

# In Touch Care Ltd

## Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		10-14 November 2014
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
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:

- not enough learners achieve their qualifications, especially by the date planned for completion
- not enough teaching and learning is good or outstanding
- teaching is not sufficiently challenging for all learners
- results of initial assessment are not used well to plan training or learners' individual learning needs
- performance targets, both for learners and staff, are not sufficiently specific to help them make good progress
- staff do not use data to monitor and review learner progress effectively
- promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity in teaching and learning and at reviews is not yet good.

### This provider has the following strengths:

- collaborative working on programmes that meet local and national needs is outstanding
- current learners make at least the progress expected of them and many make good progress
- staff are well qualified and experienced and In Touch Care Ltd (ITC) works well with good and supportive employers and sub-contractors
- arrangements for the performance management of staff are much improved.

## Full report

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

- Improve the proportion of learners that successfully achieve their qualifications, particularly within agreed timescales, through systematic collection and analysis of data to identify those at risk of not achieving and to drive learner progress.
- Improve the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and learning through continuing to develop the lesson observation system and the sharing of resources and good practice, particularly with sub-contractors.
- Ensure that outcomes from initial assessment quickly inform individual learning plans so that teachers and assessors can plan learning that meets the needs of learners, particularly their English and mathematics needs, and provides learners with more timely information, advice and guidance.
- Improve quality assurance processes to ensure that all performance targets for staff and learners are individual, clear and challenging and are reviewed systematically and that analysis informs improvement strategies.
- Improve the analysis of equality and diversity data to monitor performance and progress, and improve the promotion of learners' understanding of diversity and the experiences they may encounter within their personal lives and work settings.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Requires improvement
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- In Touch Care Limited (ITC) have 588 learners. Two thirds are intermediate, advanced and higher level apprentices and aged over 19 years. Learners undertake apprenticeships in dental nursing, child development and well-being, and health and social care. Over half of all learners are health and social care apprentices. Small numbers of apprentices are in customer service, business administration and the certificate in supporting teaching and learning in schools. A third of learners are based in the workplace or receive classroom-based training in a range of qualifications at intermediate, advanced and higher level in health and social care, child development and well-being, functional skills, and education and training. A small number of these learners are on the Innovation Code programmes in health and social care. The areas inspected represent two thirds of the provider's offer.
- Outcomes for learners require improvement. The proportion of successful apprentices declined in 2012/13 to below the national average. The proportion of successful apprentices who completed within the planned period for 2012/13 is below the national average and has been for the previous two years. The number of learners on workplace learning programmes fell significantly in 2012/13. The proportion of these learners who successfully completed their qualifications and who were successful within the agreed timescales remains very low. Classroom-based learning success rates declined in 2012/13.
- The 2013/14 data, provided by ITC, indicates success rates for apprentices have improved to near the national average and success rates for apprentices completing within agreed timescales have improved significantly from a low base. For learners following programmes in the workplace the success rate, and the success rate within agreed timescales, improved significantly from a low base. Success rates for classroom-based learners have declined in 2013/14.
- Current learners are making the progress that is expected and some are making good progress. They enjoy their learning, are motivated to achieve and respond well to teaching and learning. Staff are enthusiastic, generally well qualified and have a wide range of relevant vocational

knowledge and experience that they use well to develop learners' skills and understanding. Learners are generally well supported in the classroom and in the workplace by ITC and employers' staff.

- Learners develop a sound theoretical understanding which they are able to apply in the workplace. For example, health and social care and dental nursing apprentices are in positions of considerable trust and sensitivity in which they demonstrate improved communications skills and increased levels of confidence and are progressing into positions of authority. Dental nursing apprentices are highly valued by their employers, and learners on teacher training programmes are gaining valuable experience teaching in a number of settings and at various levels.
- Learners generally produce work to the standard expected. However, the work produced by teacher training learners and dental nurses is of a high standard. English and mathematical skills are not always developed effectively. Learners generally make good use of the progression opportunities that are available to them and progress to higher levels of study or undertake specialist programmes that enhance their employability.
- Managers have not been rigorous in using data to monitor the performance of different groups and are not always aware of significant differences between them. However, this is recognised in the self-assessment report and analysis of performance data is now the responsibility of a senior manager. It is too soon to measure the impact of this initiative.

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

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. This reflects outcomes for learners that also require improvement. The majority of current learners develop good occupational skills, a sound acquisition of knowledge and are progressing well towards their qualifications.
- Assessment practices are variable. The majority of teacher and assessor feedback challenges learners to improve their practice. They identify effectively how work can be expanded and improved. However, the over-reliance on workbooks in health and social care settings does not always allow learners to link theory and practice to develop their understanding.
- Newly introduced initial assessment processes are effective in identifying the English and mathematic skills, personal characteristics and learning styles at the start of learners' programmes. However, the results of initial assessment are not used systematically to inform individual learning plans and to plan learning.
- The majority of classroom-based learning is well-paced, lively and engaging. In the better sessions teachers capture learners' interest and instigate discussion through the use of well-planned resources and varied use of technology. For example, a topic on equality and diversity established learners' existing knowledge through a web-based test using voting buttons. ITC has developed a range of highly impressive technology resources. However, inspectors did not observe these being used consistently in the classroom or employer settings.
- In a minority of sessions teachers do not share key learning aims with their learners. They provide too few opportunities where learners can reflect and consolidate their learning before moving on to the next task. Teachers generally use questioning well to challenge and ascertain learners' understanding but this approach is not consistent across all observed sessions.
- Information, advice and guidance require improvement. Marketing material provides learners with clear information on programme content and resulting qualifications. Although assessors are highly supportive during induction, the process is overly focused on the completion of documentation with learners taking a passive role rather than engaging in rich discussions on how best to progress their learning and career aspirations. Guidance to learners is overly based on the completion of awarding body qualification aims, with limited inclusion of individual development goals.

- Equality and diversity requires improvement. Teachers provide learners with a respectful environment that they can trust while voicing their perceptions, exploring themes or declaring uncertainty or lack of understanding. The mandatory inclusion of equality practices are part of the awards that learners are completing and generally these are covered adequately. Learners have a good understanding of respect and individual rights. However, their understanding of diversity and the experiences they may encounter within their workplace is less expansive.
- Curriculum planning initiatives and the introduction of a specialist functional skills team have made a positive difference to learners' experience. Committed and well-qualified staff have an expectation that learners will work to their full potential and they provide learners with good support. However, these are newly introduced and practice is variable and not all learners receive high quality learning.
- ITC has recently changed to a new electronic portfolio which is improving the monitoring of learner contact, achievements and progress. Written work in the teaching and lecturing programme is good and in health and social care and early years; work effectively matches the qualification requirement.
- Individual coaching from English and mathematics specialists for those learners identified as benefiting from additional support is effective and valued by learners. Although assessors support the development of these skills through the completion of work booklets, their importance within learners' work roles are not yet fully promoted. The recently recruited team of functional skills teachers are developing a more occupational-based approach to English and mathematics. However, the impact of this is not yet evident.
- ITC works with committed employers who provide good support while promoting highly professional working environments. Assessors and employers work collaboratively in developing learners' skills with many employers ensuring learners' work roles match their development and qualification needs. In early years, advanced apprentices are effectively mentored while undertaking key worker responsibilities. The past variability in scheduled contact with assessors has improved. The majority of learners receive good, frequent and flexible assessor contact.

## Nursing and dental health

### Apprenticeships 19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement and are reflected in the outcomes for learners which also require improvement. The overall success rates and success rates for apprentices completing within agreed timescales in 2012/13 are low.
- Current apprentices make good progress, acquire a strong work ethic and develop high levels of professional practice as a result of their job roles and studies. They are confident with good levels of communication, technical and occupational skills that are used effectively when working with patients.
- Assessment practice is generally good and apprentices demonstrate the ability to reflect on the quality of their work in order to improve. Assessors make good use of recording and filming technology to capture apprentices' professional and technical practice. They use assessment effectively to facilitate deeper analytical discussions to identify gaps in knowledge or understanding.
- Initial assessment is effective in identifying individual skill levels, prior learning and qualifications. However, initial assessment is not always used effectively to plan additional English and mathematics support. As a result, apprentices are not always able to achieve their functional skills by the agreed target date. They are not routinely provided with detailed feedback to help them understand how to improve their English and mathematics. As a result,

apprentices are not always able to improve their existing levels of English or mathematics during their apprenticeship.

- Advice and guidance are good and help current apprentices to make consistently good progress towards completion of their studies. However, induction does not provide sufficient information on how additional learning support can be provided to aid individual progress at a sufficiently early stage in the programme.
- The vast majority of apprentices progress from their advanced apprenticeship on to the Level 3 certificate in decontamination, which provides a good progression route into specialist dental care practice. This specialist qualification builds on apprentices' professional and technical understanding and adds value to their employers' dental practice.
- Apprentices are extremely well supported by experienced well-qualified occupationally competent trained assessors. They provide good one-to-one personalised coaching and technical advice that helps to develop apprentices' higher level technical skills.
- Apprentices make good use of the latest dental technology during their work and studies to develop their professional practice. For example, they use autoclave dental technology to check and test the safety and hygiene of dental equipment. This allows them to demonstrate good health and safety procedures in the workplace. As a result, apprentices work is of a very high standard.
- Apprentices make good progress in completing work against clearly defined targets set at progress reviews. They receive detailed verbal and written feedback to help them reflect which allows them to improve their work and skills effectively. Individual learning plans are used well to capture progress and identify new targets that are agreed with the apprentice and employer.
- Apprentices adopt effective safe working practice in their dental practice environment. However, the promotion of equality and diversity does not sufficiently challenge apprentices to extend their knowledge and understanding and to consider aspects of individual cultures.

## Health and social care

### Apprenticeships 19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement as reflected in both the low overall success rates and success rates within agreed timescales in 2012/13 for both apprentices and workplace learners.
- Current learners make good progress. Progression from intermediate to advanced programmes of study is good and many learners gain additional responsibility in the workplace including promotion to a senior care position or infection control champion.
- The most effective classroom and coaching sessions use good resources in a wide range of activities to explore topics and extend learner understanding. Good use of professional discussions confirms understanding and the implications for practice. For example, a short practical exercise powerfully illustrated the daily challenges facing people with dementia raising awareness and helping learners to reflect on their practice effectively.
- In less effective sessions, learners do not fully reflect and consolidate learning. In these sessions an over-reliance on workbooks provides a basic understanding with little justification or clear link to practice. Verbal feedback on learner work is detailed. However, written feedback lacks detail and does not aid reflection or help learners to improve.
- Target-setting requires improvement. Targets often lack precision and meaning and do not include personal or career aspirations or link to functional skill needs. Learners are not always clear about their short-term or long-term goals and the skills they need to develop and demonstrate.

- Initial assessment of functional skills is satisfactory. Specialist functional skills support is provided in the workplace and training centre and is adequate in meeting individual needs. The development of English in vocational sessions is generally satisfactory with good emphasis on communication and the use of terminology. However, assessors do not routinely correct spelling and identify grammatical errors when marking work. Mathematics is underdeveloped in vocational sessions and learners are not always clear about the importance of mathematics when working in the sector.
- Learners on all programmes acquire a wide range of additional qualifications to improve their knowledge and skills and to meet the needs of service users and employers. These include qualifications in principles of dementia care and administration of medication.
- Employers are actively involved in monitoring and supporting learners and value their improved self-confidence and development of professional practice. Learners demonstrate a sound understanding of different communication methods and work well to meet complex needs of individuals.
- Health and social care assessors and teachers have good relevant knowledge and experience that they use effectively to engage learners and extend their understanding and awareness. This valuable professional support allows learners to reflect on their own practice in order to improve.
- Personal support for learners is very good. Well planned one-to-one coaching sessions and observations of practice fit flexibly around duty rotas. Learners benefit from additional support sessions in either the workplace or the training centre that enable them to make good progress. Learners particularly value the sensitive understanding and support provided to complete their studies and manage their time more effectively when faced with personal issues.
- Session planning in the subcontracted provision is good, and as a consequence, learners are making very good progress. However, in the larger ITC provision assessors do not always make full use of initial assessment to meet individual needs. For example, challenge for more able learners is insufficient and fails to deepen and broaden understanding, particularly for those aspiring to nursing or to become paramedics.
- Learners have good knowledge and understanding of equality, inclusive practice and person-centred care. However, they are less certain of the meaning and importance of diversity. Learners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how to maintain their own and their service users' safety and well-being in their work setting.

## Teaching and lecturing

### 19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. This is reflected in success rates for learners that have dipped from above national rates in 2011/12 to below national rates in 2012/13. Success rates for learners completing by their target date remain low. However, current learners are making at least the progress that is expected of them and staff are determined to improve the outcomes for learners on the recently introduced qualification in education and training.
- Teachers are well qualified and experienced as well as being passionate about helping learners to improve their skills as teachers or assessors. New members of teaching staff receive good support from colleagues; peer support and mentoring are used particularly well to help inexperienced staff to develop their skills.
- The quality of teaching on the new level 4 certificate in education and training is good. Teachers are highly skilled at galvanizing learners and capturing their imagination about the topics being taught. In-depth discussions between learners and teachers enable learners to raise their



concerns and consider teaching strategies to better manage learning situations with their own students.

- Teachers and managers develop very productive links with a wide range of partner organisations. This ensures that staff deliver teaching to a broad range of students in a variety of settings that enhances their teaching practice and develops their teaching skills well. For example, one learner is teaching children aged 14, is also teaching traineeships to learners aged 16-18, as well as teaching adults aged 19+.
- Learners receive the support expected to help them remain on their programme. Good use is made of initial assessment and support for learners with identified additional learning needs. Learners speak positively about how teachers provide significant individual support when personal concerns threaten to affect their learning experience.
- Learners have adequate access to information learning technology in classrooms and most use these facilities well to research information for assignments and to develop independent learning. A range of impressive learning resources are available in the training centre but they are not fully integrated into the programme.
- Teachers and assessors provide good written and verbal feedback to help learners improve the standard of their work. The majority of learners make the progress that is expected and develop skills appropriate for the level of programme they are taking. Portfolios completed by learners are of a high standard. Assessment practices and the internal quality assurance of assessment activities are particularly good.
- Support for English, mathematics, and information and communication technology is satisfactory. Learner feedback concluded that additional time needed to improve functional skills adds pressure to the learning process. The provider recognises this and, as a result, has increased contact time for learners during evening class. It is too early to judge the impact of this initiative on the development of functional skills. Advice and guidance are appropriate to meet individual needs.
- Learners speak highly of the welcoming training centre environment and feel valued and safe in the centre. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is sufficient to meet their needs. However, not enough attention is given to its inclusion in lesson planning and in its promotion during learning sessions.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

### **Requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement. ITC recognises that it needs to take a number of significant actions to improve its overall quality and performance as identified in its self-assessment report. For example, it identifies performance management as not sufficiently rigorous. Thorough analysis followed by swift and constructive actions led to reorganisation and redeployment of staff and a clearer focus on continuous professional development to improve teaching, learning and assessment. It recognises the need to improve the capture and use of data to improve the evaluation of the effectiveness of the provision and has recently invested in a management information system that is improving the quality of data available for analysis. However, it is too soon to judge the full impact of these initiatives.
- ITC's collaborative working and clear focus on national and local priorities is outstanding. For example, it is the lead employer, working with a group of employers on a Department for Business, Innovation & Skills Trailblazer project, to develop apprenticeship standards within the education and training sector. Partnership working is very strong and is effective in developing innovative programmes, particularly in health and social care, which provide learners nationally with additional qualifications and programmes of study.
- ITC is expanding its provision by engaging with good quality sub-contractors and by employing a number of well-qualified and experienced associates to provide its learners with a high-quality learning experience and more relevant curriculum. For example, the newly introduced level 3

certificate in decontamination is attracting interest from learners and employers in the medical sector.

- Staff have relevant teaching qualifications, are well-qualified and experienced and provide learners with particularly good support. Continuous professional development ensures staff keep up to date both academically and professionally, which helps them to prepare good quality teaching and learning sessions. However, the impact of the staff development activities is not always measured effectively.
- Resources, particularly for e-learning and in the training centre, are excellent. ITC has invested in imaginative 3D videos for tutorials in topics such as how the heart works and how nutrients affect muscles to facilitate learning and enrich lessons. Smell software, adult and baby simulators, a virtual hospital environment as well as a wide range of good quality on-line resources engage learners well. However, their use is inconsistent across programmes.
- The observation of teaching, learning and assessment strategy is suitably structured and covers classroom-based and workplace learning as well as information, advice and guidance. However, the process is not sufficiently refined to identify all key aspects to ensure consistency and to inform staff appraisals.
- The self-assessment process is satisfactory and includes staff and employer feedback. Improvement actions and targets are identified but are often too general and those identified to improve outcomes for learners are not specific. Senior managers have already identified this as an area for further development.
- Learner and employer views are collected systematically through periodic questionnaires and focused discussions. However, the response from employers is not as consistent as the feedback provided by learners and ITC does not sufficiently inform employers or learners of the outcomes of their views.
- Suitable detailed policies and procedures are in place to actively promote equality and diversity. Through a clear focus on development and training staff have a good understanding of equality and diversity and although confident to explore the wider issues, diversity issues are not always discussed sufficiently with learners. Managers do not analyse the performance of different groups of learners sufficiently.
- Arrangements for safeguarding learners are good; the provider meets its statutory safeguarding requirements. All staff are very clear about how to report safeguarding concerns and in the few instances when reports are made, action has been swift and effective. Learners are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues and who to contact should the need arise. Health and safety, particularly safe working practices and the safety of service users, are a high priority and risks are managed well.



## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### In Touch Care Ltd

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	N/A	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A
Outcomes for students	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Nursing and dental health	3
Health and social care	3
Teaching and lecturing	3

<b>Type of provider</b>	Independent learning provider								
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+								
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	1398								
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Jo North								
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	May 2013								
<b>Website address</b>	www.intouchcare.co.uk								
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>									
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>		
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	
	4	48	N/A	132	N/A	15	N/A	4	
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
	12	112	15	215	N/A	25			
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total				
	4		2		6				
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	N/A								
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A								
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A								
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A								
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	N/A								
<b>Funding received from</b>	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)								
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access Skills</li> <li>Vocational Training Services</li> <li>Bowling College</li> </ul>								

## Contextual information

ITC is a privately owned training provider based in Sheffield. It was established in 1994. The executive director is the company's joint owner in partnership with her husband. ITC offers its programmes throughout England; however, the majority of learners come from the Sheffield area. ITC directly employs 37 staff. Since the previous inspection it has developed its sub contracted provision and its register of associates who help deliver its programmes nationally. In Sheffield, the number of pupils attaining five GCSEs at A\* to C is below the national average as is the unemployment rate.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Robert Hamp HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the Executive 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 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>

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