

Train Together

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates

23–25 January 2018

Overall effectiveness		Good	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	Adult learning programmes	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good		
Outcomes for learners	Good		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Highly valued staff contributions support the mission, vision and development of the company.
- Staff development is good. It has a clear two-year focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment and supporting the company's strategic direction.
- Employer relationships and links to local communities are strong and bring positive benefits to businesses and learners.
- Staff are well qualified with highly relevant experience and have high expectations of learners.
- Learners receive good advice and guidance that support their next steps and career development well.
- Learners are confident, contribute well to team-working and show good interpersonal skills.
- Adult learners develop good, relevant skills and knowledge as a result of their training.
- A minority of trainer assessors do not use information gathered at the start of programmes to plan learning to meet individual needs.
- A minority of trainer assessors do not support learners to improve their English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills beyond their starting point.
- Planning and monitoring of off-the-job training activity are not robust and a small minority of learners and employers are not clear about when and where it takes place.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Train Together is an independent learning provider supporting employers and individuals across the East and West Midlands to develop skills, knowledge and workplace practice. The majority of adult learners enrol on diploma courses in specialist support for teaching and learning in schools and higher-level teaching assistants' courses.
- Train Together has very recently commenced apprenticeship delivery. The majority of apprentices are on level 2 and level 3 programmes in supporting teaching and learning and business administration. At the time of inspection most apprentices were undertaking induction activities. Apprenticeship provision was not inspected and graded as part of this inspection. This provision will be inspected at a later date.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that trainer assessors plan and monitor off-the-job training and that they share their planning and monitoring with employers and learners.
- Ensure that trainer assessors use the information gathered at the start of learners' programmes to plan learning that meets individual needs and in particular to stretch the most able.
- Ensure that trainer assessors support learners to improve their English, mathematics and ICT skills beyond their starting points in order to develop their employability.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have created a highly inclusive culture that focuses on developing individual talent for the benefit of the business, employers and learners. All staff contribute to developing the vision, mission and values of the company and consequently have a very good understanding of its strategic direction, ambitions and performance.
- Train Together has refocused their training to deliver training for employers using the apprenticeship levy, as well as supporting adults to develop skills to promote their careers using the Advanced Learner Loan. They have very recently started to provide learning and support for apprentices working in four multi-academy trusts, local authority schools and employers in the logistics and facilities management sectors.
- The continued professional development and training for all staff has a high priority, supported by a 24-month professional development programme designed to develop a team of teachers qualified to level 5 in learning and development and coaching and mentoring. Performance management is clear and effective.
- Managers and staff have a clear understanding of the performance of learners on all programmes through monthly learner and risk management meetings. This highlights at-risk learners and ensures that they make the progress expected of them.
- Employer engagement is strong. Leaders and managers are heavily involved in the planning of learning programmes to meet the needs of local schools, academies and trusts. Good links with local communities and businesses provide a suitable range of training programmes for learners.
- Programme management is good. Comprehensive quality assurance processes ensure that observations of teaching, learning and assessment are consistent and provide trainer assessors with appropriate closely monitored improvement actions. Trainer assessors monitor all aspects of on-the-job learning effectively. However, a small minority of employers and learners are not aware of the planning and recording of off-the-job activity.
- The majority of learners receive good support. Effective coaching develops and improves their abilities in English, mathematics and ICT from their starting points. For example, one learner benefited from the opportunity to improve his verbal communication skills and deputised for his team leader in presenting information to an external audience. However, a minority of learners do not improve their English, mathematics or ICT skills beyond their starting points.
- The self-assessment report, the first report produced by Train Together, lacks clear references to evidence to support judgements. However, inspectors agreed with most of the grades proposed in the report. The quality improvement plan did identify some, but not all, of the areas for improvement. For example, it identified the need to improve the self-assessment report by capturing the views of employers, learners and other stakeholders.
- Learners enjoy their learning. They demonstrate respect for each other and make progress in a highly supportive learning environment. They know what to do if they have concerns and feel well supported. The majority have a good appreciation of modern

British values but in a few cases learners' understanding is not so well developed.

The governance of the provider

- Oversight of the provision is effective and undertaken by two senior leaders. They are well qualified and use their extensive expertise to ensure the effectiveness and quality of the provision. They are aware of the need to revise accountability as the provision expands.
- Senior leaders attend all relevant team meetings and therefore receive regular and detailed analysis of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and progress of learners. This enables them to challenge managers effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding processes and procedures meet the current national requirements for keeping learners safe. A suitably trained safeguarding lead is in place. Leaders have clear policies for lone working and employee vetting as well as a 'Prevent' duty risk register and action plan. Leaders adopt appropriate safer recruitment practices.
- Leaders ensure that all staff receive information that familiarises them with their safeguarding responsibilities. All staff have received recent appropriate safeguarding training.
- Health and safety has a high priority. As a result, learners have a good awareness of staying safe when training, using the internet or at their place of work. At the time of the inspection there were no reported safeguarding incidents.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Most training is effective and takes place in the workplace or an appropriate setting. Trainer assessors are well qualified and knowledgeable. They provide learners with effective training and development to ensure that they progress well within their chosen career. As a result, they enjoy their training and grow in confidence.
- Feedback to learners, following professional discussions or practical learning sessions, is good. This supports them to improve and progress. They make good use of an electronic portfolio (e-portfolio) system to support their learning and set targets. Learners in school placements use the targets generated from the e-portfolio as a performance management tool to help them achieve and build key strengths.
- Workplace visits by trainer assessors are frequent and productive. Regular assessment of learning ensures that the great majority make at least the progress expected. Working relationships between trainer assessors and employers are good. Learning is well planned, and learners' next steps are clear to all. This is particularly relevant for higher-level teaching assistants who work with teachers to support young children during lessons at school.
- Learners improve their confidence and skills in communication and teamwork. For example, a customer service learner demonstrated confidence by preparing papers for the

company's board of directors. Most employers offer additional job-specific training, such as safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty and fundamental British values training, which helps learners to become more employable and provides the opportunity to complete additional professional qualifications.

- The information, advice and guidance that learners receive at the start of their programmes are good. Trainer assessors meet with employers and learners to ensure that the programme meets their needs. As a result, learners are on the right course at the right level, and the qualification units chosen match closely the interests of learners and their job roles. Trainer assessors identify relevant career choices throughout the programme.
- Learners use a good range of useful resources that enable them to develop their independent learning skills well. For example, they use an online bulletin board to share learning resources and to develop their knowledge and understanding. Further enhancement of skills takes place through planned enrichment, job rotations, work shadowing and completing external courses.
- In a few cases, trainer assessors do not use the information gathered at the start of the course well enough to plan learning to meet individual needs. As a result, in a few cases, learners do not make the progress that they are capable of, particularly the most able.
- Initial assessment is thorough in identifying those who need to improve their English, mathematics and ICT skills. However, staff do not routinely help learners to improve these key employability skills beyond their starting points.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners are confident, contribute well to team-working and demonstrate good interpersonal skills. They present themselves well and carry out tasks responsibly. For example, they work in busy environments such as managing reception duties and dealing with the public face to face where they demonstrate good communication skills. They show pride in their achievements and many are able to take responsibility for their own learning and development.
- Learners develop good vocational skills and knowledge. For example, learners on teaching assistants' courses work skilfully with teachers and pupils during lessons at school. Employers value their contribution and the way they work in teams.
- Learners receive effective careers advice and guidance that supports them to understand their next steps and further enhance their employability skills and development. For example, an assessor discussed with a learner how to consider options to progress in their career and suggested helpful resources and websites to consider.
- Employers value the technical and employability skills that learners gain during their programme. Learners conduct themselves professionally and work to high standards set by the organisations in which they work. They are punctual and their attendance is very good.
- Most learners have a good understanding of the 'Prevent' duty and are able to discuss risks associated with extremism and terrorism and how to minimise them. They refer to policies and procedures with confidence and work safely. The role of fundamental British values is familiar and they take part in discussions and learning tasks with their trainer

assessors which include these topics. However, in a few cases learners have not developed their understanding sufficiently beyond their induction.

- Learners feel safe and understand their responsibilities for keeping themselves and others safe. For example, one learner demonstrated a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the evacuation procedures for the workplace. Learners know whom to report incidents to if they are concerned.
- Learners' experience in the workplace or setting enables them to broaden and deepen their learning and equips them well for their future career. For example, one learner was able to spend time learning about job roles and work tasks in the wider organisation in which he worked in order to equip him with a better overview and in order to put his role in context. The employer valued the outcome of this and recognised an improvement in some aspects of the way that he carried out his duties, particularly in transactions with internal customers.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Most learners on the 24+ adult learning loans-funded courses achieve their qualifications and the large majority achieve within agreed timescales. Current learners are making good progress.
- Staff provide learners and apprentices with good advice and guidance at the start of their course that helps them to make informed choices about their learning programmes. They support learners well to access Adult Learner Loans to fund their training programmes and provide apprentices with regular and informative careers advice and guidance. Adult learners progress well at their place of work or into self-employment as a result of their training.
- Managers monitor the achievement of groups by gender, ethnicity, disability and age effectively. There are no significant differences in performance for the small numbers of learners that have completed their programmes or for current learners.

Provider details

Unique reference number	1237211
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	61
Principal/CEO	Charles Dall’Omo
Telephone number	0116 235 8000
Website	www.traintogetherltd.co.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	–	–	–	–	–	5	–	2
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 whom the provider receives high-needs funding	N/A							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the chief executive officer, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. Inspectors used individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners 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

Bob Hamp, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Maggie Fobister

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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