

Whitbread plc

Employer

| Inspection dates | | 30 June–3 July 2015 |
|--|----------------------|------------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | This inspection: | Good-2 |
| | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement-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:

- apprentices develop very good vocational and personal skills and successfully improve their teamwork, English, mathematics and customer service skills
- assessor-managers have high expectations of their apprentices, who develop strong aspirations to progress in their jobs from the good coaching and information, advice and guidance they receive
- senior leaders have a very clear strategic vision for the company and an unwavering belief that the staff they employ are the key to future success
- performance management is robust and senior leaders use data effectively to hold managers to account for the progress apprentices make
- managers have carefully constructed the apprenticeship programme and have worked closely with key strategic partners, such as local enterprise partnerships, to ensure it meets national priorities.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- not all apprentices complete their qualifications as quickly as they should
- the gap in the success rates between men and women is still too wide
- managers do not yet focus sufficiently on learning in either lesson observations or the self-assessment of provision
- action plans following observations of staff are insufficiently detailed to drive rapid improvement and raise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- not all apprentices receive sufficient recorded developmental feedback and action planning to ensure they make good progress and have a clear reference of what they need to do to improve.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that apprentices, especially male apprentices, complete their apprenticeship successfully on or before their planned end date by monitoring their progress rigorously so that they do not fall behind.
- Focus more on the quality of learning in reports on lesson observations and in self-assessment so that improved teaching leads to higher success rates and more rapid progress for apprentices.
- Set clear improvement actions for trainers and assessor-managers that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely.
- Extend the methods that assessor-managers and trainers use to record their comprehensive feedback to apprentices to enable them to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

| | |
|------------------------------|------|
| Outcomes for learners | Good |
|------------------------------|------|

- Whitbread plc (Whitbread) provides apprenticeships in Premier Inn hotels across England at intermediate and advanced levels, preparing learners for careers in hospitality services. Whitbread employs apprentices on permanent contracts; apprenticeships form a significant part of the company's recruitment strategy.
- Outcomes for learners are good. Success rates have improved significantly and are now around the national rate. The number of apprentices is growing to meet increased employment needs as new hotels open. Apprentices learn to deal effectively with the demands of working in busy hotels because managers have high expectations and set challenging targets. A redesigned apprenticeship programme ensures apprentices gain the skills they need to work in at least two departments swiftly. However, due to the demands of their jobs, many advanced-level apprentices do not achieve their qualifications quickly enough.
- Apprentices enjoy their learning and show high levels of commitment to Whitbread; they know that they make a valuable contribution to Premier Inn, and recognise the difference that working for Premier Inn has made to them. The majority begin their apprenticeship with no qualifications, having been unemployed for a long time before working for Whitbread. From this low base most make rapid progress in their skills development. A large majority of Whitbread apprentices develop a real enthusiasm for work and for learning; for example, by taking work home and doing homework as a family they encourage their own children to do better at school.
- All apprentices take additional qualifications that enhance their skills in subjects such as health and safety and food safety. They gain qualifications in English and mathematics, and use information technology well in their learning and at work. Many gain in confidence and rise willingly to the challenge of sharing their positive experience of working in hospitality and catering with school and college students, or work on charitable activities.
- The differences in achievement between apprentices from different ethnic groups have reduced significantly over time. Male apprentices, however, do not achieve as well as female apprentices. By recruiting high numbers of young people who have little, or no, experience of work after leaving school, Whitbread makes a significant difference to the local and national economy, raising aspirations by giving employment and well-structured training that lead to long and rewarding careers.

- Apprentices know about the range of team leader and management positions available within Premier Inn, and talk confidently about what they need to do in order to take steps towards promotion. They know, for example, about higher-level apprenticeships and the company's Shooting Stars programme. Because they become multi-skilled, apprentices get additional responsibilities or promotion at work more quickly than other team members do.
- At work, apprentices are highly professional. They are tolerant and respectful of others, and work well independently and with others so that hotel guests have a 'brilliant experience'.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, evidenced by the improvements made in intermediate apprenticeship skills and outcomes. Staff have very high expectations that apprentices gain promoted roles within the company; consequently a high proportion of apprentices have been promoted to supervisory and management roles. For a minority of advanced level apprentices, their new responsibilities lead to slower progress in their qualification.
- Apprentices are quick to take opportunities presented to them and they develop very good practical skills as a result. Apprentices benefit from well phased off-the-job workshops and they demonstrate competence in the workplace, incorporate their growing knowledge of the business and demonstrate confidence in their functional English and mathematics. For example, all apprentices present a business improvement idea on subjects including environmental challenges to benefit the organisation and ways to improve the customer experience.
- Apprentices gain very good practical hospitality skills; they develop self-confidence and an effective team working ethos; know their rights and responsibilities well and are able to deal with accidents safely and handle customer needs, including complaints, effectively. Workshop training and job coaching are good. A minority of learning and review sessions are too assessor-led; in these sessions, learners are passive and have few opportunities to develop independence which slows their progress.
- Apprentices value the support they get from their peer group, their assessor-managers, leaders and managers; they enjoy the well-structured training and assessment process as well as the challenge to raise their aspirations. Consequently, apprentices feel valued and are motivated; retention rates are high.
- Assessment and training activities including progress reviews are frequent, though apprentices and managers often find monthly meetings difficult to complete especially in busy hotels. In addition, assessor-managers do not link routine job reviews with apprenticeship assessment and progress reviews as well as they might. In one region however, apprentices make good progress because a dynamic and proactive group of managers make training and assessment happen by holding monthly group review days through the year. In another region, apprentices benefit from additional workshops for support and workbook activities.
- Verbal feedback, following observed practical assessment, is comprehensive and puts the apprentice at the heart of the process. For example, in one excellent assessment of housekeeping skills the apprentice was required to explain what they were doing, the standard that was expected and the audit process that would be completed to check the quality throughout the process of making a bed. The assessor then provided detailed feedback on the apprentice's performance against the company checklist. For the most part, assessor-managers and trainers use a limited range of assessment and feedback methods to record the progress that apprentices make.
- Assessment of apprentices' starting points is effective in placing them on the correct training programme. An effective diagnostic assessment identifies learners' English and mathematics levels and skills development needs in order to provide appropriate support. Functional skills

workshops are good; trainers identify specific learning support materials and apprentices value the improvement in their communication skills. However, assessor-managers do not correct spelling and grammatical errors in apprentices' workbooks and other written work routinely. A small minority of apprentices start their functional mathematics late in the programme; where they struggle with mathematics, they do not benefit from timely improvement support resulting in slow progress.

- Very good quality and timely information, advice and guidance support learning effectively. It is particularly good for new starters. A recruitment programme to select, advise and guide potential new starters into the apprenticeship programme through a four-week work placement is very effective in recruiting intermediate-level apprentices who settle into their work and show high levels of competence quickly.
- Apprentices have a clear understanding of diversity and have a reasonable understanding of their responsibilities under equality legislation. Most learners have a good awareness of the help-lines that exist should they wish to report any concerns or seek advice.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Unhappy with the quality of the educational provision, senior leaders took the brave decision to suspend recruitment of apprentices until they had improved quality procedures for all. Through the many improved systems implemented since the last inspection, outcomes for learners have improved significantly and are now broadly in line with national rates.
- Senior leaders have a very clear strategic vision for the company and an unwavering belief that their employees are the key to future success. Managers recognise the significant value apprentices bring to the company. For example, the hotels with the highest performance levels all have a higher number of apprentices than those that perform less well. Leaders have clear expectations that apprentices will progress within the organisation and fulfil the key leadership roles required to run a successful business.
- Leaders have established a comprehensive series of values and behaviours that form the company's code of conduct and underpin all aspects of operations and the service customers receive. Apprentices complete a comprehensive induction programme entitled 'Brilliant Beginnings', which clearly sets out the company's values and beliefs and ensures they have an effective start to their training.
- Leaders monitor the quality of provision assiduously and set challenging targets for apprenticeship achievement that they use to hold managers to account for continuous improvement. Progress monitoring by managers is very effective in identifying any areas of underperformance quickly and putting actions in place to bring about swift improvement.
- The standardisation of marking and the monitoring of assessor judgements are particularly robust and ensure a high level of consistency, ensuring apprentices achieve a high standard of work. However, managers do not ensure that written feedback on marked work is prompt in order to support learners to achieve at an accelerated rate.
- Managers review the quality of teaching, learning and assessment regularly and although they have been effective in bringing about improvements in the quality of training, managers place insufficient emphasis on the amount of learning that happens in taught sessions. They do not carry out observations of functional skills sessions taught by trainers employed by the subcontractor. The use of action plans to drive improvement following an observation is inconsistent and too many targets lack the detail needed to bring about further improvements.
- Staff development is good, supporting both business and personal development and aspirations. Reviews of staff performance are frequent and detailed and progression planning is excellent. Managers ensure that all staff, including apprentices, have access to a wide range of

development opportunities to improve their skills and advance their careers. Trainers meet regularly to review the effectiveness of their delivery and share best practice.

- Managers' self-assessment of the quality of the apprenticeship provision is broadly accurate, appropriately consultative, data rich and focuses well on the needs of the business. However, a small minority of targets are insufficiently precise and do not focus enough on the quality of learning in order to continue to improve success rates.
- Managers and leaders at all levels listen to apprentices' views carefully, and have improved provision by producing highly detailed workbooks and instruction manuals for the completion of electronic portfolios. Satisfaction levels of apprentices are high and retention is significantly above that of other staff.
- Curriculum planning is wide-ranging and includes highly effective pre-employment programmes that lead into apprenticeships. Through close consultation with government, awarding bodies, unions, local enterprise partnerships and other stakeholders, managers have been influential in revising the qualification content to ensure it matches modern hotel industry needs. As a result, the programmes meet apprentices' aspirations and the needs of the industry well at both a local and national level.
- Managers work closely with the subcontractor to support the delivery of English and mathematics as part of the apprenticeship programme. As a result, the majority of apprentices receive good support to develop their English and mathematics skills.
- Leaders and managers promote equality of opportunity and diversity well. By applying detailed policies and procedures, apprentices use their skills effectively when dealing with customers and colleagues. Achievement gaps between different groups of apprentices are closing; the difference in achievement of learners from different ethnic groups is minimal. Leaders and managers need to do further work to ensure that the gaps between male and female learners continue to close and that progression into higher-level job roles is equal.
- Safeguarding of learners is good. Managers apply the requirements of the young worker policy effectively and have highly detailed plans and procedures to ensure all employees are safe. Apprentices receive excellent ongoing support from well-trained mentors and external agencies. Managers monitor the welfare of apprentices carefully. They also monitor the support given to apprentices in the event of major incidents such as the death of a guest. Apprentices are able to articulate key British values such as democracy and tolerance of others' values and faiths and apply these well when dealing with guests. Managers have yet to introduce a comprehensive training programme for staff on the Prevent agenda.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Whitbread plc

| 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 | | | | | | 2 | | |
| Outcomes for learners | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | |

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade |
|---|-------|
| Hospitality and Catering | 2 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-----|----------|-----|---------|-----|-------------------|-----|--|
| Type of provider | Employer | | | | | | | | |
| Age range of learners | 16+ | | | | | | | | |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 19 | | | | | | | | |
| Principal/CEO | Mr Andy Harrison | | | | | | | | |
| Date of previous inspection | 2 March 2012 | | | | | | | | |
| Website address | www.whitbread.com | | | | | | | | |
| 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+ | |
| | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age | Intermediate | | Advanced | | Higher | | | | |
| | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | 19+ | 16-18 | | 19+ | | |
| | 35 | 244 | 2 | 110 | 0 | | 0 | | |
| Number of traineeships | 16-19 | | 19+ | | Total | | | | |
| | N/A | | N/A | | N/A | | | | |
| Number of learners aged 14-16 | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Full-time | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Part-time | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Number of community learners | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Number of employability learners | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Funding received from | Skills Funding Agency (SFA) | | | | | | | | |
| At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative Learning Partners | | | | | | | | |

Contextual information

Whitbread plc is a major hospitality and catering company with operations both in the United Kingdom and overseas. Whitbread brands include Premier Inn, Beefeater, Table Table, Brewers Fayre, Costa and Taybarns. Within their suite of staff development programmes, Whitbread offers intermediate and advanced apprenticeships in hospitality and catering in their Premier Inn hotels, for which they receive direct funding.

Information about this inspection

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Lead inspector | Christopher Jones HMI |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the Head of Education 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:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. 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 and 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 <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/user>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

