

INSPECTION REPORT

Kettering Borough Training

18 March 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and in New Deal options. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based training for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learn**direct provision
- adult and community learning
- training given by the Employment Service under the New Deals.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Inadequate provision

A provider's provision will normally be deemed to be less than adequate where

- one third or more of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas and New Deal options are judged less than satisfactory, or
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. The overall judgement as to whether the provision is adequate or inadequate is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

SUMMARY

The provider

Kettering Borough Training was formed in 1982 as an autonomous business unit within Kettering Borough Council. It has offices and training facilities in a refurbished building close to the council's offices in the centre of Kettering in Northamptonshire. Kettering Borough Training rents other premises in Kettering, specifically for young people who have additional social, domestic or educational training needs.

Kettering Borough Training offers work-based learning for young people in land-based provision, construction trades, engineering technology and manufacturing, business administration, managerial and professional, information and communications technology, retailing, customer service and transportation, hair and beauty therapy, health, social care and public services, visual and performing arts and media. It also provides foundation programmes in construction, administration and Life Skills.

Learners are on advanced modern apprenticeships, foundation modern apprenticeships, and national vocational qualification (NVQ) programmes or Life Skills courses.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Construction training is unsatisfactory. Learners make slow progress, and progress reviews do not set challenging targets. Engineering training is unsatisfactory. No initial assessment is carried out, and retention and achievement rates are low. Business administration and accounting training is satisfactory, with some well-structured off-the-job training, although key skills training is introduced late to the accounts programmes. Retail and customer service programmes are satisfactory and the training staff are particularly responsive and supportive. However, there is slow progress in achieving the qualifications. Hair and beauty training is unsatisfactory, with poor retention rates and insufficient assessment in the workplace. Health care is satisfactory with excellent support provided for learners, although there is slow achievement on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes. The Life Skills course is unsatisfactory. Short-term target setting is poor, and there are ineffective individual learning programmes. Leadership and management is unsatisfactory. Agreements with subcontractors are not being properly implemented and monitored. Quality assurance is unsatisfactory at Kettering Borough Training, with no overall framework to assure the quality of training and systematically improve the provision. Equal opportunities is satisfactory. The company has a strong commitment to widening participation to all young learners, but there are no targets or clear strategies to attract under-represented groups onto the programmes.

GRADES

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

Construction	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Business administration, management & professional	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Retailing, customer service & transportation	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Hairdressing & beauty therapy	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Health, social care & public services	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Foundation programmes	4
Contributory grades:	
Life Skills	4

KEY STRENGTHS

- good support for learners
- open management style with good support for staff
- positive management action to improve provision

KEY WEAKNESSES

- lack of challenging targets
- no initial assessment
- low retention and achievement rates
- ineffective reviews of learners
- insufficient assessment in the workplace
- slow achievement rates
- insufficient planning for improving basic skills
- incomplete implementation of agreements with subcontractors
- no quality assurance framework

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more effective use of work-based evidence
- better NVQ information for workplace supervisors
- better training for staff conducting initial assessments
- more formal monitoring and awareness of equal opportunities

THE INSPECTION

1. Eight inspectors spent a total of 29 days at Kettering Borough Training (KBT) in March 2002. They interviewed 87 learners and 31 employers. They also conducted 29 interviews with KBT's staff. They visited 38 employers and six subcontractors' sites. Inspectors examined 70 learning plans, 69 NVQ portfolios and various assessment and verification records. They also examined contracts and other documents, including the self-assessment report which was produced in January 2002 and the action plan.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Construction	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Business administration, management & professional	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	3
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Health, social care & public services	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	4
Foundation programmes	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Total	0	2	5	6	2	0	0	15

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. KBT is an autonomous business unit within Kettering Borough Council. It provides and arranges training for young people around the Kettering area of Northamptonshire. Formed in 1982, KBT offers in-house training at its own centres in Kettering, and subcontracted training through local colleges of further education. KBT employs nine full-time and three part-time staff. It also uses three consultants. There are 215 learners on work-based learning programmes for young people. This includes learners on printing and land-based programmes which were not inspected because of the low numbers involved. KBT has a contract with Northamptonshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to deliver and manage training in engineering, hair and beauty, construction, land based, business administration, management and professional, retailing and customer service, health and social care, printing and foundation and Life Skills programmes. Learners undertake advanced modern apprenticeships, foundation modern apprenticeships and NVQs. The Life Skills programme is partly funded through the single regeneration budget and involves staff from Northamptonshire's Lifelong Learning Service.

3. Northamptonshire is largely rural. In the Borough of Kettering, 95 per cent of companies employ fewer than 25 people. Kettering has a population of 89,900. Easy access to major road networks and rail terminals make Northamptonshire an important distribution centre. The 1991 census shows that 3.5 per cent of the population of Northamptonshire were from minority ethnic groups compared with a national average of 6.2 per cent. The proportion in Kettering itself was 2.5 per cent. In 2001, the proportion of Northamptonshire school leavers who achieved five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 49 per cent, and in Kettering it was 53 per cent. The figure for England and Wales was 47.9 per cent. Unemployment in the county in October 2001 was 1.9 per cent, compared with an average of 2.9 per cent in the rest of England.

Work-based learning for young people

4. KBT provides young people on programmes of work-based learning with good pastoral care and support. However, retention and achievement rates are poor. Learners often make slow progress towards their qualifications. Learners' progress reviews are mainly concerned with welfare issues and do not set short-term vocational targets. Learners do not have a proper initial assessment to determine their future needs and their suitability for the course.

Life Skills

5. Life Skills training takes place in good, well-resourced training rooms. However, learners do not receive enough work experience to prepare them for further training or employment. Many learners have difficulties with basic skills, but learning sessions are not planned to take sufficient account of this. Much of the learning takes place in group sessions, and does not fully meet the learners' individual needs. Too few short-term targets are set for learners.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

6. KBT is an autonomous business unit within Kettering Borough Council. A senior manager from the council's human resources department oversees KBT's operations. KBT has nine full-time staff including a manager, four trainer co-ordinators, two Life Skills trainers, one of whom has some administrative duties, one construction trainer and one administration assistant. There is one part-time business administration trainer, one part-time care trainer and three part-time consultants, all of whom work in the health and social care sectors. Kettering Borough Council has a detailed equal opportunities policy that was last updated in July 2001. Two senior council managers are responsible for equal opportunities. One is responsible for ensuring equality in the community, and the other for maintaining and updating the policy with responsibility for equality within KBT being taken by the manager. KBT does not have any formal quality assurance framework. KBT's first self-assessment was in 1998, and the process has taken place annually since then. The latest self-assessment report was produced in January 2002, in preparation for the inspection.

STRENGTHS

- positive management action to improve provision
- detailed agreements with learners and employers
- open management style with good support for staff
- strong management commitment to widening participation
- effective complaints procedure

WEAKNESSES

- incomplete implementation of agreements with subcontractors
- insufficient target-setting at learners' progress reviews
- no targets or strategy for attracting under-represented groups
- no quality assurance framework

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better analysis of data to inform management decisions
- more formal monitoring and awareness of equal opportunities

7. KBT managers have taken positive action to improve their subcontracted training provision. Business administration and care programmes were subcontracted to local colleges, and analysis showed that they were inadequate. KBT decided to provide the training for these areas itself, and learners report that the training has improved considerably. Brickwork training was also subcontracted to a local college, and feedback showed that it was not to the required standard. Following discussions, and attempts to improve the subcontractor's provision, a difficult decision was taken to

KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING

remove the learners and use another subcontracted college where the brickwork courses were thought to be much better. This college is further for most learners to travel to, and KBT has arranged transport for those who need it. All the learners' progress reviews are checked by the manager, who usually adds comments for the training co-ordinators to read and act on if required. The manager is fully aware of the learners' welfare problems and their progress.

8. Employers' and learners' agreements are comprehensive and detailed. They cover all the essential issues and provide additional information about the training courses and support structures within the programmes. Employers are given copies of KBT's policies on equal opportunities and grievances. They are expected to put these into effect, unless they already have their own policies and procedures.

9. The management style at KBT encourages staff to be open and honest with each other, to take an active part in day-to-day decision-making and to contribute to the improvement of the training provision. Managers support staff well, and take an active interest in their health and welfare. Staff feel confident in their managers and trust their ability and integrity. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report.

10. KBT has detailed written agreements with subcontractors, which stipulate the levels of service required and the data which must be supplied to confirm compliance. Many of these requirements are not enforced. KBT does not always receive copies of external verifiers' reports on subcontracted training. It is not always aware of problems with verification. It does not always collect data from subcontractors about the quality of teaching and learning. It does not keep employers informed about learners' off-the-job training, or share feedback with them.

11. Learners' progress reviews are mainly used to check on the general welfare of learners and learners feel that they are well supported pastorally. However, there is little emphasis on setting goals or measurable targets towards the achievement of qualifications. Progress on some courses is slow. It is not individually planned and targeted to stretch and challenge learners.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 3**

12. KBT uses Kettering Borough Council's equal opportunities policy. There is a summary of the policy which describes individual rights and responsibilities, and the grievance procedure. All KBT staff and learners are told about the policy during their induction, and given a copy of the summary to refer to. Staff ensure that learners understand it. Workplace supervisors are also given a copy of the summary. KBT's agreements with employers contain a section on equality of opportunity. Employers who do not have an appropriate equal opportunities policy of their own are required to sign an agreement to comply with KBT's policy.

13. KBT is strongly committed to widening participation in training. There is open access to programmes, with clear pastoral support for learners in all occupational areas. The Life Skills programme offers training to learners with basic learning needs. KBT has links with the young offenders' team and the careers service. Staff attend external training to update their knowledge and skills. They then pass on what they have learned to their colleagues. During tutorials and assessment visits, staff check that learners are being treated properly in their workplace.

14. There are no learners from minority ethnic groups on KBT's training programmes, and there are no targets set for their recruitment. The gender balance in occupational areas tends to conform to stereotypes, although there are three young men following care programmes. KBT markets its training by advertising in cinemas, the press and through the careers service. KBT does not have a strategy for attracting learners from under-represented groups. It has a management information system which records learners' gender, ethnic origin and additional needs. It does not use this information to improve under-representation.

15. KBT has links with organisations which can provide a signer for learners with hearing difficulties, and translators for learners who do not speak English. These services have not yet been used. Two learners have dyslexia. They have been given additional help during off-the-job training, and with assembling their portfolios of evidence. KBT has refurbished its training centre and it is now accessible to wheelchair users.

16. KBT has an effective complaints procedure. Complaints are recorded by the training manager, investigated and then dealt with very quickly. The few complaints that have been made have been resolved to the satisfaction of all the parties involved.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

17. KBT has no written quality assurance policy or framework for continuous improvement. Some procedures have recently been introduced which cover the recruitment and selection and induction processes. There are still no procedures for observation of training and reviews. KBT's internal verification process has been standardised across the programmes. There are regular meetings of staff, internal verifiers and assessors where issues relating to NVQ quality are discussed. There is little evidence that these meetings result in the sharing of good practice across the organisation.

18. KBT effectively monitors and records absences, health and safety inspections and the frequency of reviews. The manager checks all individual learning plans for accuracy. She also reads all reviews and makes comments for action by training co-ordinators. There is no observation of learners' induction or progress reviews. KBT does not adequately monitor off-the-job training. It does not observe its own trainers at work, or monitor the training which takes place at the subcontracted colleges. It does not review or evaluate the colleges' arrangements for assuring quality. Staff from KBT attend college advisory group meetings, but these are ineffective as a way of reviewing the colleges' training programmes and evaluating their quality. There is too much reliance on feedback from learners about the quality of teaching and learning. There is no system for collating and analysing the data on recruitment, retention and achievement rates, employer and learner feedback and internal verifiers' comments.

19. KBT has issued questionnaires to learners and employers, and the results have been analysed, but no action plans have been produced. Information from the questionnaires was used in the self-assessment report. The questionnaires are too long. They include questions not directly related to the quality of service provided by KBT. The questionnaire was designed to provide information for the council's best value inspection as well as feedback on KBT.

20. KBT's agreements with subcontractors do not require the subcontractor to supply details of the training programme or quality assurance information. The agreements do not permit KBT to monitor the quality of training directly. There are no procedures in place to ensure that subcontractors are providing the information required of them under the terms of the agreement.

21. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and involves most staff. However, the self-assessment report is not critical enough, and inspectors found a number of significant weaknesses that had not been identified. The action plan does not adequately deal with the improvements to be made.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	52	4

22. There are 44 employed learners on programmes in construction. Twenty-eight are advanced modern apprentices, 15 are foundation modern apprentices and one is on NVQ training. The off-the-job NVQ and key skills training, and the assessment and verification for these learners is subcontracted to four colleges, two of which are local. Three-quarters of these learners attend one of the local colleges for their off-the-job training. There are an additional eight learners working towards NVQs at level 1 in construction and civil engineering services. The learners on this programme are not employed, and all have identified additional learning or social needs. All their training and assessment is provided by KBT. The trainer is a new member of staff who is occupationally competent in carpentry and joinery but has no prior training experience, and is working to qualify as an assessor. Internal verification is provided by a consultant who also supports the trainer by providing guidance and learning materials. All learners are either recruited by their employer or apply directly to KBT which helps them find suitable employers before they start their programmes.

23. There are three learners undertaking foundation modern apprenticeships in heating and ventilating. In electrical installation, there are 13 advanced modern apprentices and one NVQ learner. In painting and decorating, there are two advanced and three foundation modern apprentices. There is one foundation modern apprentice on the bricklaying programme and two advanced modern apprentices. There are five advanced modern apprentices on plumbing programmes, and one foundation modern apprentice. There are two advanced modern apprentices in plastering.

24. Reviews of learners' progress take place either in college or at their workplace, and are carried out by KBT's training co-ordinators. College tutors report on learners' progress every term. Learners and employers are sent copies of the completed progress review forms. Each learner is allocated to one of the three KBT training co-ordinators. None of the training co-ordinators has occupational experience of the construction industry.

KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people														
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)														
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	7		14		25		1		15					
Retained*	0		0		13		0	0	10	67				
Successfully completed	0		0		0		0	0	8	53				
Still in learning	5		8		10		1	100	3	20				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people														
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)														
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	11		5		4									
Retained*	0		2	40	1	25								
Successfully completed	0		0	0	0	0								
Still in learning	10		2	40	1	25								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people														
NVQ Training														
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	11		8		19				13					
Retained*	8		6	75	6	32			4	31				
Successfully completed	0		6	75	6	32			3	23				
Still in learning	8		2	25	1	5			1	8				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- good support for learners
- good range of on-the-job training opportunities

WEAKNESSES

- no initial assessment
- lack of challenging progress review targets
- slow progress for some learners
- insufficient work placements for level 1 learners
- inadequate practical facilities for level 1 learners
- poor retention rate

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more effective use of work-based evidence

25. Learners enjoy their work and their off-the-job training. They appreciate the help, support and encouragement they are given. KBT staff have good working relationships with learners, employers and college tutors. In addition to the progress reviews, there is frequent informal contact through visits and telephone conversations. Employers take a close interest in the welfare and development of their learners. They are enthusiastic about the training and are keen to help learners progress. Learners are placed with skilled supervisors who are prepared to spend time helping them and supporting their development.

26. Learners work alongside experienced and qualified workers to learn the practical skills associated with their craft. Most of them work on a range of jobs and gain a good mixture of practical skills and experience. Employers provide good opportunities for learners to develop their skills and to produce work-based evidence for their NVQs and key skills awards. These strengths were identified in the self-assessment report.

27. Learners are interviewed by KBT staff before they start on their programmes, but an initial assessment is not carried out. Without an effective initial assessment, it is difficult to ensure that the most appropriate programme is selected. KBT did not identify this weakness in the self-assessment report. KBT does not assess whether learners have enough basic skills to be able to complete all the requirements of the modern

apprenticeship framework. There is no test of manual dexterity, or of colour perception, an essential requirement for electrical installation.

28. Learners' progress is reviewed regularly. Most learners know how long their training will take and what overall targets they have to achieve. Reviews do not focus sufficiently on learners' progress towards achieving their NVQ and key skills awards. KBT staff do not set measurable and demanding targets for learners to achieve by the time of the next review. The self-assessment report did not identify this weakness. Although employers have some involvement in reviews, and are sent copies of the completed review documents, they are not directly involved in setting targets. Little formal feedback from the reviews is given to college tutors. The lack of short-term targets makes it difficult for employers to co-ordinate the on-the-job training with what is being taught off the job.

29. Some learners are making slow progress towards achieving their NVQ. Several have had their planned completion date extended to enable them to complete their NVQ portfolios of evidence. Two learners have had their planned completion date extended by two years or more. This was not identified in the self-assessment report. One learner said that it took over six months for the assessor to comment on and return his portfolio. There is too little assessment in the workplace. Learners collect little evidence of their competences through their everyday work. KBT has recently introduced new work-experience records and diaries to remedy this, but it is too soon to judge their effectiveness. Internal verification arrangements and training resources at the colleges are satisfactory.

30. The self-assessment report identified that there are insufficient work placements for level 1 NVQ learners. There is only one work placement currently available to these learners although KBT is trying to find more. Without appropriate work placements, learners are unable to provide work-based evidence for their qualification. Learners are keen to gain work experience and progress towards their qualification.

31. The practical training facilities for level 1 NVQ learners are inadequate. Some aspects of this weakness were identified in the self-assessment report. Although KBT is developing a training site, there are insufficient work areas set up for training, no electricity or water supplies to the site, and toilet and washing facilities are not conveniently located. Inspectors observed a practical exercise of setting up a hoarding. This was at too small a scale to be realistic, and did nothing to help the learners develop safe manual handling techniques.

32. Retention rates on all construction programmes are poor. On advanced modern apprenticeship programmes, of the learners who started on their programme in 1999-2000, only 40 per cent were retained until the planned completion date. Of the 21 learners recruited in 2001-01 and 2001-02, eight have left the programme without completing their planned learning. Only 25 per cent of learners who started on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes in 1999-2000 are still on the course. The self-assessment report was insufficiently critical of KBT's poor retention rates.

Good Practice

Learners on construction programmes have access to special funds. They are given a grant of £75 towards the purchase of tools, and £30 to buy books which will help them gain their qualifications.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	33	4

33. KBT recruits learners to engineering programmes through the careers service and by advertising in the local press. KBT carries out recruitment in conjunction with employers, and all learners are employed. Potential learners are interviewed to determine their suitability for training. KBT subcontracts all engineering, welding and motor vehicle training and assessment to two colleges with sites in Corby, Wellingborough and Northampton. There are 33 learners with 22 employers. Twenty-seven learners are advanced modern apprentices, two are foundation modern apprentices, and four are on NVQ programmes. There are four learners following the performing engineering operations NVQ at level 2. Four learners are working towards an electronics servicing NVQ at level 2, and 17 are working towards motor vehicle NVQs. Seven learners are working towards a level 3 NVQ in welding, and one towards a level 4 NVQ in engineering. Subcontractors provide off-the-job training on weekly day-release over a two, three or four year period. Motor vehicle learners attend four additional one-week blocks at the college. College staff assess learners in the workplace. Key skills training is integrated with the NVQ programme. Key skills assignments also provide additional evidence for NVQ portfolios. College staff are competent and well qualified. There are enough nominated assessors and internal verifiers to adequately cover the learners' programmes.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	16		13		22		23		19							
Retained*	0		0		0		8	35	9	47						
Successfully completed	0		0		0		8	35	5	26						
Still in learning	9		7		9		1	4	1	5						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		1998-99													
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		1													
Retained*	0		0	0												
Successfully completed	0		0	0												
Still in learning	2		0	0												

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		2		2		2		11							
Retained*	1		2	100	0	0	1	50	7	64						
Successfully completed	0		1	50	0	0	1	50	6	55						
Still in learning	1		1	50	0	0	1	50	1	9						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- well-structured off-the-job training programmes
- effective support for learners
- active support for learners by employers

WEAKNESSES

- poor retention and achievement rates on advanced modern apprenticeship programmes
- infrequent assessment in the workplace
- slow progress with key skills on welding programmes
- no initial assessment
- poor target-setting

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better NVQ information for workplace supervisors

34. Off-the-job training is well planned and well structured. Learners have nine weeks of background knowledge training, alternating with nine weeks of practical sessions. Progress towards NVQ achievement is monitored on a wall chart. Learners are given a detailed induction programme and an induction workbook. This includes the course outline, staffing details, disciplinary and appeals procedures, and health and safety requirements. Learners are shown assessment plans and given guidance on how to build portfolios of evidence. One subcontractor provides learners with a logbook and NVQ workbooks to cover each unit of the performing engineering operations NVQ.

35. Resources are good. Learners receive off-the-job training in well-equipped workshops and classrooms at two colleges. Specialist computer rooms with appropriate software packages are also available. There are several electronics rooms housing computer-based training materials. Learners use industry-standard machine tools and equipment. The motor vehicle workshops are large, and house a range of cars and heavy goods vehicles. However, at one site, due to a recent theft, the shortage of hand tools and materials has impeded some learners' progress.

36. KBT provides effective support for learners. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. Each learner is allocated a training co-ordinator who liaises with the employer and subcontractor. Training co-ordinators carry out progress reviews and deal with any problems relating to the course or workplace. In addition, they provide learners with pastoral support, putting them in touch with external agencies and discussing course-related issues with them and their parents. Support for learners at the college is effective. The college provides additional coaching in literacy and numeracy.

37. Employers provide good support for learners. Many employers provide office space and time for learners to complete written work for their portfolios of evidence. Learners are allocated to workplace supervisors who mentor them and provide witness testimony to confirm their on-the-job competence. Employers take a keen interest in learners' development and provide good training opportunities. They are keen to contribute to learners' training and experience. However, some employers and work-based supervisors have a poor understanding of the NVQ requirements. They are not always able to help in the planning and co-ordination of training to meet the NVQ standards. Workplace supervisors are unclear about their roles and do not understand the structure of the NVQ.

38. Retention and achievement rates are poor on advanced modern apprenticeships. Of the 19 advanced modern apprentices who started their programmes in 1997-98, 26 per cent achieved all the requirements of the modern apprenticeship framework, 44 per cent gained NVQs at level 2 and 33 per cent gained NVQs at level 3. Of the 23 who

started their programmes in 1998-99, 35 per cent achieved all the requirements of the apprenticeship framework, and 47 per cent gained NVQs at level 2 and level 3. Twenty-two advanced modern apprentices began their training in 1999-2000, and 13 have already left without completing it.

39. Assessment in the workplace is infrequent for level 2 and level 3 learners. Workplace evidence from motor vehicle activities consists of job cards together with associated evidence, countersigned by a workplace supervisor. However, the new awarding body standards specify the nature and scope of workplace observations, and there has recently been an increase in the amount of observed workplace assessment. The subcontractor has a small team of tutors who have begun to assess learners in their workplace, but there are still areas in which workplace visits by assessors do not take place regularly.

40. There is slow progress in key skills at level 2 and level 3, in the welding programmes. This was identified in the self-assessment report. Key skills training is not integrated with the vocational welding programme. Evidence from the vocational course is not used to contribute to the portfolio of key skills evidence. Until recently, training in key skills was not started until late in the training programme. The subcontractors provide referencing and tracking documents for key skills, but these are not being used.

41. There is no effective means of ensuring that all learners receive an adequate initial assessment. KBT does not effectively identify the additional support learners may need. There is a thorough initial interview, but no routine testing of basic skills. Training co-ordinators visit the learners in their workplace to carry out progress reviews. However, the reviews are often just pastoral in content. They do not set challenging short-term vocational targets or show action plans to achieve such targets.

Good Practice

KBT provides additional numeracy workshops for learners in the first year of motor vehicle training. This helps them to bring their mathematics up to the level required for the course.

Business administration, management & professional**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	26	3

42. KBT provides training in business administration and accounting at NVQ levels 1 to 4 for 26 learners. In business administration, there are three advanced modern apprentices and 10 foundation modern apprentices. In accounting, there are four advanced modern apprentices and three learners working towards level 4 NVQs. There are six learners working towards level 1 NVQs in business administration who have progressed from the Life Skills course. All training and assessment in business administration is provided in the workplace or at off-the-job training sessions. KBT subcontracts all training and assessment in accounting, except for key skills, to a local college. Most learners are employed, with a few level 1 NVQ learners in, or awaiting, appropriate work placements. Employers range from small businesses such as a local veterinary practice, to departments of the local borough council. Each learner has a co-ordinator from KBT assigned to visit them at their workplace and monitor their progress at least every 12 weeks. Workplace supervisors are often involved in these progress reviews. All learners are given off-the-job training. Most business administration learners receive half a day's off-the-job training every week. Accounting learners attend day-release training during college term time. There is flexibility in both types of training to meet the needs of the individual learners. Additional support is available as required. KBT's business administration team includes accredited NVQ assessors and internal verifiers.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people														
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)														
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	4		5		8		15		12					
Retained*	0		1		7	88	7	47	4	33				
Successfully completed	0		1		6	75	7	47	4	33				
Still in learning	3		3		1	12	0	0	0	0				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	10		12		12		5									
Retained*	1		8	67	9	75	5	100								
Successfully completed	1		5	42	9	75	5	100								
Still in learning	7		3	25	0	0	0	0								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	7		1		2		14		14							
Retained*	1		1	100	2	100	12	86	8	57						
Successfully completed	0		0	100	1	50	12	86	8	57						
Still in learning	7		1	100	1	50	0	0	0	0						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- high level of support for learners
- some well-structured off-the-job training
- good use of prior achievements in key skills
- good achievement rate on modern apprenticeship programmes

WEAKNESSES

- some weak assessment practices
- late introduction of key skills training to accounting programmes
- some inappropriate use of level 1 NVQ learners' time
- lack of measurable targets in some reviews
- weak initial assessment

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better staff development for initial assessment
- clearer planning and delivery of level 1 administration

43. Learners are well supported by training co-ordinators from KBT. There are formal reviews of learners' progress every 12 weeks. Staff also make themselves available to all learners by telephone to ensure that problems can be dealt with swiftly. Learners speak very highly of the pastoral and training support available to them. The KBT team provides a weekly mentoring support record which guides the learners through the requirements of the NVQ. Some learners stated that it was only due to the support and guidance of their assessor or training co-ordinator that they had persevered with their training. The self-assessment report did not identify this strength.

44. KBT provides good off-the-job training in business administration for foundation and advanced modern apprentices and NVQ learners at levels 2 and 3. The training is co-ordinated well. This was identified in the self-assessment report. There are appropriate learning resources for independent study. The training centre has good information technology resources, which enable learners to develop skills which might not be covered in their workplace. There were examples of learners using these skills to improve procedures at work. KBT's trainers use a range of teaching methods designed to appeal to, and motivate, most learners.

45. Some administration and accounting learners have already achieved key skills awards as part of other training programmes or at school. The staff at KBT are experienced in the teaching and assessment of key skills. They give credit for prior key skills learning, and where necessary, will tailor programmes to allow learners to build on existing evidence in order to gain higher level qualifications. KBT identified the accreditation of prior key skills achievement as a strength in the self-assessment report.

46. Achievement rates for foundation modern apprentices are good. The achievement rate on advanced modern apprenticeships improved between 1997-98 and 1999-2000.

47. There are weak assessment practices in level 1 business administration NVQs, and in the subcontracted accounting training. In accounting, there is insufficient use of workplace evidence, even though most learners are employed. Tutors from the subcontracted college do not visit learners in their workplace. Training in accounting is structured, and focuses on the knowledge and understanding requirements of the NVQ. However, the teaching and assessment methods are not planned around the needs of learners. Some evidence in level 1 business administration portfolios is not of an acceptable standard. This has not been officially recorded or fed back to the learners. The self-assessment report identified the weakness in the accounting training, but not in business administration.

48. Key skills training was being introduced late into accounting apprenticeships by the subcontractor. This weakness was identified in the self-assessment report. In order to remedy it, KBT has now taken over key skills training for accounting learners. Some learners will be put under additional pressure because they have to work on their key skills awards at the end of their programmes, when they would otherwise be able to concentrate exclusively on their NVQs.

49. Individual learning plans are not sufficiently detailed. The documents should include a detailed record of the location and precise duration of any training, but this is not always present. Some learners registered on level 1 NVQ programmes only receive a weekly maximum of five hours planned training in business administration. There is no activity specified on their individual learning plan for the rest of their time. Some level 1 learners lack motivation. Some individual learning plans contain so little detail they cannot be used to effectively monitor learners' progress towards their NVQ. The self-assessment report did not identify this weakness.

50. All learners have their progress reviewed at least every 12 weeks. Reviews are seldom used to set measurable short-term targets for learners. Progress is not always monitored effectively. Review meetings are not always used to plan the observation and assessment of workplace activities.

51. Initial assessment is inadequate, and is often limited to a basic skills test. Some tests were found, unmarked, in learners' portfolios. There is little evidence that the initial assessment has been used to plan learners' training. Initial assessment is particularly inadequate for level 1 NVQ learners, and there are some learners on the business administration programme for whom the programme is clearly unsuitable. There are some learners whose prior learning has not been taken into account, and some who have been put on NVQ programmes that are not demanding enough. Staff do not always understand the value of initial assessment in ensuring that learners are matched to the right training programme. The self-assessment report did not identify the weakness of KBT's initial assessment process.

Retailing, customer service & transportation

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	20	3

52. There are 20 learners on customer service, and warehousing and distribution programmes. There are two advanced modern apprentices and one NVQ learner in warehousing and distribution. There are three advanced and 14 foundation modern apprentices in customer service. Learners recruited onto training programmes are already in employment. Nearly all the training and assessment takes place in the workplace. Induction to the programmes is given by a training co-ordinator in the workplace. There are three staff working in this area, two carry out assessments and one reviews learners' progress.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people														
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)														
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2		6		1		2		1					
Retained*	1		2	33	1	100	2	100	0	0				
Successfully completed	1		2	33	0	0	2	100	0	0				
Still in learning	1		3	50	1	100	0	0	0	0				

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people														
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)														
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	15		3		4		2							
Retained*	0		1	33	1	25	1	50						
Successfully completed	0		1	33	1	25	1	50						
Still in learning	14		0	0	0	0	0	0						

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	4		8		4											
Retained*	2		4	50	1	25										
Successfully completed	1		4	50	1	25										
Still in learning	1		0	0	0	0										

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- good retention rate on advanced modern apprenticeship programmes
- particularly responsive and supportive staff
- good improvements in learners' job skills and confidence

WEAKNESSES

- slow progress in achieving qualifications
- ineffective reviews of learners' progress
- no initial assessment

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- further information on NVQs for employers

53. The retention rate for learners on advanced modern apprenticeship programmes is good. In 1998-99 and 1999-2000, all learners recruited to these programmes remained in learning for the planned duration of their course. Of the eight learners recruited in 2000-01 and 2001-02, only one has left the programme early.

54. KBT training staff have a flexible approach which takes into account the needs of individual learners. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. Assessors visit learners in their workplace at least once a month but more often if needed. Visits are made at times to suit both employers and learners. This includes evenings and

KETTERING BOROUGH TRAINING

weekends to fit in with shift patterns. Every 12 weeks, learners are visited by a training co-ordinator who reviews their progress. NVQ internal verifiers also talk to learners in confidence during their visits. All KBT staff are aware of the need to overcome any problems that may prevent young people from learning. They deal with pastoral issues tactfully and in a professional manner. Employers are pleased with the communication that they have with KBT.

55. Employers report that the training programmes have greatly improved learners' job skills and confidence. Learners say that they feel more able to do their jobs as a result of the training and are more confident in their job roles. This was not identified in the self-assessment report.

56. There is a strategy for internal verification, which includes a planned programme for sampling portfolios of evidence and observing assessments. Assessors are observed at least twice a year.

57. Learners make slow progress towards gaining their qualifications. This was partly identified in the self-assessment report. Until recently, training in key skills has started towards the end of learners' programmes, and not been an integral part of vocational training. KBT has begun to develop learners' key skills through aspects of their work, but the evidence that has been produced so far has not been accredited. Some learners near the end of their training programmes still have most of the key skill units to achieve. Learners are also making slow progress towards achieving their NVQs. Witness testimonies from workplace supervisors are not being used. Some learners have missed several assessment visits through their own sickness and non-attendance. KBT does not provide training materials to help learners with the background knowledge they need for their qualifications. Accreditation of prior learning is slow. Most learners will not complete their full qualifications within the planned duration of their programmes. KBT continues to support learners who have gone beyond the allotted time on their training programmes.

58. Progress reviews take place every three months but are not effective. The reviews are not used to measure progress against individual learning plans. All targets are set for the end of the training programme. The learners' individual learning plans are not updated to take account of their progress and achievements. There are no detailed targets recorded on review forms and there is no evidence that actions agreed with the learners are followed up during subsequent reviews. Short-term targets are set during assessments so learners know what they need to complete between assessment visits. It is difficult to see from learners' portfolios what they have achieved, as there is no summary of their progress. Learners are unsure how much of their qualification they have completed, what they will be undertaking next, and when they will finish their programme. Employers are given a copy of learners' completed progress review documents. They are not always involved in the review. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report.

59. There is no initial assessment of learners. There are no formal tests to identify

learners' basic skills needs, or to see what level of NVQ would be appropriate for their job role. This was not identified in the self-assessment report. Tests are available to determine the level of learners' key skills, but they are not being used. Induction is given by a training co-ordinator in the workplace and covers everything learners need to know about their programmes. Learners are given a comprehensive handbook to reinforce this.

60. Employers would like to be more involved in the training programme, and to fit learners' work tasks round the requirements for gathering evidence. However, they are not given sufficient information about the NVQ units which their learners are working towards.

Good Practice

An employer has 10 learners working in a high-pressure customer service environment. KBT has arranged to see the learners in small groups for weekly off-the-job training sessions. This flexible approach gives learners a chance to work on their qualifications in a supportive environment, and causes minimal disruption to the employer's business. Learners observed at these sessions are highly motivated and share ideas with each other. They also have the opportunity for one-to-one support from their assessor.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Grade 4

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	14	4

61. KBT provides work-based training for young people in hairdressing and beauty therapy. There are six advanced and seven foundation modern apprentices in hairdressing, and one advanced modern apprentice in beauty therapy. All the learners are employed at salons in the Kettering area. Off-the-job training is subcontracted to two local colleges. Two staff members from KBT are on one college's advisory panel and attend termly meetings. The colleges provide practical and key skills training, and background knowledge, as well as assessment and internal verification. All the hairdressing learners attend college for one day each week. The beauty therapy learner attends two evening sessions at college each week for key skills training and portfolio building. There is no specific off-the-job training course for advanced modern apprentices in beauty therapy. Learners are given an individual induction, which takes place in their workplace. This is reinforced by an induction handbook. If learners are identified as having additional learning needs, they are offered basic skills support and this is monitored at progress reviews.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1998-99											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	4		7		2											
Retained*	0		0	0	0	0										
Successfully completed	0		0	0	0	0										
Still in learning	4		3	43	0	0										

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	10		12		4		16									
Retained*	0		3	25	0	0	1	6								
Successfully completed	0		0	0	0	0	1	6								
Still in learning	4		3	25	0	0	0	0								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	1		1		2		7									
Retained*	1		1	100	2	100	3	43								
Successfully completed	1		1	100	2	100	3	43								
Still in learning	0		0	0	0	0	0	0								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- good pastoral guidance and support

WEAKNESSES

- poor retention rates on foundation modern apprenticeship programme
- insufficient assessment in the workplace
- ineffective target-setting in progress reviews
- inadequate key skills training

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- greater understanding of NVQ requirements by workplace supervisors

62. Learners receive good support and guidance from staff at KBT and the subcontracting colleges. There is a strong commitment to encouraging all learners. Learners' pastoral needs are discussed during progress reviews, and they are offered appropriate help. Learners are encouraged to contact the training co-ordinator responsible for hairdressing and beauty therapy should any need arise. This support is appreciated by learners, and regularly used. This strength was identified in the training provider's self-assessment report.

63. Retention rates for foundation modern apprentices in hairdressing are poor. In 1999-2000, no learners were retained for the planned duration of the programme. In 2000-01, the retention rate was 25 per cent. Sixty per cent of learners recruited in 2001-02 have already left the programme without completing it. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report.

64. Learners' practical and key skills are not assessed in the workplace. Workplace supervisors are not fully aware of NVQ criteria or key skills requirements, and they do not know which key skills awards their learners are working towards. In the self-assessment report, KBT recognised the lack of workplace assessment of NVQs as a weakness. It is now encouraging workplace supervisors to qualify as assessors. Two salon staff are already qualified assessors, but their qualifications/skills are yet to be accepted by the subcontracting college. Learners, regardless of their level of skills, have to repeat activities such as shampooing to gain evidence during off-the-job training. KBT encourages learners to use witness statements as evidence. Learners' practical work is of an acceptable commercial standard.

65. Learners' progress reviews are used for pastoral support and do not monitor their progress towards their qualifications. KBT does not use progress reviews to plan action or set targets for the completion of NVQ units. Learners several months into their programmes, have not yet started their key skills training or had any practical NVQ assessments. These problems were not raised at learners' progress reviews. Progress reviews often take place in the workplace, but there is no planned involvement of workplace supervisors. KBT staff do not use reviews to plan assessment in the workplace. There is a lack of co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training.

66. Key skills are taught and assessed by the subcontracting colleges. Learners have limited understanding of the requirements and are unsure of the levels of the key skills awards they are undertaking. Teaching takes place during a dedicated key skills lesson and is sometimes linked to vocational areas. Key skills are not taught or assessed in the course of learners' everyday work, or linked with on-the-job training. Staff in the salons are unsure about the key skills training their learners are being given. One learner is receiving no key skills training because of difficulties with timetabling. The weakness in key skills training was not identified in the self-assessment report.

67. Workplace supervisors have a limited understanding of the requirements of the apprenticeship framework. It is difficult for them to fully support learners' NVQ or key

skills training. On-the-job training increases learners' vocational skills, but does not help them meet the NVQ assessment criteria. There is no planned development of specific practical skills. Training evenings often take place at the salons, but they deal with new techniques and treatments rather than the topics needed for the NVQ.

68. Resources for off-the-job training are satisfactory. One hairdressing salon recently underwent refurbishment and is of a high standard. Two further training rooms are available at the college and are satisfactory. Commercial products and consumables are used in the practical training sessions and there is sufficient equipment. KBT has a good relationship with employers. Salons often recruit their employees from among KBT's learners.

Good Practice

Learners are given financial assistance to meet the cost of uniforms, books and small items of equipment. Travel costs are also reimbursed.

Health, social care & public services

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	41	3

69. Kettering Borough Training offers foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships in care, and early years care and education. There are four foundation and eight advanced modern apprentices on early years care and education programmes. On care programmes, there are 14 foundation and 14 advanced modern apprentices, and one learner is working towards an NVQ at level 3. All learners are employed, and work in Kettering and the neighbouring towns. Employers are drawn from the independent and voluntary sector, and offer a broad range of learning opportunities for early years, care of the elderly and care for those with learning difficulties. Recruitment is often by recommendation from those who have previously used KBT. Off-the-job training was subcontracted until 1999. It now takes place at KBT. Learners both in care and early years care and education have three hours off-the-job training each week. One training co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating on- and off-the-job training. Specialists in care and early years provide the training in key skills and background knowledge for the NVQ. In care, one part-time member of staff completes assessments/observations on a weekly basis. In early years care and education, assessments are contracted to an appropriately qualified assessor. There are no workplace assessors. Internal verification in care and early years care is provided under contract from consultants.

The following tables show the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	10		7		10		22									
Retained*	0		0	0	9	90	4	18								
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1	10	2	9								
Still in learning	8		4	57	8	80	2	9								

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	13		8		13											
Retained*	1		4	50	2	15										
Successfully completed	1		0	0	0	0										
Still in learning	12		4	50	2	15										

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

Work-based learning for young people																
NVQ Training																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			3		16											
Retained*			3		8											
Successfully completed			2		8											
Still in learning			1		0											

*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

STRENGTHS

- excellent support for learners
- flexible provision to meet learners' needs
- good integration of key skills training with NVQs
- effective use of prior learning

WEAKNESSES

- slow achievement of foundation modern apprenticeship programmes
- insufficient work-based assessors

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- formalised use of work-based assessors

70. Learners speak highly of the training support they receive. They feel that staff are knowledgeable, approachable and interested in them as individuals. During tutorials, staff offer learners pastoral support and monitor their progress against agreed targets. Learners appreciate the close co-operation between training staff and employers. Progress reviews take place every 12 weeks and ensure that learners remain on target to complete their qualifications within the agreed timescale. One copy of each review document is given to the learner, one to their employer and one is kept by the trainer. Additional learning materials are provided for learners who cannot attend off-the-job training. Two learners with dyslexia have been given additional support. Their ability to provide evidence for their NVQ portfolios has improved rapidly. Retention rates on care programmes are improving.

71. There is a well-planned induction process which makes learners aware of their roles and responsibilities. Learners know that they must inform staff if they are unable to attend training. Employers are informed of any absence. Any absence is recorded in a register and individual records are used to monitor attendance.

72. Off-the-job training in care is flexible, allowing learners to attend at different times and dates to accommodate shift working. Every three months, the care assessor circulates a list of times available for tutorial support and portfolio planning, to help learners plan around their working patterns. Assessments and workplace observations take place continually and are individually arranged through the tutorial system. For learners on early years care and education programmes, arrangements are made for assessment during the weekly training sessions. Trainers and assessors arrange individual outreach sessions for learners unable to travel to the training centre.

73. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that key skills training is clearly integrated with the vocational training programmes. Learners are given an initial test to determine their needs. Trainers teach key skills by using realistic scenarios drawn from the workplace. For example, learners were asked to plan a nursery by working out the floor space, determining the number of children able to use the area according to the statutory guidelines, drawing a scaled diagram, working out the amount of floor covering required, and deciding which type to buy to remain within budget. They wrote a report using the computer, including graphics and a range of methods to display numbers. Additional support is available for learners requiring specialist help.

74. There is good use of prior learning to decide what level of programme a learner should follow. Learners' qualifications, experience and current job role are all taken into account. Learners with a general national vocational qualification in health and social

care, or those working in responsible jobs, are placed on the advanced programme. Learners are exempted from part or all of the key skills training if they can provide evidence of achievement within the accepted timescale. There is no formal assessment of preferred learning styles. Informal assessment includes discussion with the learner and observation of their ability to understand and complete written tasks. Trainers encourage learners to draw on their personal and work experience to develop their understanding in training sessions. There is additional training in the workplace, including courses on specialist areas in care, and outdoor play in early years care and education. Handouts are used to supplement limited resources. Learners are encouraged to undertake research using the Internet.

75. The achievement rate on foundation modern apprenticeships is low. So far, no learner has successfully completed their programme. KBT has introduced a template for assessment which includes the achievement of competence in a given unit, with evidence of the background knowledge and relevant key skills. Learners are now assessed regularly and the evidence is submitted for internal verification. The NVQ external verifier has approved the revised process.

76. There are too few assessors in the workplace. At present, there is only one assessor to 30 learners on the care programme. The assessor assesses learners in their workplace as often as possible. KBT has obtained additional funding to train more assessors. All the potential assessors have achieved advanced modern apprenticeships, two in care and two in childcare.

Foundation programmes**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Life Skills	8	4

77. KBT works in partnership with the Northamptonshire Lifelong Learning Service, the careers service and the local LSC to provide a Life Skills programme for young people aged 16-18 who are not in mainstream education, training or employment. The learners are disadvantaged young people, some of whom have experienced domestic violence or homelessness. They have poor social skills, and have often missed out on education at school because of exclusion or disaffection. The Life Skills training takes place in recently refurbished, dedicated training rooms, owned by the lifelong learning service, rented and furnished by KBT. It is funded by the single regeneration budget, the local LSC and KBT. There are eight learners on the Life Skills programme. Two other learners, who are on the business administration level 1 NVQ programme, attend Life Skills sessions for three days a week. The programme is staffed by a co-ordinator and a trainer from KBT, aided by part-time staff from the youth division of the lifelong learning service. The KBT staff have qualifications in business administration, and the co-ordinator also has the initial teaching certificate in teaching literacy. The other staff have youth work qualifications. Learners are referred from the Learning Gateway by careers service personal advisers. The programme is intended to reintroduce the young people to learning, and prepare them for further training and employment. Learners can join at any time, and they attend for between 16 and 20 hours over four days a week. They follow a core programme of group activities including stress management, confidence building, citizenship, team building, personal hygiene and jobsearch. There are visits by, and to, employers. Formal reviews of learners' progress take place every four weeks.

The following table shows the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

Work-based learning for young people																
Life Skills																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	26		38		26		1									
Retained*	8		6	16	1	4	1	100								
Successfully completed	5		12	32	4	15	1	100								
Still in learning	8		0	0	0	0	0	0								

STRENGTHS

- good pastoral support
- good training accommodation
- good opportunities for progress to other KBT training

WEAKNESSES

- ineffective individual learning programmes
- poor short-term target-setting
- insufficient planning for improving basic skills
- insufficient work experience

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better co-ordination between tutors

78. Learners receive good support. This was identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. Staff have experience of working with a wide range of learners and are sensitive to their social and support needs. There are good relationships between staff and learners which enable the learners to develop confidence and trust. The staff demonstrate a high level of care and understanding of the learners personal and social needs. The ratio of staff to learners is good, at one to four. There is good use of

external agencies and a good partnership with the careers service. Careers staff visit learners every week to help learners with jobsearch skills. There are joint monthly progress reviews, involving the careers personal adviser and the programme co-ordinator, which provide good support for learners. Learners develop improved confidence and self-esteem. Some of the staff who work with the learners on the Life Skills programmes are also youth workers. They come into contact with the young people informally, in youth centres and elsewhere. This ongoing contact with the youth workers is useful and offers the young people consistency. However, the reliance on youth workers to provide a good proportion of the programme is inappropriate, as some lack expertise in teaching or training. For example, youth workers have not been trained to teach basic skills, and some are not confident in the use of IT.

79. The dedicated accommodation for training is well furnished and provides a good learning environment. It is welcoming and non-threatening and it demonstrates the value that KBT places on the learner. There are good resources for learning, which include a purpose-built domestic kitchen, and a training room equipped with four computers and Internet access. The learners value the learning environment and resources. There is a gymnasium and outside sports facilities which are well used. KBT identified this strength in the self-assessment report.

80. There are good opportunities for learners to progress to further training with KBT. There are level 1 NVQ programmes in business administration and in construction and civil engineering services which have been developed as a stepping stone for learners progressing from the Life Skills provision. The support given at KBT has given some learners the confidence to move into other areas of learning within the organisation. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report.

81. Individual learning plans identify the needs of the learners. The Life Skills programmes are ineffective in meeting those needs. KBT did not identify this weakness in the self-assessment report. Individual learners' broad aims are identified by the careers service, but there is no formal initial assessment by KBT. The programme is planned and taught at a whole group level. Some learners should not be on the programme. Learners do not understand the purpose of some of the activities, and are not sufficiently challenged by their programmes. There are some learners who have been on the programme for too long, or are repeating it. The learning programme lacks structure and coherence. There is too much reliance on discussions. Some learners would like more specific vocational training and work experience tasters. They are bored by the general training. The training programme does not meet the particular needs of the group, many of whom have problems with reading and writing. Some learners gain certificates whilst on the programme. In 2001, certificates were achieved in food hygiene, level one information technology (IT), basic first aid, deaf awareness and junior sports leadership.

82. KBT staff pay insufficient attention to setting short-term targets for Life Skills learners. Learning sessions are planned for the whole group, without making allowances for learners' different abilities. Individual targets are not set for each session, and

learning is not fully evaluated. Progress reviews are focused on pastoral support, with too little time spent on learners' achievement, or on setting small, measurable steps for learning. This weakness was partly identified in the self-assessment report.

83. Training in basic skills is insufficiently planned, and does not meet the needs of the learners. Some learners have not completed a basic skills assessment. There is no diagnostic assessment to establish what the learners' priorities should be, or to develop an individual learning plan. Even when learners have completed the assessment, little planned teaching occurs either in separate sessions or as part of the programme. There are no plans for monitoring their progress and achievement. Staff are told that learners have a basic skills need, but no plans are made to meet those needs. Learners do not make enough progress with basic skills. Staff have little awareness of teaching or training techniques, or of the need for careful planning linked to the national basic skills curriculum and standards. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report.

84. There is insufficient work experience available for learners on the programme. Currently, only one learner has the opportunity for work experience. Some learners have had unsuccessful work placements. Many learners are unsure of their future career paths. They are not given enough work tasters. Learners are insufficiently informed or prepared to move to the next stage of training or employment. This was not identified in the self-assessment report.

85. Some learners timekeeping is poor. They see little point in arriving punctually and some trainers do not start the training sessions on time. The pace of some sessions is too slow, and learners are inattentive. Attendance is good when external visits are planned. Learners benefit from visits to places such as a climbing centre, where they can develop confidence and team work skills.

86. In 2000-01, only 30 per cent of learners completed the programme and 19 per cent moved onto further training or employment with training. A further 23 per cent moved into employment without training. Most learners remain on the programme for eight to 12 weeks, although some have had their programmes extended to up to 57 weeks.

Poor Practice

There is an external telephone line in the teaching room. The telephone ringing distracts learners, and when training staff answer it teaching sessions are interrupted.