

TNG Ltd

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection..

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Health, public services and care

The inspection did not include TNG Ltd provision in business administration, retail and commercial enterprise, education and training or English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). However, these subject sector areas contributed to the findings in the overall effectiveness and main findings section of this report.

Description of the provider

1. TNG Ltd (TNG) was established in 1983 and has its head office in Enfield. TNG holds contracts across the Northwest of England, the Midlands, London and the Southeast. The organisation has 40 local centres and employs approximately 400 staff. In March 2006 the company merged with InBiz, a national Jobcentre Plus provider. The organisation is a wholly owned subsidiary of Avanta Enterprise Ltd.
2. TNG provides apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeships training, Train to Gain and programme-led apprenticeship programmes in health public services and care, apprenticeships in business administration and customer service, and Entry to Employment (E2E). TNG also has substantial subcontracts for Train to Gain that focus mainly on training for the early years care and elderly care sectors through nine other providers in London and the East Midlands.
3. TNG has 1108 learners on programmes in health, public services and care, 35 on business administration programmes, 25 on retail and commercial enterprise, 35 on E2E programmes, 42 Train to Gain learners on advice and guidance and teaching assistant national vocational qualifications (NVQs), and 10 learners on programmes in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).
4. The company is lead by a chief executive and a managing director. Avanta Enterprise Ltd has overall responsibility for corporate functions such as human relations, quality assurance and finance. TNG has three regional directors responsible for operational management and seven other managers responsible for the day-to-day management of the programmes.
5. TNG works in areas of east London and the midlands where there are high numbers of people from minority ethnic groups.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject area

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: Grade 3
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

6. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievement and standards, the quality of provision and leadership and management are satisfactory. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory and social inclusion is good. Provision in health, public services and care is satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

7. TNG has demonstrated it has sufficient capacity to improve. Since the previous inspection TNG has increased its range of provision to meet employer needs. Achievement is good in the extensive new Train to Gain provision. Overall apprenticeship success rates have continued to improve over the last three years but are still poor. Overall success rates are satisfactory in several of the larger learning centres and current learner progress is much improved. TNG has good partnership working to extend provision through closely monitored subcontractors. Managers have carried out reviews of several areas and actions are now being implemented.
8. The company's annual self-assessment process is satisfactory. Draft findings collected through questionnaires and meetings are circulated for comment. The use of comparative data is poor for apprenticeship programmes. Insufficient use is made of the findings of some quality assurance processes such as observation of teaching and learning. The self-assessment report provides a broadly accurate assessment of the provision but does not sufficiently break down the different aspects offered by TNG. The report uses some data on equality of opportunity but did not identify the strength around participation of minority ethnic groups. Some key strengths identified were judged by inspectors to be no more than normal practice. The report identified most of the key areas for improvement and action had been taken to improve several aspects through continuous improvement planning. Inspectors agreed with the grades given in the report.
9. Although many actions have been taken during 2007, TNG has made slow progress in improving the provision since the previous inspection. A reinspection in May 2004 for retailing, customer service and transportation produced a satisfactory outcome, but this area of learning is no longer provided. Several poorly performing contracts are not being carried forward. TNG has made progress on several of the key weaknesses and areas for improvement. Overall, the steps taken to improve the quality of provision since the previous inspection have been satisfactory.

Key strengths

- Good success rates on Train to Gain
- Very effective use of employers' on-the-job training
- Particularly good communications with staff and partners

Key areas for improvement

- Poor success rates for apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships
- Timely progress of learners
- Amount and use of management information
- Focus on quality improvement

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

10. Achievements and standards are satisfactory as identified in the self-assessment report. Overall success rates for Train to Gain programmes, which represent 70% of the company's learners, are good. Rates improved from 76% in 2005-06 to 91% in 2006-07. Timely success rates are satisfactory, rising from 46% in 2005-06 to 74% in 2006-07.
11. Overall success rates for apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships, which represent approximately 27% of the provision, are poor. Apprenticeship overall success rates in 2005-06 were 28%. Provisional in-year data for 2006-07 indicates some improvement. Advanced apprenticeships success rates were 20% in 2005-06, less than half the national average for that year. Provisional in-year data for 2006-07 indicates a modest improvement. Most apprentices are taking health and social care or childcare NVQs and are based in the midlands area. The centre that shows the greatest improvement is at Milton Keynes where overall rates have improved from 8% in 2004-05 to a provisional 57% in 2006-07.
12. Apprenticeship timely success rates were particularly poor at 8% in 2005-06 compared with a low national average of 33%. Provisional data for 2006-07 indicates a significant improvement to 23%. Advanced apprenticeship timely success rates have improved slightly.
13. Outcomes for E2E, which represents less than 3% of TNG's provision, are low. Progression rates vary over the last three years but are low at 33% in 2006-07. Achievement rates show a small improvement from 43% in 2004-05 to a provisional 49% in 2006-07.
14. All learners are now making at least satisfactory progress. The standard of learners work on all programmes is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

15. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Most tutors plan lessons carefully and provide interesting and varied activities for learners. Tutors in literacy and numeracy lessons with E2E learners are particularly good at holding learners interest and developing their knowledge and understanding of grammar. In other theory lessons tutors do not use enough stimulating learning materials and visual resources. Learners are able to drop in to some centres to gain useful individual help and advice from tutors to complete work for portfolios. Assessors plan training very effectively alongside the NVQ. Assessors and tutors train learners well, either on an individual basis, or in small groups on employers' premises.
16. Provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is satisfactory. On the E2E programme, qualifications are vocationally routed and linked to employment. In health and social care and early years training, many employers offer additional qualifications and short certificated courses adding value to the learners' experience. Learners progress

successfully through level 2, 3 and 4 qualifications. The provision to meet the needs of learners with literacy and numeracy difficulties is satisfactory. Assessors provide additional visits to learners with additional learning needs and carefully explain vocational language and complex processes.

17. Learners receive suitable guidance in the choice of their programme. TNG Ltd provides employers with a good range of information on the programmes it offers. However, a few employers are not fully involved in learners training. Learners clearly understand the benefits of their programme.
18. Initial assessment of learners is satisfactory. TNG's employment briefing to employers' staff and learners is appropriate and a suitable initial assessment of learners' needs is carried out. Learners receive timely feedback and results are used to develop individual learning plans. However, target-setting during subsequent reviews is insufficiently clear or useful. This area for improvement is identified in the self-assessment report and TNG has already started training staff to improve progress reviews.
19. Learners receive effective additional support throughout their training. Work-based assessors make regular and timely visits. Assessors are flexible in visiting learners at times to meet varying shift patterns, and provide learners with contact numbers which can be used outside normal work hours.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

20. Leadership and management are satisfactory. TNG has particularly good communications with staff and partners across a wide geographical area. Managers hold regular, well attended structured meetings nationally and in centres. TNG uses electronic communications well, including email and mobile phones. Video conferencing facilities in the main centres are used well to avoid unnecessary travel. A range of well designed publications and briefings are used internally and externally with staff, employers and partners. The chief executive carries out annual road-shows that effectively share strategic plans with staff. Senior managers rotate meetings around different centres to enable local staff to meet them and raise issues face-to-face. Managers and board members maintain good external links. Avanta, the holding company, has detailed strategic plans in place for 2007-10 that encompasses the work of TNG. The board are active in monitoring performance, clearly leading the strategic direction and financial management of TNG.
21. Managers carry out appraisals making good use of performance data that reflects work with learners such as achievements and results of observations. Staff are well supported in extending their qualifications and experience.
22. Overall TNG has satisfactory resources to support learning with appropriately experienced and qualified staff. TNG's strategy to support literacy, numeracy and language needs is satisfactory. Learners receive support in the workplace or in centres. Specialist resources are used and TNG has appropriately qualified staff.

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23. TNG's use of management information is underdeveloped. Managers have begun to use management information more effectively in the past year, particularly with the recent implementation of an improved system for apprenticeship monitoring. A few managers in centres use management information well. However, staff do not use comparative data at a local level to effectively measure performance of apprenticeships according to *New Measures for Success*, although poor performance for apprenticeships overall was identified in the self-assessment report.
24. The arrangements to provide socially inclusive training are good. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups is good at just over 50%, substantially higher than the rate in the general population across the areas in which TNG works. Recruitment literature is carefully designed to reflect the diversity of the population.
25. Overall employer engagement is satisfactory. An employer engagement team achieves repeat business and an increasing portfolio of courses is helping meet employers' needs.
26. TNG has an effective equal opportunities review group. The company makes awards annually to staff who have shown a strong commitment to equality of opportunity. Data is collected on staff, learners and partners and includes gender and ethnicity but not disability. Learners have a good understanding of equal opportunities with an appropriate induction and discussion during training. However, this is not reinforced sufficiently during reviews. New online learning materials for equality of opportunity have been piloted and 200 staff are currently taking the first module. Most centres have good disabled access, and where they do not, appropriate contingency plans are in place.
27. TNG's quality assurance procedures focus in the main on compliance with insufficient focus on quality improvement. This was identified in the self-assessment report. TNG has recently implemented changes to quality assurance to improve the provision but it is too early to judge their effectiveness. Managers have recently reviewed centres and produced continuous improvement plans. Plans are appropriate but completed actions have not yet been signed off. The company provides opportunities to share good practice but staff do not routinely identify or regularly share this information. Observation of teaching learning and key training processes such as reviews use the same paperwork. Findings are often too descriptive, identifying normal practice as strengths. TNG does not use a summary of outcomes to share with all staff on a regular basis. Recently, however, the manager with responsibility for literacy and numeracy has reviewed the outcomes of his observations and produced a useful summary of key strengths and areas for improvement. Some targets, such as improve attendance, are too general and not quantified. Internal verification and assessment practices had been an area for improvement at the previous inspection and are now satisfactory.

What learners like:

- Support and guidance from assessors – ‘My assessor gives me the confidence to do the qualification’
- Relaxed and friendly atmosphere – ‘No pressure, not like school or college’
- Flexible approach to training and learning – ‘Being able to choose where and when I work’
- Gaining qualifications and hands-on experience – ‘I can prove I know what I’m doing’
- Gaining knowledge, skills and understanding

What learners think could improve:

- Amount of time to complete work
- Pay – ‘It would be good to get paid while on work placements’
- ‘Better explanation of the work needed for each unit at the start of the programme’

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

28. Currently 135 apprentices and 161 advanced apprentices are on programmes in children's care, learning and development. All apprentices are employed. TNG has 51 children's care learning and development programme-led apprentices in the East midlands. Currently 277 learners are on Train to Gain in the East Midlands region and London. TNG has eight subcontractors with 484 learners on Train to Gain, mostly in Leicester and London. Most learners are visited by assessors at least once a month.

Strengths

- Good success rates on Train to Gain
- Very effective use of employers' on-the-job training

Areas for improvement

- Poor success rates on apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships
- Poor target-setting during progress reviews

Achievement and standards

29. Success rates on the Train to Gain programme, which represents 70% of all learners, are good. In 2005-06 the overall success rates were 76% and improved to 91% in 2006-07. Timely success rates are satisfactory, rising from 46% in 2005-06 to 74% in 2006-07.
30. Current learners on Train to Gain are making good progress. The standard of learner's work is satisfactory, with well organised and presented portfolios. Learners fully understand the relevance of their training and are able to demonstrate an understanding of how theory supports practice. They are clear about how they have enhanced their skills while on the programme. For example, learners in childcare have increased confidence in story telling to children and others learn to reflect on and understand their clients' rights.
31. Success rates for apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships programmes are poor. Timely success rates across the organisation are also poor, significantly below the national average, with 18% of advanced apprentices being on programme for over two years. Milton Keynes and Northampton have better success rates, currently above 50% and around the national average for 2005-06. In the London area success rates remain very poor at 33%. However, current apprentices are making at least satisfactory progress towards completing their framework.

Quality of provision

32. Employers' on-the-job training is used very effectively. Most employers offer very good training opportunities in well resourced settings. Most employers and assessors effectively

support learning at work. The range of mandatory training offered by employers, such as first aid, moving and handling, and child protection is effectively incorporated into the planning of training for the apprenticeship. Most employers are actively involved in planning assessments and contribute well to progress reviews.

33. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Assessors have appropriate skills and experience to support learning. Lessons effectively help learners to understand assignments and NVQ requirements. For example, tutors use careful questioning to help learners explore further areas to broaden their awareness of key features of a good play environment. Feedback on written work is satisfactory and helps learners to improve their knowledge and understanding of care principles.
34. Assessment is satisfactory, meets awarding body requirements, is generally well planned and provides clear and concise feedback to learners. TNG has not always been prompt in allocating assessors, but this has recently improved. Assessment takes place at a time and location that meets the needs of the learner, employer and clients.
35. Resources to support learning are broadly satisfactory and available in each centre. The newly appointed product champion is arranging staff training around the use of these materials. Specific childcare and care resources in the workplace effectively support skills development, however, resources available to support theory sessions are less widely used.
36. Work to meet learners' needs and interests is satisfactory. Qualifications are appropriate for the needs of employers and local workforce, meeting the statutory requirements of the sector. Most employers have worked consistently with TNG over time.
37. Support for learners is satisfactory. Assessors effectively support learners through monthly visits, assessment planning, individual sessions and observation. Assessors are accessible between visits by telephone or email. Assessment meets learner and employer needs for example, evenings, early mornings and weekends. Support for literacy, numeracy and language is satisfactory and meets individual learner's needs.
38. Advice and guidance is appropriate and links to satisfactory initial assessment. Initial assessment includes basic skills assessment, a skills scan and a specific vocational knowledge assessment. This had been developed using the technical certificate as a base and provides a sound assessment of knowledge and experience, effectively judging the degree of support each learner requires. On apprenticeship programmes previous qualifications in literacy and numeracy are used appropriately in relation to the level of key skills each learner needs to take.
39. Target-setting during progress reviews is poor. Assessors fail to move learning forward quickly and specifically enough. Targets are too broad and generic with little recognition of individual needs. For example, learners are required to complete NVQ units or the technical certificate but assessors do not state clearly enough what activity or task is required by the next visit.

Leadership and management

40. Management of the vocational area is satisfactory. The manager responsible for developing the area has recently devised a quality improvement plan. She now meets with other similar managers within the company to share good practice. Regular meetings, management road shows and individual reviews between managers and their teams support effective communications. Communication with employers is satisfactory. However, in the London region, a few employers make little contribution to learners' progress reviews. A few employers are not fully informed about the awards, the progress of their learners or who they should contact at TNG.
41. Arrangements to ensure equality of opportunity are satisfactory. Learners have an appropriate understanding of equal opportunities and are able to explain their own rights and responsibilities as well as the issues for the sector. Learners are issued with the TNG equal opportunities policy at induction. However, equal opportunities are insufficiently reinforced during progress reviews.
42. Internal verification is satisfactory and meets awarding body requirements. Recent changes in verification, such as monthly meetings between the members of the internal verification team have strengthened the process.
43. The self-assessment report is broadly satisfactory and the narrative and overall judgement accurately reflects the provision. Some staff have insufficient knowledge of the continuous improvement plans. However, all have been set targets for improving success. Actions are taken at local level to support learners who are making slow progress.

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes** managed by the provider 2004 to 2006

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/c college NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider/college framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	03-04	Overall	243	65	51	31	27
		Timely	216	31	31	13	16
	04-05	Overall	362	39	47	14	21
		Timely	386	20	28	9	12
	05-06	Overall	432	47	53	19	34
		Timely	437	22	29	7	17
Apprenticeships	03-04	Overall	357	47	43	15	17
		Timely	338	14	18	3	6
	04-05	Overall	480	39	46	5	29
		Timely	504	12	21	2	13
	05-06	Overall	503	45	48	25	50
		Timely	467	133	31	6	25

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

Success rates on **work-based learning 'Train to Gain' programmes** managed by the provider 2006 to 2007

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**
Train to Gain ***	05/06	overall	143	76
		timely	66	46
	06/07	overall	122	91
		timely	91	74

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

*** Includes 'Train to Gain' long course NVQ provision, but not 'skills for life'

Outcomes on **Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes** managed by the provider 2004 to 2006

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
03-04	116	43	25
04-05	149	44	53
05-06	150	49	33

* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

** Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period