices are planned to meet employers' and learners' needs. They are completed in a professional manner and judgements are clear and fair. However, not all assessors question learners enough to ensure they understand exactly how much knowledge the learner has acquired.
- Feedback to learners requires improvement. Verbal feedback is good but written feedback does not give the learner sufficient detail on how to improve. In some cases, the learner receives no written feedback.
- Teaching of English and mathematics requires improvement for both apprentices and study programme learners. Staff do not do enough to help learners' improve beyond the level required by the apprenticeship framework. Mathematics and English are not consistently integrated into vocational lessons, and tutors do not correct spelling or grammatical errors sufficiently. In one centre that specialises in working with learners with a learning difficulty or disability, learners have no structured programme for functional skills development.
- Barnardo's provides its learners with good pre-course information, advice and guidance about their course. They are well advised about their choice of work placement. The provider works well with Connexions to provide additional information for learners. In most centres, on-going guidance is effective in helping learners consider what their next steps might be. Staff are well qualified to a high level to give this information, advice and guidance.
- Learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect in centres. Incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. A range of activities takes place to reinforce and extend learners' understanding of other cultures. In one centre, videos are played on a television in the learners' refreshment area to highlight and explain aspects of equality and diversity. In another centre, learners played 'blind-fold' football and wheelchair rugby.
- Barnardo's have been proactive in developing innovative approaches to keeping learners safe. A recently introduced mobile telephone application very effectively highlights possible dangers for young people through a range of scenarios, helping learners to relate these to their own lives. Learners who have downloaded this are very positive about it, one saying that it had helped her to make clearer judgements about decisions that could have put her at risk.

Employability training

16-19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement and this is reflected in the need to improve outcomes for learners. Although the group sessions for a number of learners are good and actively support their development, too many teaching and learning

sessions are not good enough. Learners enjoy their lessons; however, too many learners fail to achieve their learning goals or to progress.

- Tutors have a good understanding of the complex barriers their learners face. They provide a particularly warm and supportive approach that motivates and encourages learners to participate. As a result, learners are comfortable in lessons and have a more positive attitude to their learning. Tutors are good role models and instil a good work ethic in learners.
- Most learners benefit from carefully selected work placements. They receive good training from their employers. Learners grow significantly in confidence in their placements and gain a wide variety of vocational skills, for example, carpentry learners can hang doors, fit skirting boards and make corners in brickwork.
- In the successful lessons, tutors often use an interesting variety of activities that promote learners' involvement. They use a good range of techniques to assess and develop learning such as skilful questioning, practical activities and group discussions. Learners work purposefully in these lessons and are often encouraged to work independently.
- An insufficient number of lessons are of a good or better standard. In nearly all of the lessons, learning is not planned sufficiently to meet individual learners' needs and does not make enough productive use of their time. The Liverpool centre in particular, is less successful and fails to challenge fully all learners to reach their full potential. The standard of work in portfolios is satisfactory and in a few cases, good.
- Staff are enthusiastic and vocational tutors have good occupational knowledge that they successfully use to motivate and engage learners. Learners complete some interesting research activities using computers, for example designing hair and make-up in 1950's style to present at the local 'living' museum. Learners use their skills to support local communities, such as decorating a playgroup outdoor area. Hair and beauty learners visit a care home to provide hairdressing services and manicure and pedicure treatments.
- Resources are mostly good and provide learners with a good quality experience of learning. Classrooms at the Newcastle centre have interactive whiteboards and both tutors and learners have appropriate access to information and learning technology. However, most tutors do not use the technology imaginatively enough to enliven lessons.
- Initial assessment is thorough and comprehensive and is given to all learners to identify their starting points and their interests and aspirations. However, the results of the initial assessment are not used as well as they could be to plan the learning programme and inform individual targets.
- Most learners receive detailed constructive feedback verbally. They know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Feedback on written work is less effective and does not provide enough information for learners so that they have a record to which they can refer at a later date. Tutors do not routinely correct spelling or grammatical errors.
- Many individual learning plans are insufficiently detailed to help learners improve quickly. Learners do not have clear, measurable targets for their learning goals and to measure progress over time. Employers' input into the learner reviews is variable and therefore not all learners receive clear feedback on the impact of their training on their work.
- Functional skills development requires improvement. Tutors do not sufficiently plan to meet learners' different learning needs in either mathematics or English to ensure that they all make sufficient progress for the time they have been on the programme. While some vocational tutors integrate functional skills into mainstream sessions well, this is not done consistently across all vocational areas. In the Liverpool centre particularly, functional skills provision is insufficiently developed.
- Learners receive good information, advice and guidance. Learners improve their understanding of the world of work through the good work placements and are more aware of the options available to them to progress. Learners receive high levels of individual pastoral support that helps them to succeed. Guidance and support for personal and practical needs are good and

include such as behavioural and emotional issues, improving group relationships and travel arrangements.

- Staff promote equality and diversity very well. Learners treat each other, their tutors and employers with respect and courtesy. Learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity. In the Bradford centre, the sports learners participate in activities such as 'blindfold' football and wheelchair rugby. Learners feel safe and have a good understanding of how to work safely.

Administration

Requires improvement

Apprenticeships

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement and this is reflected in outcomes for learners which require improvement.
- Assessors are well qualified and experienced and provide effective pastoral support for learners that helps them to develop their confidence in the workplace. Learners receive a high level of support from their employers. For example, one learner is responsible for managing an online shop and for orders being despatched to meet customers' needs. Another learner working with a construction training provider has been given additional responsibility and has learnt to invigilate national tests for learners on apprenticeship programmes.
- Learners are encouraged to work independently and assessors make appropriate use of paper-based resources to support learners' development. Assessors provide effective individual coaching in the workplace and this helps learners to develop further in their job role. Assessors use their good levels of experience and skills to provide effective individual help and support for learners.
- In the better sessions, tutors make good use of video clips and this helps learners to improve their telephone skills. However, in the less successful sessions, trainers place insufficient focus on assessment of learning. Learners' individual needs are not met sufficiently and more advanced learners find sessions too easy.
- Assessors provide good verbal feedback that supports learners to develop. However, written feedback lacks sufficient detail for learners to improve their performance. Learners submit evidence between visits for assessment which ensures that learning is continuing to take place. However, assessors do not always question learners in sufficient depth about their written or other work to determine the level of knowledge and understanding the learner has gained.
- Initial assessment is thorough and effectively identifies strengths and areas to improve. However, it is not used effectively to plan individual learning for all learners. Targets are set and recorded on the learner's individual learning plan. However they are too vague and do not sufficiently help learners to learn or achieve more quickly. Assessors place insufficient focus on setting short- and long-term targets at assessment and review visits and learners are not always clear about the progress they are making. They do not always include learners' personal and work-related skills development.
- Most learners work towards the completion of English, mathematics and information and communication technology qualifications relevant to the level of their framework. Learners who require additional support receive help from a specialist tutor and are directed to learning resources that effectively support their development. Staff accurately identify and correct spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in learners' written work. However, they do not encourage learners to improve their English and mathematics skills beyond the level required for their apprenticeship.
- Assessors provide learners with good information and guidance at induction, and during progress reviews, to enable them to make informed choices about further study and career progression. Learners value the support provided which motivates them to achieve and progress to advanced apprenticeships and to take on additional responsibilities at work.

- Learners have a good awareness of equality and diversity and specific topics are included in discussions at learner reviews. However, assessors do not always take opportunities to extend learners' knowledge of cultural differences in the context of their learning to provide them with a better understanding of the wider world. Learners understand who to approach if they need to discuss safeguarding concerns.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The directors and managers of Barnardo's have an ambitious vision for the development of the organisation, have set a clear strategic direction and shared it with staff. Internal communications are good.
- Directors have recognised the need for improvement identified at the last inspection and have produced particularly good strategic and business plans to meet that need. The current three-year business and strategic plan has resulted in radical changes to the management structure. Directors have appointed a new management team within the last year. There is now a culture of high expectations of management and staff, and some good operational planning to improve the quality of the provision.
- Managers monitor the performance of staff thoroughly through monthly one-to-one reviews and supervisions. Staff benefit from an established staff appraisal system that makes a significant contribution to their professional development. There is, however, insufficient focus on individual contributions to the improvement of teaching, learning and assessment during the appraisal process.
- The new management team has recently revised and improved the arrangements for managing and assuring the quality of provision. Until recently, quality assurance arrangements were fragmented and inconsistent. Staff now benefit from a planned calendar of quality assurance activities. This is supported by a well-designed and helpful set of procedures and documentation for assuring the quality of most of the organisation's learning and assessment activities.
- Staff apply the new arrangements consistently across the provision. Early indications are that the new quality assurance systems are already bringing about improvements in the quality of provision. However, systems are not yet fully established and have not had sufficient impact on consistently improving teaching, learning and assessment.
- Self-assessment is accurate and leading to improvements. The process is inclusive and makes good use of comments from learners, staff, employers and other partners. Overall judgements are accurate and the report has identified many of the strengths and areas for improvement identified by inspectors. However, the use of data across the organisation is underdeveloped, particularly the analysis and use of data to support judgements about learners' achievements.
- Managers make effective use of feedback from learners, employers and staff to make improvements to the provision. Arrangements for collecting and using feedback have improved since the last inspection through well-designed and timely learner questionnaires, staff surveys following major changes to the organisation and the introduction of telephone surveys to improve the response rate of employers. Staff make good use of learners' and employers' comments as supporting evidence for self-assessment judgements and to improve provision.
- Target setting across the provider is weak. Organisational targets are usually too general and not sufficiently well thought out. For example, a blanket target of 55% success rate is set for subcontractors. Many have already exceeded this and so the target is irrelevant and counter-productive.
- The new management team is bringing about significant improvements in the way that Barnardo's engages with employers. New managers have established a national strategy for employer engagement; a pilot project has already successfully engaged with a major national company and produced 12 apprenticeship opportunities.
- Learners benefit from increased numbers of better work placements and job opportunities arising from better engagement of employers. Regional managers are sharing good practice

more effectively and successful pilot initiatives are creating model arrangements to be shared across the regions. Further development is needed to establish fully the initiative.

- Arrangements for observing teaching and learning do not have enough impact on consistently raising the overall quality of teaching and learning. Observers rely too much on a detailed and cumbersome checklist and focus on processes and tutors' performance rather than learners and learning. Managers have recognised this and are currently reviewing arrangements.
- Barnardo's management of equality and diversity is good. Learners are protected successfully from bullying and harassment and they feel safe in the training centre and on work placements. A small, lively and enthusiastic group of staff coordinate activities to promote equality and diversity. Group meetings are productive and well attended and lead to good actions to develop initiatives across provision.
- Learners have a good awareness and understanding of equality and diversity. They respect others' views and value differences. Staff development on equality and diversity is good and staff have a good understanding of associated principles, practice and issues.
- Barnardo's meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed and updated. Staff development on safeguarding is good and staff and learners have a good understanding and awareness of safeguarding.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Barnardo's									
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	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A
Outcomes for learners	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A

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

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	641							
Principal/CEO	Mr Tim Lacey							
Date of previous inspection	July 2012							
Website address	www.barnardos.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+
	196	121	39	29	1	4	13	59
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	73	100	11	32	N/A	N/A		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Northumbria Youth Action ■ Resources NE ■ North Tyneside Council ■ Maze8 ■ Essex Training Centre 							

Contextual information

Barnardo's is the largest children's charity in the United Kingdom. It has provided government funded education and training since 1983 with Palmersville Training Centre in Newcastle acting as the main training site. It is a company limited by guarantee providing apprenticeship and study programme training around the country. Recently, the training wing of the company, known internally as Employment, Training and Skills, has formed a more distinct training division, still under the management of Barnardo's but with a more distinct focus on training and development. New managers have been appointed in the last year to manage the provision. The company's headquarters is in Essex but the bulk of the learners work from three main sites in Newcastle, Bradford and Liverpool. A small satellite site recently opened in London. Learners are drawn from a wide area, as suggested by the location of the centres. The local populations are diverse, reflecting the nature of a national provider.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

June Cramman HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the head of quality and compliance 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 relevant 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 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



Employer View is a new website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too.

To find out more go to www.employerview.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 enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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 2014

