

# In Touch Care Education and Vocational Training College

---

Inspection date

6 June 2007

---

Inspection number

301569

## 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 .....	10
Equality of opportunity .....	10
What learners like:.....	13
What learners think could improve: .....	13
Learners' achievements .....	14

## 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:

- Early years and playwork
- 14-19 provision

## Description of the provider

1. In Touch Care Education and Vocational Training College (ITC) is a privately owned company which was established in 1994 to provide work-based learning in care and early years in South Yorkshire. ITC has recently moved into new premises in Sheffield. Thirty-three learners are following advanced apprenticeship programmes and 91 are following apprenticeships in early years. There are 249 younger learners attending vocational programmes from local schools, including young people who are not accessing education or training. ITC has a contract in oral health and social care and provides a wide range of other commercial training.
2. The executive director manages the company. The management team consists of the executive director, an employer engagement manager, a finance and contract manager, an information technology (IT) manager, a business development manager and three operational managers for each of the programmes involving 14-19 year olds, 16-25 year olds and adult learners. The company employs 38 staff in total.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
14-19 provision	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
14-19 provision	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
14-19 provision	Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
14-19 provision	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

## Sector subject area

Early years and playwork	Good: Grade 2
14-19 provision	Outstanding: Grade 1

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning  
14-19 provision

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2  
Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. For apprentices achievement and standards are satisfactory. For 14-19 learners achievements and standards are good. The quality of provision for 14-19 learners is outstanding and for work-based learners is good. Leadership and management is good as is equality of opportunity.

### Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

4. ITC has demonstrated that it has a good capacity to improve. Since the previous inspection, there have been significant improvements in the availability and use of management information. Target-setting for managers and staff has improved, but the setting of targets for learners, particularly in progress reviews, is still underdeveloped. Financial controls and contract management have improved. Most strengths identified at the previous inspection have been maintained. Success rates on apprenticeship programmes have improved and are now high. Although success rates on advanced apprenticeships are low, they are now improving. Management of training has improved and is now good. Management of change has been highly effective and resources are now outstanding. Observation of teaching and learning is regular and comprehensive with clear links to staff appraisals.
5. ITC makes good use of feedback from learners to improve its provision. It uses frequent questionnaires to collect the views of learners and staff. The results are thoroughly analysed, reported and are used well to implement improvements.
6. The self-assessment process is effective, inclusive and it is used well for business planning. However, the report is very long, lacks clarity and does not clearly state the key strengths of the organisation. The quality improvement plan includes some actions which do not clearly state what is to be achieved or by when. Inspectors did not confirm the grades within the self-assessment report.

## Key strengths

- Good success rates on apprenticeship programmes
- Good teaching and learning
- Good additional learning support
- Outstanding specialist equipment and accommodation
- Clear strategic direction and leadership
- Outstanding links with external organisations and employers

## Key areas for improvement

- The low success rates on advanced apprenticeship programmes
- The inadequate documentation of learner progress reviews
- The insufficient clarity in the self-assessment report and quality improvement plan

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning  
14-19 provision

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3  
Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

7. Success rates for apprentices are good. Most learners have completed both their key skills and technical certificate and are on target to complete their full qualification. However, some learners have gone beyond their expected end date. Although historically success rates were poor, overall success rates on apprenticeship programmes have improved significantly over the last three years up to 2005-06. During the period 2005-06 success rates for apprentices were good at 65% which is 10% above the national average. In addition, learners acquire good vocational skills and develop in confidence. There is a good range of placements and learners are able to work with children across the age range.
8. For younger learners achievement rates are good but retention has proved a challenge on the vocational GCSE programme. Working closely with the 11 partner schools ITC has changed the curriculum this year to a BTEC first diploma in health and social care. Current success for these learners is good.
9. Success rates for advanced apprentices are low at 19% for 2005-06 which is 16% below the national average. This weakness was recognised in the self-assessment report. During the period 2003-05, success rates for advanced apprentices declined from 25% to nil. A number of strategies have been introduced to improve success rates. Current in year completions show a steady increase and provider data indicates that success rates are likely to improve further in 2006-07.
10. During inspection, attendance for apprentices was good. Attendance for younger learners in some classes was unsatisfactory at only 72%.

### Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning  
14-19 provision

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2  
Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1

11. ITC learners enjoy good teaching and learning. At the previous inspection teaching was judged good and it remains so. This strength was correctly identified in self-assessment report. Lessons are well planned and delivered. Learners benefit from a range of excellent resources that are used effectively in lessons. The working relationship between learners and teaching staff is good. Teachers use a wide range of methods to successfully meet the needs of



learners. Learners' enjoy their lessons, participate well and develop good vocational skills. For younger learners teaching and learning is also good.

12. All teaching staff are observed and most staff are working towards their preliminary teaching, learning and skills qualifications and all staff who are not qualified are working towards their Initial Teacher Training in Skills qualification. However, some observations of teaching are insufficiently focused and do not always provide staff with clear action points to improve. The identification of good practice is not a strong feature of lesson observations.
13. ITC provides good additional learning support. This aspect was identified as satisfactory at the previous inspection. All learners have an effective initial screening during their induction, which is followed by useful diagnostic testing. Ongoing support for literacy, numeracy and language is effectively provided by a well qualified staff team. Additional support is fully established into the apprenticeship programme. The effectiveness of the additional support is carefully monitored. All learners go on to achieve their key skills. Staff training is provided on an ongoing basis for assessors and tutors. ITC has a well considered skills for life strategy.
14. Assessment practice is good. Assessments are well planned and detailed, with particularly good involvement from learners. Assessors complete an effective action plan before each assessment. This is agreed and signed by the learner and the assessor. Learners' portfolios are to a high standard. They are well presented and contain a good range of evidence. A variety of assessment methods are used. Holistic observations are detailed, well recorded and clearly linked to the national vocational qualification (NVQ) standards. Learners receive prompt and constructive feedback. Internal verification processes are satisfactory. Younger learners receive very good feedback on their work and receive useful actions points on how to improve.
15. Younger learners receive outstanding support from the course tutors. They are well motivated to succeed in their studies and all learners have aspirations to continue in early years.
16. Programmes are managed well to respond to learner and employer needs. Programmes are socially inclusive and are delivered flexibly by tutors who go out to schools and workplaces to deliver training. All learners have good and equal access to training and assessment opportunities. Five staff are qualified to provide careers education and guidance level 3. In addition there is also a member of staff able to provide mediation on personal and social issues. ITC ensures there is a swift response to learners referred by Connexions who are usually seen on the day of referral.
17. Induction is satisfactory, memorable and effective. It provides a good foundation for apprenticeship programmes. Learners are given a detailed information pack. They are well aware of equal opportunities and the appeals and complaints procedure.

18. Learner progress reviews are inadequately documented. Few targets are sufficiently challenging. Actions are not always agreed with learners and not always reviewed thoroughly. Additional learning support is not sufficiently recorded. Comments on the review forms are vague, insufficiently evaluative and do not provide the learner with enough direction to progress. Learners are not given a copy of the review documentation. Individual learning plans are not routinely updated as part of the review process. Individual learning plans are used to record dates of reviews, but learners progress towards their qualification, or details of what they have achieved are not always updated or accurate. Employers are not always sufficiently involved in the review process.

## Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

14-19 provision

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

19. Specialist equipment and accommodation at ITC are outstanding. ITC relocated to new premises in February 2007. The accommodation is spacious, well equipped, and exceed the needs of learners and staff. Significant investment has been made in information and learning technology, and specialist equipment. New facilities include a good quality resource centre, nursery, and clinical simulation suite. Several employers have been directly involved in delivering training using these new resources. A number of employers benefit from the loan of workstations with web cams made available to them and their learners in early years settings. ITC has a very well equipped vehicle which gives highly effective support to off site learning and to younger learners where necessary. The provider is a key partner in a health and social care Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) which has enabled additional investment in resources.
20. Arrangements for staff development and appraisal are good. The appraisal system is well established and its effectiveness is regularly reviewed. Job descriptions have recently been updated and are useful. Appraisal takes place annually and is followed by three review meetings. Appraisal makes effective use of evidence from observations of teaching and learning and of assessment. In addition, the 14 staff completing teacher training are also assessed as part of their qualification. The extended curriculum team from the local authority observes staff teaching younger learners and their performance is also monitored by the curriculum managers from the five partner schools. The identification of staff training needs is good. All staff have an up-to-date continuing professional development plan. Opportunities for and take up of staff development are good.
21. The executive director provides strong leadership and sets a clear strategic direction. This is effectively communicated to all staff, and shared with partners. The business and strategic planning process is well established, and the current three-year business plan is both comprehensive and detailed. However, links

between the different plans are insufficiently clear and the business plan lacked measurable performance indicators, and risk assessment is underdeveloped. Managers, assessors and verifiers hold frequent meetings. The executive director meets all managers individually every month, and there is a useful monthly whole-staff meeting. All meetings have clear agendas and clearly identified action points. All training staff have access to the company intranet and use of email, which they can also access from home.

22. Links with external organisations was identified as strength at ITC's previous inspection and since then these have been enhanced. This strength was correctly identified in the self-assessment report. ITC has had a full-time employer engagement manager for the last year. Other useful initiatives to further improve employer engagement include highly effective monthly open days and the production of a promotional DVD which has been distributed widely to employers and other partners. ITC works effectively with 11 partner schools to deliver good quality vocational education to a large number of 14-19 year olds.
23. Since the previous inspection and following the recent restructure, there has been significant improvement in the operational management of the early years programme. Learners now complete their key skills and technical certificates much earlier in the programme. The monitoring and recording of learner progress is more rigorous and data indicates recent improvements in learner performance. Assessors have a more balanced and reduced case-load, and initiatives to improve target-setting for learners are demonstrating early signs of improvement.
24. Arrangements for ensuring equality of opportunity are good. Policies and procedures meet legislative requirements, are comprehensive, up to date and reviewed annually. Staff receive monthly updates on equality and diversity. Learners' awareness is high and equal opportunities are effectively dealt with in learner progress reviews. Equal opportunities data is analysed annually and strategies are regularly introduced to improve recruitment from under-represented groups. Useful recruitment initiatives have focused on encouraging men from mining communities to enrol on early years programmes. Staff work closely with the Connexions service to increase recruitments from under-represented groups. Much work has been done with the local press and other media to attract males into early years.
25. The ITC's response to the *Every Child Matters* themes is appropriate. Learners enjoy learning and overall make good progress. Managers and tutors pay good attention to risk assessment and safeguarding arrangements. They very effectively target under-represented groups and courses actively promote healthy living.
26. ITC's approach to educational and social inclusion is outstanding. They make very good use of their links with partner schools to provide learning opportunities for 14-19 year olds, many of whom have underachieved or have been excluded from school. The approach to this work is very flexible, with ITC staff delivering in schools as well as the young people attending the centre. ITC teachers quickly

develop good rapport with these learners and readily empathise with them. Managers at ITC have also supported partner schools in accessing additional funding to support vocational training. ITC is very proactive in a number of special projects, working with a wide range of partners to encourage people into education and training. ITC provides transport to learners who live outside of the city and to younger learners where necessary. All learners receive very good personal support, and additional learning support when required.

## What learners like:

- The supportive tutors and staff - 'would not have achieved the award without the support of the assessor'
- The great resources including books and computers
- Being treated as an adult
- The opportunity to work with the children
- The helpfulness and the discrete way in which additional learning support is provided

## What learners think could improve:

- The information given to the placement supervisors regarding expectations and requirements of the programme
- The vending machine for snacks and drinks
- The climate control systems in the classrooms
- The travelling arrangements to the centre – not convenient

## Annex

## Learners' achievements

Success rates on work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes for early years managed by the provider 2004 to 2006:

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	4	75	55	25	27
		timely	3	67	31	33	15
	04-05	overall	9	11	49	0	22
		timely	9	11	26	0	11
	05-06	overall	16	31	55	19	35
		timely	28	25	25	11	15
Apprenticeships	03-04	overall	29	48	49	3	21
		timely	28	36	20	0	7
	04-05	overall	24	54	53	42	26
		timely	28	39	22	32	15
	05-06	overall	66	67	63	65	55
		timely	72	49	33	47	29

\* 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'