

# Kettering Borough Council

Local authority

## Inspection dates

20–22 September 2017

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>	16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Requires improvement</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement	

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- The quality of taught lessons experienced by learners is not consistently good enough.
- Too few learners achieve their planned qualification, with a minority not making the progress they should in improving their English and mathematical skills.
- Learners are not able to take part in enough activities to develop their understanding of how to improve their personal health or in additional training programmes to enhance their future employability.
- Teachers do not ensure that all feedback received by learners helps them improve by detailing what activities they have to complete and by when.
- Managers do not monitor performance well enough to raise standards through their use of established quality assurance arrangements and their evaluation of data on qualification achievement compared to targets.
- Leaders and managers have yet to improve the quality of provision sufficiently so that all learners achieve their planned targets.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Learners receive good support and care that help them re-engage with, and effectively address their barriers to learning.
- Where learners remain on the programme, a high proportion move to an apprenticeship, employment or further education.
- Learners are well protected while on the programme and develop a good understanding of how to remain safe in their personal lives.
- Learners' attendance is good and they enjoy their learning programme.
- Learners receive good-quality independent information, advice and guidance, which helps them make informed decisions about their future.
- Learners make good progress in developing their confidence and self-esteem; those participating in work experience acquire and improve their vocational skills well.

## **Full report**

### **Information about the provider**

- Kettering Borough Training is part of Kettering Borough Council and is the responsibility of the head of service for commercial development. The training centre is in the centre of Kettering. It offers a study programme that was the subject of this inspection. In addition, Kettering Borough Training delivers a subcontracted apprenticeship programme that was not part of the inspection.
- Within the area, the achievement of five GCSEs at grade C or above is slightly lower than the national rate. The adult unemployment rate is below the national level, with a significant proportion of employment within the public sector.

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

- Leaders, managers and the governing board should act quickly to significantly increase the pace of improvement in the quality of provision so that all learners achieve their planned short- and long-term targets.
- Managers should make full use of data monitoring and quality assurance to deliver effective performance management.
- Teachers should plan and deliver high-quality sessions that are personalised to meet learners' needs, particularly targeted at improving their English and mathematical skills.
- Teachers should provide consistently detailed feedback to learners so they have a good understanding of what activities they have to complete to improve within an agreed timescale.
- Leaders and managers should introduce a comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities designed to enhance learners' understanding of personal health, as well as additional training programmes to increase learners' employability.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The pace of improvement since the previous inspection has been too slow. The actions taken by managers to address staff performance and delays in recruitment have hindered development of the provision. Until recently, key staff have been absent and cover arrangements were not sufficiently effective.
- Monitoring of qualification achievement by subject area requires improvement so that managers can accurately identify concerns and take swift remedial improvement action. Leaders and managers currently place too much reliance on end-of-year reviews. This evaluation does not include sufficient analysis to inform future curriculum developments.
- Managers make insufficient use of milestone targets to check whether the current performance of learners and staff will deliver the expected results.
- Managers' use of quality improvement arrangements requires improvement so that standards rise more quickly. Evaluation of taught sessions through direct observation is not frequent and regular enough. Leaders and managers have not taken sufficient action to resolve this weakness. Where managers observe teachers, the teachers receive accurate feedback on their areas for improvements and helpful support to improve. Managers recognise that the observation process does not sufficiently consider how effectively learning is taking place.
- Since the previous inspection, managers have improved the initial assessment of learners, and this is now good. This has contributed significantly to managers' sound understanding of learners' prior educational attainment and their often significant barriers to learning. Managers effectively tailor the elements of a study programme for learners who have high needs but have not yet received an appropriate formal evaluation.
- Since the previous inspection, senior managers have successfully restructured the organisation to improve internal, collaborative working. Learners now benefit from closer partnership working with the economic development service of the council. For example, this has increased the variety and range of work-experience placements available to learners. Subsequently, learners have begun careers in business sectors such as the print industry, which has had difficulty in recruiting young people.
- Staff participate in an appropriate range of development opportunities, which helps them to become more successful in their role and gain more responsibility. In addition, regular update training keeps staff well informed about current professional practice. All staff are appropriately qualified and experienced to undertake their work. Managers make sure that staff understand clearly how any changes planned will affect their work with learners.

### The governance of the provider

- A governance board, led by the executive director, provides appropriate examination and challenge of the provision's performance. The effectiveness of leaders' and managers' decision making is suitably scrutinised by members of the board. This is in turn subject to relevant consideration by elected council members and at meetings led by the head of service.
- The board now receives a good range of pertinent reports to aid its work. Until recently,

the board's effectiveness required improvement because the data available on learners' success, for example in achieving English qualifications, was too limited. The board now has a good appreciation of how the provision needs to improve. It has supported managers well in their work. However, it has not previously been demanding enough to ensure that any actions agreed are carried out rapidly at the operational level.

- The board includes a good spread of expertise and experience to support its work. However, it recognises the need to include more external members, other than council staff, to bolster objective scrutiny.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and managers have established a caring and supportive culture that ensures that learners feel safe while learning. Many learners have complex and multiple needs that make them highly vulnerable. Managers very effectively use their good external agency links to support learners during learning and in their personal lives.
- The training centre offers learners an environment where they feel valued and their welfare is paramount. The time learners spend at the centre is often a respite from demanding personal lives, which helps them adopt socially acceptable behaviours. This helps learners to settle into their classwork and rediscover the benefits of learning.
- Leaders and managers have established and implemented effective safeguarding processes. Managers keep appropriately detailed records of incidents and respond quickly to concerns raised by learners and staff.
- Learners have a suitable understanding of British values. They can appropriately apply these to explain how they would respond in situation they may encounter. Learners' demonstrate a good understanding of safe use of internet-based activities. They know how to protect themselves and whom to contact if they feel concerned.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of taught lessons is not of a consistently high enough standard. Teachers are not always effective in planning sessions that help individual learners to achieve their goals. Not all learners understand what teachers expect from them. Teachers do not always challenge those learners that are more able by setting appropriately demanding tasks. Where lesson activity is successful, learners are clear how the set tasks will contribute to their achievement. Teachers capture and sustain learners' interest so they are motivated to learn and know how the tasks set will help their achievement.
- Teachers do not give enough attention to improving learners' English skills in taught lessons. Too often, teachers fail to correct learners' spelling, grammar and verbal skills. This slows learners' development. The quality of work-experience applications completed by learners is not consistently good enough, as they contain spelling errors and the incorrect use of capital letters. A small minority of worksheets used during taught lessons contain poor grammar and punctuation.
- Monitoring of individual learners' skill development in mathematics and English requires improvement. Teachers do not use milestones effectively to help them easily evaluate

learners' attainment and progress in developing individual skills. The tracking of learners' progress to inform lesson planning and target-setting requires improvement.

- Teachers' assessment of learners requires improvement. Feedback on learners' work is not always in sufficient detail to provide them with the guidance needed to improve their work further. Learners too often have only a vague understanding of what actions they must carry out in order to achieve. Targets set for learners focus on long-term goals, such as passing the course, rather than on the steps required to meet this aim.
- Learners receive good individual care to help overcome identified barriers to learning and to keep themselves safe. The training centre has good levels of security and poster campaigns to raise learners' knowledge of staying secure. In one lesson, learners played out a scenario of a missing person who may have been subject to sexual grooming. They successfully compiled a helpful list of tips on how to stay safe when using social media. This activity linked well to reinforce learners' understanding and their use of the handbook they received during their detailed induction. Consequently, learners gained a sound appreciation of how to find and use reporting links within social media to raise concerns about online activity.
- Learners are able to make informed and realistic decisions about their future options. The pre-course entry and ongoing information, advice and guidance they receive are good. Strong partnership arrangements with an external careers service ensure that learners gain from high-quality impartial guidance. Learners appreciate being able to attend additional lessons on vocational pathways delivered by external agencies that help them clarify their career plans.
- Teachers are well qualified and experienced in working with learners who have additional social and learning needs. They manage any challenging behaviour by learners very effectively. Teachers establish and use mutually respectful relationships to resolve quickly conflicts that emerge with or between learners.
- Teachers use a good range of activities with learners to motivate them and help them gain an effective understanding of equality and diversity. Learners are able to apply this learning well to situations in their personal lives and wider contexts.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

- A minority of learners are not making the progress expected in improving their English and mathematical skills. For example, in mathematics, learners do not adequately improve their understanding of how to estimate quantities or how to check the work they have completed. Learners are not prepared well enough for the online assessments.
- Learners' understanding of personal health issues, such as the benefits of good nutrition, requires improvement. Extra-curricular activities to widen their understanding are not extensive enough to support learners' development. Learning activities to promote learners' appreciation of wider ethical issues, such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation, require improvement. By contrast, learners participate in a good range of enrichment activities that effectively extend their understanding of acceptable behaviour, safeguarding and British values.
- Learners' access to additional training programmes and accreditation to increase their employability skills requires improvement. Managers recognise that they have not

introduced courses such as first aid, health and safety and food hygiene rapidly enough.

- Learners' attendance is good and improved since the previous inspection. However, classroom attendance by a small number of learners is too erratic and low.
- Learners' behaviour is good, both in lessons and in communal areas within the training centre. Learners are polite and respectful. They manage their emotions and feelings well in response to a range of social situations. Teachers act as good role models for learners. This allows learners to experience and adopt the values of good citizenship required to live in modern Britain.
- Learners develop confidence and self-esteem well. They receive good support from teachers and managers to help them break down their individual barriers to learning. For example, learners participate in additional training in anger management to help them reduce stress and develop their mental health and well-being.
- Current learners on work-experience placements are making good progress in acquiring and improving their vocational skills. Employers contribute well to the mid-term and overall assessment by highlighting the progress learners have made towards potential employment.

## Outcomes for learners

## Requires improvement

- Learners' overall qualification achievement rates are not high enough and require improvement. In 2015/16, the rates were too low and had declined from the previous year. In-year data supplied by the provider indicates that where learners complete their programme, their achievement rates have improved. Current learners are making expected or better progress.
- The proportion of learners who stay to the end of their programme requires improvement. The rate for learners in the current year is too low. However, the large majority of learners who left early did so due to personal circumstances that were beyond the provider's control.
- Specific groups of learners generally achieve at a similar rate to the main cohort. Managers know their learners well and they monitor the success of different groups of learners effectively. For example, they have sound evidence of how well those learners in care, eligible for free school meals or learning English as an additional language are succeeding.
- Where learners complete their programme, their progression to their planned outcome is high. For example, learners have successfully entered and sustained participation in a good range of destinations, including apprenticeships, employment and further education courses.
- Learners enjoy their learning at the training centre. For many, this is a uniquely positive experience, as they have not attended school or college regularly because of exclusion, ill-health or chaotic personal lifestyles.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	52843
Type of provider	Local authority
Age range of learners	16 to 18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	26
Principal/CEO	Graham Soulsby
Telephone number	01536 535900
Website	<a href="http://www.kettering.gov.uk">www.kettering.gov.uk</a>

## 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	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	–	–	7	–	–	–	–	–
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	–	–	–	–	–	–		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	–		–		–			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	N/A							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	None							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors	None							

## Information about this inspection

The quality manager, as nominee, assisted the inspection team who carried out the inspection at short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report, development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used individual, group and telephone call interviews to gather the views of learners, employers and other stakeholders; these views are reflected within the report. They scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those concerning learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

## Inspection team

Nigel Bragg, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Martin Bennett

Ofsted Inspector

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