

Barnardo's Employment, Training and Skills

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates

16–19 July 2019

Overall effectiveness			Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	Apprenticeships	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good		
Outcomes for learners	Good		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Good

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders have an ambitious strategy for the service that is well aligned to Barnardo's charitable values. They have a carefully considered plan to work with learners who are from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Leaders and managers have strong, supportive partnerships with local authorities, employers and charities that they use to help learners most in need.
- Staff provide extensive and highly effective support to help learners and apprentices to overcome significant barriers to learning.
- Learners and apprentices develop their personal and social skills very well.
- A very high proportion of learners who leave Barnardo's go on to further education, employment or apprenticeships. Almost all apprentices remain in employment on completing their programme.
- Most learners on study programmes benefit from high-quality and relevant external work experience.
- Learners on study programmes develop their vocational skills well through effective teaching and training.
- Too many learners and apprentices make slow progress in improving their English and mathematical skills.
- Too many learners on study programmes fail to attend regularly, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Leaders and managers do not identify precisely the weaknesses in the quality of provision. As a result, they do not set specific actions for improvement.
- Too often, trustees do not receive information that is helpful to them in holding leaders and managers to account for the quality of provision.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Barnardo's Employment, Training and Skills (Barnardo's) is part of a well-established, large children's charity. Most learners who study with Barnardo's face significant barriers to engaging in education, with many not in education, employment or training before they start with Barnardo's. The main training centre is based in North Shields, and two regional training centres are located in Bradford and Halesowen. At the time of the inspection, 116 learners were following 16 to 19 study programmes and there were 77 apprentices. A further 11 learners were on adult learning programmes, which have not been graded due to the low number.
- Unemployment rates in the locations of the training centres are higher than the national average. A large proportion of learners joining Barnardo's have lower than average prior attainment in English and mathematics.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Enable learners and apprentices to make swifter progress in developing their English and mathematical skills by ensuring that:
 - trainers take appropriate account of what learners and apprentices can already do when planning their teaching
 - learners have the opportunity to extend and apply these skills in their vocational training.
- Improve attendance, particularly in English and mathematics, by making sure that trainers have high expectations for students that reflect workplace demands.
- Improve the evaluation of the quality of the provision by ensuring that leaders identify accurately its key weaknesses and then set and monitor precise actions to address these weaknesses.
- Ensure that the charity's trustees receive accurate information on the quality of provision so that they can effectively hold leaders and managers to account for the impact of the actions that they take to improve the provision.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers have a clear vision to work with learners from the most disadvantaged communities. Most of the learners and apprentices that they work with have significant barriers to learning. Leaders, managers and staff provide them with excellent support. As a result, learners and apprentices see their life chances improve.
- Leaders and managers use their strong and well-established partnerships to support learners from disadvantaged backgrounds extremely well. They work closely with local authorities and charitable organisations, such as homeless charities, drug and alcohol misuse support services and food banks, to enable learners and apprentices to overcome a range of difficulties with learning.
- Leaders and managers have created a curriculum for apprentices that meets the broader business needs of Barnardo's and the small number of employers that they work with. The adult learning programmes enhance learners' work-related skills well, preparing a large number to move into employment. The study programme curriculum is carefully designed to support learners with challenging circumstances. Learners develop the skills that they need to move successfully into further training, employment or apprenticeships when they leave Barnardo's.
- Leaders manage subcontracted provision effectively. They ensure that rigorous arrangements are in place that allow them to monitor the quality of provision with partners closely. As a result, the quality of provision at subcontractors is good.
- Leaders and managers have not overseen swiftly enough improvements in the proportion of learners who achieve English and mathematics qualifications. They recently introduced a coordinator to support staff teaching English and mathematics. The coordinator has started to encourage a more consistent approach to teaching English and mathematics, such as introducing a peer support network. However, it is too early to see the impact of this work.
- Leaders and managers do not identify weaknesses in the quality of the provision accurately or swiftly enough. Although they have established a clear process of quality monitoring and improvement activities, these are not being applied consistently across all areas of the provider's work. For example, attendance has been problematic for an extended period but does not feature in the self-assessment report. As a result, leaders and managers are not able to demonstrate the impact that they are having in some key areas that need improvement.
- Managers do not ensure that records of teaching, learning and assessment observations have enough focus on the progress that learners make or the activities that they undertake during learning sessions. As result, too few trainers improve their teaching practice following the feedback or action plans that they receive.

The governance of the provider

- Trustees of Barnardo's children's charity have ultimate responsible for the quality of education. They use a designated director in the organisation with devolved power to oversee the day-to-day operation of the education and training provision.

- Trustees do not receive information that allows them to be fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. As a result, they are unable to hold leaders and managers to account sufficiently well for the quality of provision.
- Very recently, trustees have introduced a 'Children and Young People Services Committee' to ensure more oversight of, and accountability for, the employment, training and skills part of the charity. However, it is too early to measure any impact from the new committee structure.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders keep detailed and well-maintained records about safeguarding referrals. They record thoroughly the follow-up actions when learners and apprentices have needed support to ensure that interventions have been successful.
- Local managers carefully evaluate safeguarding concerns and provide appropriate support to ensure that learners are safe. They have very strong links with support partners that they use effectively to ensure that learners and apprentices quickly receive any help that they need.
- The 'Prevent' risk assessment and action plan does not identify the risks of radicalisation and extremism that learners face in their own communities. As a result, too many learners on study programmes do not understand the risks that they might face locally.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Trainers have high aspirations for learners and apprentices. They motivate learners and apprentices to think carefully about their future careers. Staff provide effective careers education that is related to the sectors in which learners and apprentices aspire to work. Lessons are carefully planned to allow time for learners and apprentices to explore a broad range of career and learning opportunities. As a result, learners and apprentices have ambitious plans for their futures and work hard to realise their ambitions.
- Vocational trainers use their extensive industry knowledge to plan and sequence learning effectively. They provide activities that skilfully build on the current knowledge of learners and apprentices. Trainers ensure that learners and apprentices can recognise the links between theory and workplace practice.
- Most trainers carefully check learners' and apprentices' understanding in lessons. They use extended questioning successfully to build learners' knowledge of the topic and address any gaps in understanding. As a result, learners achieve their learning goals and develop their confidence in applying subject-related knowledge and skills.
- Most trainers provide constructive feedback that helps apprentices to improve their work. They ensure that apprentices receive worthwhile off-the-job training that helps to develop their specialist knowledge. Consequently, apprentices make positive contributions to their workplace. For example, apprentices who complete training courses in autism awareness use their newly acquired knowledge to design presentations to support their colleagues in their work with specific groups of clients.
- In too many instances, trainers do not provide constructive feedback on the work that

learners on study programmes produce. Where feedback is provided, trainers do not ensure that learners follow up and revisit their work to make it better. Consequently, learners do not learn from their mistakes, and this impedes improvements in the quality of their work over time.

- Too many trainers do not effectively plan English and mathematics learning to meet the needs of individuals. They do not use their knowledge of what learners can already do when planning and providing learning activities. As a result, learners do not develop their English and mathematical skills at the pace of which they are capable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners and apprentices benefit from excellent pastoral support. Staff carefully develop an in-depth understanding of the personal circumstances of learners and apprentices, and their barriers to learning. They provide effective practical and emotional support that improves the quality of learners' and apprentices' lives. For example, staff support learners to apply for charitable grants to help furnish accommodation and provide effective one-to-one counselling.
- Staff use their excellent links with specialist support agencies to make timely and appropriate referrals. As a result, almost all learners and apprentices develop personal resilience and are better prepared for their future lives.
- Learners and apprentices demonstrate good behaviour and have positive attitudes to their learning. They work enthusiastically in lessons and listen attentively to the instructions of trainers. Learners and apprentices work collaboratively with their peers and, in many cases, make long-standing friends. Over time, they become more willing to speak up in class and share their opinions with their peers.
- Learners and apprentices treat each other and staff with respect. When appropriate, such as at work or in hairdressing and beauty therapy, learners and apprentices wear uniforms and ensure that their personal presentation reflects commercial expectations. They are proud of their achievements and many experience successes in learning for the first time.
- Learners and apprentices develop their personal and social skills well. Many make substantial progress from their low starting points. Staff recognise and celebrate the small successes of learners and apprentices so that they develop their confidence and self-esteem.
- Learners develop their employability skills very well. Trainers identify key work-related skills, such as timekeeping and communication skills, so that learners understand the importance of these when entering work for the first time. For example, those studying customer service qualifications learn how to deal with challenging customers. They learn the art of negotiation and how to deal with customers' complaints.
- Learners on study programmes benefit from enrichment activities and guidance from external speakers. Learners also enjoy taking part in well-planned outdoor activities, such as rafting and five-a-side football. Through such activities, learners develop their social and communication skills. Staff ensure that learners develop their knowledge of broader issues that may affect their lives. Learners develop their awareness of topics such as healthy living and the risks of knife crime. As a result, they know how to protect themselves and understand the difference between right and wrong.

- Learners on study programmes benefit from well-planned and relevant work experience that provides them with a good insight into their chosen career. Staff support learners well during their work placements, through frequent contact and careful review of the skills that learners are developing and applying. For example, learners on childcare courses take part in placements at day care nurseries; learners on customer service programmes work in the charity's donations and retail units.
- Learners benefit from effective initial advice and guidance that helps them to enrol on the right course. Ongoing careers education helps learners to go on to suitable further learning or employment. Specialist careers advisers provide frequent impartial information, advice and guidance for groups of learners and to individuals as required. Learners receive important information on the local labour market so that they are aware of the available opportunities.
- Too many learners do not attend well enough, particularly in English and mathematics. Staff follow up absences promptly and set learners targets for improvement. They involve parents and carers in discussions. However, too few learners improve their attendance as a result of this intervention. Apprentices attend work and their off-the-job training well.
- Too many learners and apprentices do not develop their English and mathematical skills well enough. For apprentices who are not required to complete functional skills qualifications as part of their programme, trainers place insufficient focus on developing their skills further. At progress reviews, apprentices discuss with trainers how they apply their existing skills, rather than how to improve their skills. Too many trainers do not provide enough specific guidance on how learners and apprentices should improve their writing skills.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- A very high proportion of learners go into education or employment when they leave Barnardo's. Leaders track, monitor and review these destinations rigorously. They check that learners remain in education and/or employment over time and record this carefully. Many learners go on to destinations directly influenced by their study at Barnardo's. Almost all completing apprentices remain in employment at the end of their course.
- Most current learners are making expected progress, with a few learners making better than expected progress. A high proportion of learners who complete their programme achieve their qualifications.
- Apprentices make good progress towards achieving their qualifications. The proportion of apprentices who complete within their planned time scales is high, particularly for those who are studying engineering and business administration.
- The proportion of adult learners who achieve their qualifications is high, particularly those who take qualifications that develop their employment-related skills.
- Learners and apprentices produce standards of work in vocational subjects that meet, and in a few cases exceed, industry expectations. Learners and apprentices demonstrate valuable and useful skills that will help them in their future careers.
- Too many learners on study programmes leave their courses before their planned end date, and without completing their qualifications. While most early leavers go into employment or apprenticeships, too few achieve their qualifications before doing so.

- Too many learners make slower than expected progress in developing their English and mathematical skills. As a result, the proportion of learners on study programmes who achieve qualifications in English and mathematics is very low. Most adult learners and apprentices who take qualifications in English and mathematics achieve them.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- At the time of the inspection, Barnardo's had 116 learners on study programmes. Around half of these were with subcontractors studying towards qualifications in motor vehicle- and construction-related subjects. The remaining learners were studying towards qualifications in a range of subjects, including hairdressing, beauty therapy and sport.
- Trainers have high expectations of learners. They support learners well to engage in their learning. Learners work very well in practical sessions. They develop substantial new skills. As a result, almost all current learners are making at least the expected progress, based on their prior achievements, towards achieving their vocational qualifications.
- Learners value the strong personal support they receive from staff. Learners with complex difficulties affecting their learning receive support so that they can engage well with their studies. Many learners come from disadvantaged backgrounds and staff support them well to overcome challenges in their lives. As a result, most learners develop ambitious plans for their futures that they would not have otherwise considered.
- Most learners benefit from high-quality external work placements that enable them to develop their skills and knowledge further. Learners develop well the behaviours required in the workplace. For example, learners on construction courses gain valuable experience on local building projects, observing and supporting experienced industry practitioners.
- Trainers in vocational subjects provide frequent and helpful feedback during lessons. Learners act on the feedback and improve their skills and understanding. For example, learners on a motor vehicle course learned how to strip and clean a braking system. They improved their knowledge of how to clean different areas of the brakes following feedback from their trainer.
- Learners develop good practical skills that they can apply in real-life situations. Trainers use their extensive industry experience to ensure that learners acquire and demonstrate skills that employers require. For example, learners on a level 1 hairdressing course practise their hair-styling skills during a weekly visit to a local care home.
- Learners feel very safe. They know how to raise concerns with trainers should the need arise. Learners complete training in safeguarding at the start of their course. They develop a basic understanding as a result. However, too few trainers improve learners' understanding further. For example, they do not show learners how to keep safe from involvement in local gangs.
- Most trainers do not provide feedback on learners' work that is sufficiently helpful in enabling learners to make improvements. Trainers do not routinely identify common errors in learners' written work or provide learners with constructive suggestions on how they can rectify mistakes. This often impedes improvements in the quality of learners' work.

- Too many trainers do not integrate the development of English and mathematical skills well enough into vocational tasks to support learners to develop their skills quickly. Too many learners do not study English and mathematics qualifications as a core part of their learning from the start of their programme. For example, learners with the largest subcontractor did not start studying these subjects until they were five months into the programme.

Apprenticeships

Good

- At the time of the inspection, Barnardo's had 77 apprentices in learning. Barnardo's offers apprenticeships in a small number of vocational areas, the most popular being engineering and business administration.
- Apprenticeships are managed well. Trainers ensure that programmes fully meet the requirements of apprenticeships. They carefully link on- and off-the-job training, working closely with employers and apprentices to plan all aspects of their apprenticeships. Most apprentices are employed directly by Barnardo's, whose managers are very keen to support apprentices to develop within their departments. Apprentices not employed by Barnardo's are supported very well by their employers, who provide a good range of interesting work that enables apprentices to develop good skills.
- Most apprentices make good progress towards achieving their apprenticeship. Trainers carefully assess apprentices' progress frequently. Apprentices generally enjoy their learning. Most develop very good practical skills that they can apply well at work.
- Apprentices benefit from trainers' extensive industrial experience. Trainers make good use of their knowledge to develop apprentices' awareness of a range of career opportunities. Trainers demonstrate how theory can be applied in practical situations to enable apprentices to be more successful at work.
- Apprentices receive ongoing feedback that helps them develop their practice over time. Trainers frequently test the knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices develop throughout their programme. Trainers use this assessment to shape the additional support and training that apprentices need to be of most value to their employer.
- Trainers set individual learning targets for apprentices that focus too much on the completion of tasks rather than on the skills, knowledge and behaviours that apprentices need to develop to be productive in their job roles. Apprentices rely too heavily on trainers to set them targets to drive their progress, with the result that they do not take sufficient responsibility for their own learning.
- A small minority of apprentices do not apply in the workplace the technical language they have learned on their off-the-job training. As a result, they continue to make errors at work that prevent them from meeting industry standards.

Provider details

Unique reference number	50604
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	575
Principal/CEO	Steve Woolcock
Telephone number	0208 4987632
Website	www.barnardos.org.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)	56	8	43	2	17	1	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	7	8	58	-	4		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	2		-		2			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	North Tyneside Council Northumbria Youth Action Resources (NE) Ltd							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of operations, 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 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

Ken Merry, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Stabler	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jonny Wright	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christine Blowman	Ofsted Inspector
Pat Hornsby	Ofsted Inspector

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