

Veolia Environment Development Centre Limited

Employer

Inspection dates

20–23 March 2017

Overall effectiveness		Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	Apprenticeships Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good	
Outcomes for apprentices	Good	
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- The new leadership team has implemented successfully a broad range of improvement actions. Teaching, learning and assessment are good and the proportion of apprentices who complete their qualification within the time planned is now high.
- Leaders and managers are ambitious for their employees to do well and put improving workforce skills at the heart of the organisation.
- Apprentices develop good technical and work-related skills as a result of the good training they receive.
- Highly motivated and enthusiastic apprentices settle quickly into their job roles and become valued team members.
- Apprentices ensure that they pay the closest attention to keeping themselves, their colleagues and members of the public safe. Their attention and adherence to health and safety regulations are exceptionally high.
- Apprentices benefit from good opportunities to extend their knowledge through undertaking a wide range of additional work-related qualifications.
- Apprentices develop high levels of self-confidence and take pride in their work. They develop a strong commitment to sustainable resource management and protecting the environment.
- Assessors and line managers provide good help to apprentices and ensure that they have sufficient time away from their jobs to attend their training. In addition, the very effective personal help provided enables many to remain in learning who would otherwise leave.
- Apprentices develop a good understanding and respect for the diversity of others. They use this knowledge well to provide good customer and client care.
- Most apprentices remain in employment with Veolia on completion of the apprenticeship and benefit from well-planned career opportunities.
- The individual targets for learning that assessors set for apprentices do not focus sharply enough on apprentices developing further their skills and knowledge in English and mathematics.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Veolia Environmental Development Centre Limited (Veolia) provides apprenticeship training to around 190 apprentices. Most apprentices are adult apprentices following programmes at level 2 in business management and in cleaning and environmental support services. The remaining apprentices are working towards apprenticeships in driving heavy goods vehicles, sustainable waste management and engineering.
- Apprenticeship programmes are managed from a national training centre in Wolverhampton, 'The Campus', and are mostly undertaken wholly in the workplace. The one exception to this is engineering apprenticeships, which have a college-based element provided by partner colleges across the country.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of apprentices that develop good skills in English and mathematics by ensuring that assessors set apprentices specific targets for English and mathematics that relate to further skills development, not just meeting the requirements of the qualification.
- Managers need to use the findings from their observation of learning to set assessors developmental targets to improve their practice further.
- Managers need to monitor closely the performance of learners and take action to ensure that male learners, and those aged 16 to 18, achieve their qualification at the same high rate as female learners.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The relatively new Head of Campus, appointed since the previous inspection, has galvanised the work of managers and assessors and brought about significant improvement. The quality of provision is good and the proportion of apprentices who complete their training within the time planned is high. Leaders focus sharply on improving all aspects of learning and make effective use of their good-quality improvement arrangements.
- Communications between managers, subcontractor partners, workplace supervisors and assessors are highly effective. Supervisors understand well the contribution apprentices make to the productivity of their depots and the subsequent reduction in the proportion of days lost to injury or sickness.
- A good range of apprenticeship qualifications is provided and apprentices benefit from clearly defined career opportunities. Managers are aspirational for their staff to succeed and progress within the organisation; most employees are long-serving members of the Veolia workforce. Managers now work closely within their regions to ensure that those apprentices at risk of not completing their apprenticeship, due to the termination of a contract, are found suitable alternative work to enable them to complete their qualifications successfully.
- Leaders' and managers' partnership working benefits apprentices, who have a good understanding of the sustainable waste management industry and their individual roles within it. Managers work closely with a broad range of partners in schools, colleges and universities to promote apprenticeships and career opportunities. Senior leaders are prominent members of the Trailblazer partnership developing qualifications in sustainable waste management.
- Performance management of staff is strong. Managers use the annual appraisal process effectively to set staff clear targets for improving the proportion of apprentices who achieve. Where staff underperform, effective steps are taken to secure improvement. Assessors are well qualified and benefit from a broad range of developmental activities, including completing teaching qualifications and higher-level vocational qualifications.
- Managers monitor closely and well the progress of the small proportion of apprentices who receive their technical training from subcontractor partners. Most apprentices complete their work to a high standard. Managers work effectively with subcontractors to ensure that any concerns apprentices may have are dealt with quickly and resolved effectively.
- Leaders and managers have developed a very strong culture of tolerance and respect for the views and beliefs of others. Managers and assessors ensure that apprentices have a good understanding of how to apply these values to their work, and their communications with customers and the general public.
- The refreshed quality assurance arrangements are well thought through and have the impact leaders intend. Teaching, learning and assessment are now good and self-assessment of performance is accurate and insightful. In their quality improvement plans, managers make very good use of data to monitor and substantiate any improvements

staff and managers make. While managers monitor all aspects of learning, they do not set developmental targets for staff training based on their observations of learning.

The governance of the provider

- The apprenticeship training programme is overseen effectively by the executive committee for Veolia UK. The members of the executive committee place workforce improvement at the centre of corporate decision making and have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the apprenticeship provision. They recognise that previously, progress towards increasing the proportion of apprentices who complete their training in the time planned has been slow. The board has invested significantly in the training and development of training staff, and has been influential in selecting the new Head of Campus to force through the speed of improvement required.
- Members of the executive committee hold leaders and managers to account thoroughly for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and expect apprentices to complete their programme on time and produce work of a high standard. Their monitoring of performance against targets is very effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Apprentices feel safe and know how to report any potential incidences or concerns to their assessors and/or supervisors. Managers ensure that apprentices understand how to keep themselves safe while at work, and recognise the importance of their role in public safety, for example with regard to dealing appropriately with hazardous waste.
- All staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role and training is regularly updated in line with statutory requirements and good practice. Appropriate staff safe recruitment checks are in place and all staff are carefully vetted to ensure their suitability to work in a training environment, in particular with apprentices under the age of 18 and adults who may be vulnerable.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that they have discharged their obligations effectively under the 'Prevent' duty. Managers have made good use of external resources, such as the training that apprentices working in central London have received from the Metropolitan Police, to raise apprentices' understanding of the threats posed from those who support radical and/or extreme views.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Highly qualified assessors use their extensive up-to-date industrial experience very successfully to ensure that apprentices develop good work-related skills and knowledge. For example, apprentice goods vehicle drivers skilfully manoeuvre heavy waste collection vehicles carefully through congested and often narrow streets, ensuring the safety of themselves, their crew and other road users. Apprentices enjoy their learning and value the opportunities provided by their courses to improve their own knowledge and career prospects.
- Assessment of learning is well planned and apprentices receive good help with their studies from assessors and workplace supervisors. Assessors work flexibly to support

apprentices, by planning training and assessment to meet apprentices' varied shift patterns, often attending very early in the day to complete training before the shift begins work. Workplace supervisors value training and encourage apprentices to succeed by providing time at work to complete research tasks and written assignments. The individual and highly personalised help that assessors provide to apprentices ensure that apprentices overcome the barriers to learning that many face.

- Apprentices develop effective mathematical skills and use them routinely and well in the workplace. For example, waste management apprentices calculate safe working loads for lifting equipment and are skilled in correctly loading vehicles because they have learned how to determine accurately the correct weight distribution required.
- Apprentices become attuned to living and working harmoniously within a diverse community. During training sessions, assessors regularly discuss tolerance and respect for others and incorporate these discussions productively when assessing apprentices' spoken and written English skills. Most apprentices use their improved awareness of cultural diversity well to provide good customer and client care.
- Assessors do not set targets for apprentices to develop further their skills in English or mathematics beyond the requirements of the apprenticeship qualification. Most apprentices use their existing skills in English to complete the written tasks and activities demanded of their role.
- Assessors have regular reviews with apprentices to monitor their progress carefully and ensure that they complete their programme in the time planned. However, a small proportion of apprentices make slow progress because assessors, on occasion, do not make clear to apprentices and workplace supervisors what skills apprentices need to practise and develop at work between their training sessions.
- Managers have yet to ensure that apprentices on all programmes benefit from good access to information and communication technology (ICT) and vocationally relevant online materials to help them with their learning. While apprentices in business administration and engineering have good access to ICT and a wide range of online learning materials available to them, apprentices working towards qualifications in street cleaning and sustainable waste management have limited opportunity to extend or enhance their learning in the same manner.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Apprentices benefit from a broad range of enrichment activities that enables them to gain a good understanding of sustainable waste management and the potential careers available to them. For example, apprentices working towards qualifications in water treatment visit energy and waste management centres in order to see in practice the interrelated aspects of waste water treatment within Veolia. Engineering apprentices visit partner organisations that produce the sensing equipment they will use during the installation of hospital heating systems.
- Apprentices produce work of a high standard. They take pride in their work and gain in self-esteem as a result of their studies. Apprentices talk with increased confidence about the skills and knowledge they have acquired and how they contribute effectively to the work of their team. For example, engineering apprentices self-assuredly explained how they are developing their skills in using a lathe for making stepped bars, as well as the

correct selection and use of hand tools when repairing gearboxes in machinery or for general site maintenance tasks.

- Apprentices benefit from completing additional courses and qualifications that enhance their apprenticeship programme and their future career prospects. For example, apprentices working in waste management depots learn how to drive fork lift trucks and operate high-level access platforms.
- Apprentices have a very sound understanding of how to work safely and are empowered to protect themselves and others while at work. A well-established 'yellow card' system is in place should apprentices feel they need to refuse to undertake a job allocated to them because they view it to be unsafe. Apprentices undergo a well-structured induction for each site they work at or visit, and are vigilant in ensuring that visitors wear protective clothing and observe safe site protocols.
- Apprentices understand well the risks posed to them from those who support radical or extreme views. For example, apprentices in business administration talked confidently about signs of extremism and radicalisation, and what actions they should take if a colleague exhibits changed behaviour. Apprentices in waste management and road sweeping have benefited from training from the Metropolitan Police on how to be vigilant when removing and treating waste.
- Information, advice and guidance about the programme are comprehensive. Assessors ensure that the content of each apprenticeship programme matches well to the individual work an apprentice undertakes. While apprentices gain a wide understanding of the business and their potential career progression, assessors often do not highlight the internal promotional opportunities available to them on completion of their programme.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The proportion of apprentices who complete their qualification within the time planned is now good and matches closely with the percentage of apprentices who complete their programme of learning overall. Current apprentices are making the progress expected of them, with a small but significant proportion making good progress towards developing the skills and knowledge they need to become valued members of the Veolia workforce.
- Apprentices across all programmes develop good vocational skills and work to high professional standards. They use their skills and knowledge well to improve further the good levels of customer service that their team provides to customers. For example, one apprentice working in the office of a large depot has instigated successfully a highly effective means of monitoring and tracking the vehicle maintenance requirements of the depot's fleet, thereby improving overall depot productivity.
- Workplace supervisors and managers value highly the training apprentices receive. They speak positively about the improved productivity in their regions together with the reduction in the percentage of working days lost to injuries, accidents and staff sickness.
- Apprentices' attention and adherence to safe working practices are very good. The company ethos of 'think safe, work safe, home safe' is very well established into every aspect of apprentices' induction, training and working day. Apprentices have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and their customers safe while at work.
- Apprentices develop an appropriate level of skills in English and mathematics and pass

their external tests.

- Most apprentices remain in employment on completion of their studies. A good proportion secure promotion to shift team leaders or continue to study at a higher level as a result of their training. Apprentices who choose to remain working with Veolia benefit from a well-planned career pathway.
- Female apprentices have high achievement and perform far better than their male peers. Younger apprentices aged 16 to 23, although an extremely small proportion of apprentices, have low achievement.
- The very small proportion of apprentices who are working towards an engineering apprenticeship have very low achievement. Most leave shortly before completing their qualification as they secure employment elsewhere.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58179
Type of provider	Employer
Age range of apprentices	16+
Approximate number of all apprentices over the previous full contract year	588
CEO	Matt Pitt
Telephone number	07850 984514
Website	www.veolia.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 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	14	15	6	155	-	-		
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of traineeships	-		-		-			
Number of apprentices aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of apprentices for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
Funding received from:	Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Chesterfield College East Berkshire College Walsall College Wakefield College East Kent College Southampton College St Helens College Stockport Engineering Training Association							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the Senior Consultant, Education and Training, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of apprentices and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

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Steve Lambert	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ralph Brompton	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Fitt	Her Majesty's Inspector

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