

# Springboard Sunderland Trust

---

Inspection date

12 July 2007

---

Inspection number

301554

## Contents

Background information .....	3
Inspection judgements .....	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider .....	4
Summary of grades awarded.....	5
Overall judgement .....	6
Effectiveness of provision.....	6
Capacity to improve .....	6
Key strengths .....	7
Key areas for improvement .....	7
Main findings.....	8
Achievement and standards .....	8
Quality of provision .....	8
Leadership and management .....	9
Equality of opportunity .....	9
What learners like.....	11
What learners think could improve .....	11
Sector subject areas .....	12
Health, public services and care .....	12
Preparation for life and work.....	15
Learners' achievements .....	18

## 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](http://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](http://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
- Preparation for life and work

## Description of the provider

1. Springboard Sunderland Trust (Springboard) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. Its nine training centres each have a centre manager who has responsibility for day-to-day management. They report to the trust secretary who is based in the main centre in Sunderland. Each training centre has its own structure with administrative and support staff and tutors. There are 115 staff throughout the training centres. There is also an outdoor education lodge in Northumberland. Springboard has links with many community and neighbourhood groups, including groups for young offenders. They offer alternative education and complementary programmes. There are currently 252 learners with Springboard on programmes in health, care and public services, agriculture, horticulture and animal care, engineering and manufacturing technologies, retail and commercial enterprise, arts, media and publishing, business administration and law and preparation for life and work. Most learners join the Entry to Employment (E2E) programme. Learners in the sector skills areas outside preparation for life and work are on apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship programmes. Springboard has a small Train to Gain contract, with two learners currently on a programme leading to national vocational qualifications (NVQ). In addition, Springboard has a contract with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for some New Deal provision. However, this was not included in the scope of this inspection as DWP are reviewing all their contracts in Sunderland. Springboard is funded by Tyne and Wear LSC and DWP. Currently 81% of Springboard's income is from government funding.
2. The inspection focussed on provision in health, care and public services, with 86 learners enrolled at the time of the inspection, and preparation for life and work which currently has 107 learners. Other sector subject areas were sampled through the paired observation process, interviews with learners and sampling of individual learning plans and portfolios.
3. Sunderland is twenty-fifth in the Department of the Environment's Index of Local Conditions (2000). The unemployment rate in Sunderland in 2006 was 5.9% compared with 5% nationally. According to the 1991 census, there is a minority ethnic population of 1.1% in Sunderland compared with the national average of 9.1%.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory Grade: Good: Grade 2

## Sector subject area

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Preparation for life and work	Good: Grade 2

---

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The quality of provision, leadership and management and the arrangements for equality of opportunity are good. The quality of provision in health, public services and care is satisfactory and in preparation for life and work is good.

### Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

5. Springboard demonstrates good capacity to improve. Springboard has made significant improvements to learners' achievements since the previous inspection and they are now satisfactory. In E2E, the programme with largest numbers of learners, progression has improved from 36% in 2004-05 to 62% in the current year. In health, public services and care success rates improved from 21% in 2004-05 to 47% in 2005-06. Achievements in key skills and technical certificates are now good. Action to improve provision since the previous inspection is good and grades awarded at this inspection are better than those awarded at the previous inspection. Springboard has improved its accommodation and staffing resources. The number of staff has increased from 86 to 115, with a high emphasis on training to ensure quality. Much resource has been put into developing support for learners, some of whom are among the most vulnerable learners in the area. Most of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been rectified and are now at least satisfactory. The process for observation of teaching and learning is well developed and accurate. It leads directly to staff training and support for individual development and is integral to improvement of provision. Self-assessment is accurate, inclusive and thorough. Good use is made of data to make judgements. However, there is insufficient action-planning following self-assessment in some areas.

## Key strengths

- Well-planned teaching and learning sessions
- Very good resources
- Wide range of activities and projects
- Particularly good support
- Highly effective partnership working
- Well-developed strategies to support the mission of the organisation

## Key areas for improvement

- Too many early leavers
- Insufficiently developed action-planning for improvement

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

6. Achievements are satisfactory. E2E learners progress well into positive outcomes. Both E2E learners and health, public services and care learners develop good levels of confidence, self-esteem and workplace skills. Health, public services and care learners, who account for 34% of the provision, achieve well in key skills and technical certificates. Their framework success rate is satisfactory. The motor vehicle and horticulture programmes are recent developments with no framework completions yet. Success rates for arts, media and publishing learners are good though numbers are small. Framework completions for business administration learners, who represent 11% of the provision, are poor.

### Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

7. Teaching and learning in E2E and health, public services and care is well planned with a good range of stimulating activities. Learners respond enthusiastically to their tutors. Learning is good or better in most sessions though in a small number of sessions the individual needs of learners are not always met. Resources are good for most learners across the provision with two very well-equipped buildings in the Alec Dickson centre. These have good motor-vehicle and construction workshops, conference facilities and good information and communication technologies (ICT). Tutors are well qualified and experienced. Springboard's own observation process is systematic, based on objective criteria and accurate.
8. Springboard offers learners a very good range of initiatives and activities across its provision. In response to the needs of learners and employers it has developed programmes in both motor vehicle and horticulture. It has several commercially run community businesses which allow learners to gain work experience in more sheltered work settings. It provides a range of activities to widen learners' experience such as use of its residential centre for outdoor activities. Springboard is also very active in building progression routes for learners and in raising awareness of work-based learning in local schools.
9. Support for learners is very good. Springboard provides prompt and effective additional help for learners with skills for life needs. Specialist tutors give sensitive support to learners with dyslexia. Learners have good access to qualified information, advice and guidance workers. Learners are well matched to their placements. Learners benefit well from the services of a qualified counsellor who provides practical support for learners with housing difficulties, drug dependency and pregnancy. Springboard works well with partners to ensure learners have access to a very wide range of additional specialist services. Projects to give extra support to the most vulnerable learners are practical and well-considered. These



include good work with the Youth Offending Service to quickly identify learners' support needs when they leave custodial sentences.

## Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

10. Springboard has good and well-developed strategies for achieving its mission to provide opportunities particularly for young people and those with barriers to progression. These aims are very well understood by all staff. Springboard has an open recruitment policy, and provides unusually high levels of support to help disadvantaged learners to succeed. There is a good strategy for providing literacy, numeracy and language support. The team of skills for life tutors are very well-qualified and experienced in adapting their work to the learners' vocational needs. The team includes specialists in a range of particular learning difficulties. Springboard has developed a wide range of provision including some innovative social enterprises in catering, childcare, and design and print, to provide work placements and, in some cases, permanent employment. An innovative programme has recently started to provide community-based training as an alternative to custody for some young offenders. Springboard's directors meet regularly with managers to provide support and monitor progress.
11. Springboard has good and long-established partnerships with a wide range of organisations and agencies. It is the main contractor for the delivery partnership for E2E in Sunderland. The partnership is well managed, with a high degree of trust and co-operation between partners. Learners benefit highly from the partnership and the additional support services and resources it provides. Springboard is well-represented on local groups such as the 14-19 strategic partnership. Relationships with employers are good. Large numbers of learners secure work placements.
12. Springboard has very good resources for learners. Facilities at the Alec Dickson centre are particularly good with industry-standard motor vehicle, construction and print and design workshops and good ICT resources. Springboard's nine centres enable it to provide programmes at a local level to draw in learners who might otherwise be reluctant to attend training. Tutors are well-qualified and supported with good staff development opportunities.
13. Springboard's management information system is effective and is well used by managers to monitor learners' progress. All staff access up-to-date procedures and forms through a shared computer file system.
14. Action plans for improvement of provision are insufficiently developed. Springboard has recently revised its arrangements to improve its focus on action-

planning. However, the process has yet to be fully implemented. Quality monitoring, action-planning and self-assessment are not sufficiently linked. Action plans do not include all areas for improvement identified at programme level. A quality improvement group has overseen the new developments but has not yet fully acted on the outcomes.

15. Springboard demonstrates a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and social inclusion through its recruitment policy and support arrangements which offer beneficial opportunities to all young people who apply to join its programmes. There is a comprehensive policy for monitoring and implementation of equal opportunities, which was updated in February 2007. Learners have a good awareness of their rights and responsibilities, which are introduced during their induction and reinforced throughout their programmes. There is a good range of facilities for learners with disabilities. Springboard makes efforts to counter stereotypical views of gender roles, and has been successful in recruiting small numbers of men onto care courses, and women into construction and motor vehicle engineering. Arrangements for the protection of young and vulnerable learners through *Every Child Matters* are satisfactory.

## What learners like:

- 'Very good support staff – they're always there for you'
- 'You learn more in your placement'
- Being treated like an adult
- 'The activities – they make you learn more'
- The time given at work to practice things
- Being able to improve mathematics and English
- The welcoming, friendly centres
- The high amount of help that they receive
- Good trips out
- 'It's good fun – the teachers are just like us!'

## What learners think could improve:

- More assessment support
- Faster computers
- A better space to take breaks at Jarrow
- More afternoon sessions

## Sector subject areas

### Health, public services and care

Satisfactory: Grade 3

#### Context

16. There are 86 learners on health, public services and care programmes. In child development programmes there are four advanced apprentices and 49 apprentices. In health and social care there are five advanced apprentices and 28 apprentices. Three learners are men and none are from minority ethnic groups. Currently 49% of learners have additional learning or social needs.

17. Springboard uses four sites at Sunderland, South Tyneside, East Durham and Hartlepool. Learners have off-the-job training activities in the centres in care as well as specialist sessions to support basic and key skills. Off-the-job training is also offered in the workplace to learners who cannot attend the centre. Most learners are on work placement with a small number having employed status. Learners are allocated work placements in nurseries, schools, residential care homes, nursing homes or hospitals. They are visited in the workplace by assessors and learning is reviewed at least every eight weeks. There are five tutor/assessors and two co-ordinators. One of these is responsible for early years provision and the other for general care.

#### Strengths

- Good development of workplace skills and knowledge
- Good management and planning of learning
- Particularly effective and flexible support for learners

#### Areas for improvement

- Insufficiently developed target-setting processes
- Too many early leavers

#### Achievement and standards

18. Learners develop good workplace skills and knowledge, and high levels of confidence. A wide range of learning activities is used effectively to develop their understanding of care. Learners make good links between theory and practice in the workplace. Springboard provides enjoyable extra sessions for learners, particularly in childcare, where they develop specific skills and knowledge, for example in window painting, creative play and planning trips. Achievements of key skills and technical certificates are good. In 2005-06, 60% of learners on health and social care programmes, and 71% of learners on child development programmes achieved their key skills qualification. In the same year, 54% of

learners on health and social care programmes, and 65% of learners on child development and well-being programmes achieved their technical certificates.

19. Success rates have improved over the past three years and are now satisfactory overall. For advanced apprentices they are good, having improved from 50% in 2003-04 to 86% in 2004-05. In 2005-06 success rates declined slightly to 71% but are still good. Apprentice success rates have improved and are now satisfactory, rising from 6% in 2003-04 to 43% in 2005-06 and to 47% in 2005-06. Attendance is satisfactory.
20. Too many learners in health, public services and care programmes leave early. Of the 137 learners who left the programme in 2006-07, 34 progressed to employment and further training and 103 learners left training early. Of these, 8% came to the end of their training programme, 11% left with no known reason, 40% left for other reasons and 16% became unemployed. Springboard recognises this weakness and is taking action to tackle it.

#### Quality of provision

21. Planning and management of learning is good. On- and off-the-job training are well organised. Off-the-job training sessions are well planned and include a wide range of learning activities and support materials. Assessment plans make effective links between theory and practice. Staff communicate well with employers, to create observation and assessment opportunities for learners. Learners have the opportunity to attend extra learning sessions at the provider. They make good use of these to develop their vocational, key and theoretical skills. Tutors and assessors have a particularly flexible approach to delivering off-the-job training in the workplace and offer it to learners who are unable to attend the centre for sessions.
22. Support for learners is particularly effective and flexible. Currently 49% of learners have additional learning needs. Staff identify and respond well to individual needs and make frequent visits and reviews to learners in the workplace and often to their homes. They provide good support in key and basic skills. Springboard offers good opportunities for learners to progress quickly through their qualifications to meet individual needs and circumstances. It provides very effective specialist support to learners who have additional social needs, for example those who are homeless or who have specific health issues. Sensitive introductions to work placements are made for less confident learners. Assessors give good levels of support in preparing learners for employment.
23. Induction is satisfactory and includes a good work placement induction process. Initial advice and guidance is satisfactory. Learners gain a satisfactory understanding of their programmes.
24. The range of programmes offered adequately meets the needs of learners and employers. Employers are satisfactorily involved in the reviews of learners' progress.

25. The use of target-setting to monitor and measure learners' progress is not sufficiently developed. Springboard has recently developed a good framework to support the individual learning plan. All learners value this plan to support them in their learning. However, individual learning targets are not routinely set or reviewed. They are not always realistic, achievable and time bound. Achievement of targets is not fully monitored by staff. Learners are unclear about how to use the plan to monitor their personal progress.

### Leadership and management

26. Leadership and management of the programme are satisfactory. Key skills are integrated well with the vocational programme. Springboard has a satisfactory meeting structure to keep staff informed of developments and programme requirements. It uses data adequately to monitor learners' progress. Specific systems are used effectively to highlight concern with learners who may be falling behind in their learning. Staff have an adequate understanding of the improvements that are required to improve timely success rates. They are experienced and appropriately qualified and opportunities for their development are good. Arrangements for their appraisal and for observations and feedback on their performance are satisfactory.

27. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity. Equality of opportunity is reinforced at both induction and reviews.

28. Internal verification is satisfactory. Adequate sampling plans are now in place. They include observations of assessors and feedback on performance. There is a good audit trail of internal verification activities. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory.

29. The self-assessment process is good and involves all staff. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement identified at inspection.

## Preparation for life and work

Good: Grade 2

### Context

30. Springboard is the lead partner for E2E delivery in Sunderland with 166 learners on programmes with subcontractors. 107 learners are on programmes provided by Springboard from centres in East Durham, Hartlepool, South Tyneside and Sunderland. Springboard has direct contracts for three of these centres. However, in South Tyneside it is a subcontractor of B-Skill. Currently 64% of E2E learners are men with no learners from minority ethnic groups. An E2E manager co-ordinates the programme, with the help of 47 tutors and support workers.

31. Learners have a three day induction and then join a programme which lasts from 16 to 30 hours per week. It includes personal development, vocational activities and programmes to improve literacy and numeracy skills. Learners are offered a range of qualifications which include basic foundation certificates in construction and motor vehicle studies, health and safety, and basic food hygiene certificates. They are also offered qualifications from entry level to level 1 in literacy and numeracy. Learners are matched to job placements as their skills develop. Assessors and an employer liaison worker visit them weekly in placements.

### Strengths

- Good progression
- Good planning of teaching and learning
- Very good support for learners
- Well co-ordinated partnerships

### Areas for improvement

- Insufficient attention to the needs of individual learners in some classes
- Incomplete action-planning

### Achievement and standards

32. Progression to training, further education and employment is good. Overall progressions have improved over the last three years from 36% in 2004-05 to 52% in 2005-06. In 2006-07 progression is at 62%. In the year 2005-06, 36% of learners progressed into training, 20% to further education and 43% to employment. In the last two years progressions from the Sunderland centre have increased from 48% to 57% and in Durham from 68% to 70%.

33. Seven learners from East Durham progressed to gain employment in local garages. They had all started at entry level, gained employment through their placement and went on to become apprentices.

34. Learners develop confidence in realistic work environments at Springboard's well-equipped training centre in Sunderland. They particularly enjoy the enrichment activities such as canoeing and orienteering and develop good social skills and teamwork skills with other learners. Retention has improved in the last two years from 54% in 2004-05 to 73% in 2005-06.

#### Quality of provision

35. Planning of teaching and learning is good. Lesson plans are detailed and include a group analysis which clearly shows attention to learning styles. Schemes of work are thorough. A good range of activities and methodologies is planned into sessions. Tutors make good use of quizzes at the beginning of sessions to recap effectively on previous learning. Theory is incorporated well into practical teaching. For example learners in one session were given clear explanations of multiplication and addition methods and then they were able to apply these successfully in the orienteering exercise which followed. Tutors make good use of linked activities to develop learners' skills in construction and childcare. For example, childcare learners use numeracy skills to draw up scale plans of clocks and dolls they want to use with children. These are then made by learners on construction courses. Resources are satisfactory.

36. Support for learners is very good. Many classes have several tutors who circulate among learners to give extra help. If needed, learners are referred to a mentor for additional help. The mentor makes good use of extensive networks, for example to help homeless learners to find accommodation. He also liaises with parents to provide advice on claiming appropriate financial support. At the East Durham and Sunderland centres good kitchen facilities are available where learners who live independently learn to use washing machines and cookers to increase their life skills. Identification and support for literacy, numeracy and language needs is good. Support for learners with dyslexia is good. Partners are used effectively to provide specialist services to learners that are not directly offered by Springboard.

37. Springboard has an appropriate range of activities to meet learners' interests and to develop their skills. Learners enjoy attending an outdoor pursuits centre, taking part in trips to local museums and visiting the various centres across the region.

38. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Connexions staff regularly provide advice and guidance, and learners have access to a wide range of guidance materials.

39. There is insufficient attention to the needs of individual learners in a small number of classes. In the best sessions individual learners' needs are met using strategies such as pairing learners of different ability and small group work. However, in a small number of classes, there is insufficient use of these and other strategies for meeting individual needs and involving all learners in the session. Most learners follow activities planned for the group and tutors do not always



provide enough additional material to challenge more able learners, or support those who are struggling. In one group, learners who had been assessed at entry level had difficulty reading complex words on an overhead projector.

### Leadership and management

40. Springboard works very effectively with a wide range of provider partners and outside agencies and these partnership arrangements are well co-ordinated. Local schools have long-established links with Springboard to engage learners who are at risk of exclusion, or have been excluded from school, to offer them an alternative curriculum. Regular referrals between partner organisations and the sharing of paperwork helps to improve and simplify quality systems. Springboard has produced a resource pack to help improve target and objective setting for learners.
41. Communications among staff at Springboard are satisfactory. Staff meetings are used effectively to share information. A website has recently been set up and learners are encouraged to contribute. The self-assessment process is satisfactory.
42. Promotion of equality of opportunity to learners is good. Staff have a good understanding of their learners' needs and support them well.
43. Action-planning for improvement is incomplete. Several different action plans are in use. Some staff are unsure which action plan they are following. Some staff are aware of the LSC target for progression but do not know about other targets for E2E. Although the overall progression target is generally understood, neither teams nor individuals have a clear idea of their specific targets and actions to enable them to reach the overall target for progression.

## Annex

## Learners' achievements

Success rates on work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes for health, public services and care managed by Springboard 2004 year to 2006 year

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider/college framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	03-04	overall	2	50%	51%	50%	27%
		timely	2	0%	31%	0%	16%
	04-05	overall	7	100%	47%	86%	21%
		timely	7	100%	28%	86%	12%
	05-06	overall	7	71%	53%	71%	34%
		timely	8	13%	29%	0%	17%
Apprenticeships	03-04	overall	33	24%	43%	21%	17%
		timely	37	5%	18%	5%	6%
	04-05	overall	70	46%	46%	44%	13%
		timely	72	10%	21%	10%	13%
	05-06	overall	150	53%	58%	47%	49%
		timely	143	32%	31%	28%	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'

Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by Springboard 2004 year to 2006 year

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
03-04			
04-05	479	23%	36%
05-06	397	41%	52%

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

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