

INSPECTION REPORT

Joint Learning Partnership Limited

08 July 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 Jobcentre Plus programmes. 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
- **learnirect** provision
- adult and community learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of her majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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 Jobcentre Plus programmes 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

Joint Learning Partnership Limited is a private company founded in April 1996, with offices and training facilities in Southport, Greater Merseyside. In Greater Merseyside and Lancashire the company provides Life Skills training, modern apprenticeships and national vocational qualification (NVQ) training in customer service, business administration and hospitality. Customer service training is also provided in Sunderland. The hospitality and customer service training in Sunderland is provided through joint ventures.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training in business administration, customer service and hospitality is satisfactory and training in Life Skills is good. The leadership and management of Joint Learning Partnership Limited are satisfactory and there are satisfactory arrangements for quality assurance and equal opportunities.

GRADES

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

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

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	3

Foundation programmes	2
Contributory grades:	
Life Skills	2

KEY STRENGTHS

- particularly good pastoral and educational support for learners
- well-presented portfolios with a wide range of evidence
- creative off-the-job training

KEY WEAKNESSES

- poor individual target-setting for learners
- slow rates of achievement for work-based learning

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better access to premises
- clearer paperwork in support of equal opportunities

THE INSPECTION

1. Seven inspectors spent a total of 28 days at Joint Learning Partnership Limited (JLP) in July 2002, where they carried out 42 interviews with staff, interviewed 68 learners and observed nine training sessions. The inspectors visited 11 employers, examined 40 portfolios of evidence and 73 individual learning plans. They reviewed internal company documents, such as the equal opportunities policy, quality assurance manual and audit records, as well as documents from Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and awarding bodies. They also studied the company's most recent self-assessment report, which was produced in March 2002, and the accompanying development plan.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Retailing, customer service & transportation	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Foundation programmes	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	6
Total	0	1	5	2	1	0	0	9

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. JLP is based in central Southport and was established in April 1996 to provide training in the Greater Merseyside area. The company has two directors and 19 staff, with two partners in a hospitality training joint venture and a further two partners in a customer service joint venture. The company offers foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships and NVQ training in customer service, business administration and hospitality, and provides Life Skills training for 16-18 year olds.

3. There are 54 hospitality learners and all hospitality training is provided through a joint venture, which was established with independent hospitality professionals in July 2000. Customer service training is provided in Greater Merseyside, Lancashire and Sunderland. There are 143 customer service learners in Greater Merseyside and Lancashire. In Sunderland, there are 21 customer service learners and training is provided through a joint venture, which was established with independent trainers in November 2001. There are 28 business administration and 19 Life Skills learners. All of these programmes are funded by the Greater Merseyside LSC.

4. According to the 1991 census, the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups was 1.8 per cent in Greater Merseyside, 3.5 per cent in Lancashire and 1.1 per cent in Sunderland, compared with 6.2 per cent for England. In April 2002, the unemployment rate was 6.5 per cent, in Greater Merseyside, 2.8 per cent in Lancashire and 5.7 per cent in Sunderland, compared with 3.1 per cent for England. In 2001, the proportion of school leavers achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 42 per cent in Greater Merseyside, 50 per cent in Lancashire and 39 per cent in Sunderland, compared with 47.9 per cent in England. The Southport area itself has attracted regional funding to remedy poor housing, deprivation and homelessness. Major local employers in the area are drawn from the financial services sector, public services and healthcare, and there is a substantial tourism and leisure industry in Southport.

Work-based learning for young people

5. Work-based learning for young people is satisfactory in business administration, customer service and hospitality. There is good support for learners, who are visited regularly in their workplaces by JLP's staff. Learners produce good portfolios, which contain a wide variety of evidence from the workplace. There is good, though infrequent, off-the-job training.

6. Individual target-setting for learners is poor. When planning individual learning programmes, insufficient account is taken of prior learning and programmes are overly standardised. Learners achieve their aims only slowly, with many taking too long to complete their programmes.

Life Skills

7. Life Skills training is good. The retention rate is excellent and most learners progress into employment or further education and training. There is much good support for learners and most teaching sessions are stimulating. Learning programmes are too standardised and insufficient use is made of individual targets for learners.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

8. JLP is owned by its two directors, who have equal responsibility for running the company. One director is responsible for managing the training and learning activities and human resources, and the other for financial management, strategic planning and managing the relationship with funding organisations, awarding bodies and other partners. The directors are jointly responsible for quality assurance and equality of opportunity. They are supported in managing the company by two team leaders and the four joint venture partners. The remaining 17 staff are divided into four teams covering marketing, administration, training for employed learners and training for unemployed learners, each of which is managed by a director or team leader. There is an equal opportunities policy, which is reviewed annually and was last updated in April 2002. JLP has a quality assurance handbook, which is issued to all staff and was reviewed in June 2002, when two new procedures were added. The company's first self-assessment report was produced in 1999 and its most recent self-assessment report closely follows the format of the 'Common Inspection Framework' and was completed in March 2002.

STRENGTHS

- strong links with external organisations
- good staff development
- effective action to deal with harassment and bullying
- good use of feedback from learners

WEAKNESSES

- inadequate management of staff resources
- poor emphasis on equal opportunities in the workplace
- inadequate monitoring of the quality of learning and training in the workplace

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better use of data
- better access to premises
- clearer paperwork in support of equal opportunities

9. JLP has developed good working partnerships with external organisations, including the local education authority, the Probation Service, Jobcentre Plus and many local employers. The company also has strong links with local and national charities, which are used effectively to help develop programmes and to help learners with social and domestic problems, such as housing difficulties. JLP arranges free eye tests for Life Skills learners and organises dental examinations. Good use was made of consultants to help

prepare the company for inspection and to help with the reorganisation in early 2002. Other consultants are used to provide outdoor adventure training for staff, which has boosted their confidence and motivation.

10. There are good procedures for staff development. All staff are appraised every six months. This leads to a clearly recorded programme of staff development, which is linked closely to the company's business plan. For example, eight members of staff are completing teaching awards, while others are working towards externally accredited awards in food hygiene and information technology (IT). Newly appointed staff and those not on the staff appraisal scheme are given equal access to training. Many have completed training days on relevant legislation and health and safety, which have improved their understanding of important issues. JLP makes a small training grant available to any member of staff who wishes to train outside of work in areas unrelated to their work activities.

11. Staff resources are not managed adequately. Some staff at JLP have little understanding of the NVQ standards and key skills, and cannot always provide the level and depth of support that learners need. Some staff are not clear about ways of incorporating key skills into vocational programmes. The number of learners that each trainer/assessor is required to visit is sometimes too large. Staff are not set clearly identified and challenging targets for unit and framework completions. Some staff's roles are not clearly defined when visiting learners in the workplace. There is insufficient differentiation between assessment, review and internal verification. Staff receive satisfactory summaries of performance data at meetings, but these data are not being used effectively to influence decision-making.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

12. JLP's staff are extremely sensitive to incidents of bullying and harassment and take action immediately they occur. The company's training sessions in equal opportunities are well planned and relevant, and staff are effective in tackling tough issues, challenging behaviour and complex situations. For example, Life Skills tutors presented a short play about discrimination and learners reacted strongly when they witnessed unfair treatment in action, making for an effective training session. Learners are well supported and protected effectively from bullying and harassment.

13. There is poor emphasis on equal opportunities for learners in the workplace. Also, the depth of coverage of equal opportunities during induction is inadequate and the training session is not memorable for learners. JLP's staff check whether learners have any equal opportunity problems during workplace visits but for most learners there are no other refresher sessions during their training programmes.

14. The equal opportunities policy is satisfactory, but it does not provide a detailed description of JLP's approach to equal opportunities. The equal opportunities policy is displayed in the training centre and is issued to all staff and learners. JLP requires all its employers to sign an agreement, which includes a reference to equal opportunities, and highlights its commitment to equal opportunities on its marketing materials. There are procedures for staff grievances and learners' complaints to be dealt with by a named person. A number of documents, including worksheets for learners, contain errors and confusing statements. Both of JLP's buildings in Southport have poor access for people with mobility difficulties.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

15. JLP has good procedures to gather feedback from learners throughout their training programmes, using four different styles of questionnaire. These procedures are written clearly in the company's quality assurance handbook, which includes procedures describing training and learning, not just administration. All staff have a good understanding of them and learners understand that they have good opportunities to provide feedback. The response to questionnaires is good and information is collated and analysed clearly. Any problems are dealt with quickly. The information is used at staff meetings to help decision-making and changes have been made to learning programmes as a result of learners' feedback. Learners' feedback also contributed to the company's self-assessment report.

16. JLP has clear procedures for observing off-the-job training, which are used to check the quality of learning. Constructive feedback is given to staff to help them make improvements. However, there are no procedures to ensure that training and learning is effective and evaluation of the quality of learning and training in the workplace is inadequate. While JLP's staff visit the learners in the workplace regularly, and have developed good working relationships with workplace supervisors and other key staff, individual training provided in the workplace is not checked.

Good Practice

When providing training in areas outside of its own geographical area, or in unfamiliar areas of learning, JLP has created joint venture arrangements with subcontractors to help ensure the long-term success of these training courses.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	28	3

17. JLP provides work-based learning in business administration. There are 10 learners working towards advanced modern apprenticeships, 12 learners working towards foundation modern apprenticeships and six learners on NVQ programmes. A further 23 customer service modern apprentices are working towards business administration NVQ units as part of their learning programmes. Learners are recruited onto JLP's training programmes directly through employers after recommendation by workplace supervisors and can join the programmes at any time. All occupational training is in the workplace. Assessments, progress reviews and individual coaching is carried out by JLP's staff, who visit learners in the workplace at least every two weeks and produce written summaries of their visits. Induction to the learning programmes and initial assessment is carried out in the workplace by JLP's staff. There are two qualified internal verifiers and three qualified assessors, all of whom are shared with the customer service 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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	3		7		24											
Retained*	0		4	57	4	17										
Successfully completed	0		4	57	3	12										
Still in learning	1		3	43	6	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																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	9		14													
Retained*	1		5	36												
Successfully completed	0		3	21												
Still in learning	4		8	57												

*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	9		7		1											
Retained*	0		5	71	1	100										
Successfully completed	0		2	29	0	0										
Still in learning	6		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

- very good on-the-job training
- particularly good pastoral and educational support for learners
- particularly effective monitoring of learners' progress

WEAKNESSES

- some slow rates of achievement
- ineffective initial assessment
- poor individual target-setting

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- fuller use of new process for developing individual learning plans

18. Learners receive good on-the-job training, covering product knowledge, systems, computer skills and administration practice. There are good opportunities for learners to develop their skills. For example, learners from a local solicitor's office have attended an effective communication course at a call centre. Employers provide encouragement and allow learners ample time at work for evidence collection and portfolio development. Workplace supervisors have a good awareness of the NVQ structure and, in some cases, have linked their internal reviews to the standards effectively.

19. There is good support for learners. JLP's staff visit learners in the workplace frequently. These visits provide effective individual training and constructive guidance on portfolio-building, as well as motivating learners. For example, JLP recently took over a group of employed learners, from a training provider which had ceased trading, of whom six were particularly poorly motivated and making slow progress. After enhanced support from JLP, two have now completed their training programmes and the other four are making good progress. The occupational competence of the assessors and verifiers is good and all have the appropriate awards. They make effective use of evidence from the workplace to assist learners and assess competence. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report.

20. There is effective monitoring of learners' progress. There is good communication between the assessors and internal verifiers, and the assessment process is well managed. There is good short-term planning and outcomes are recorded during progress reviews. At each review visit, the activities carried out since the previous review are discussed thoroughly and any aims not achieved are carried forward to the next visit.

21. Learners are slow to achieve all their learning aims. Of the 2000-01 foundation modern apprentices, 36 per cent have so far completed the full framework and 57 per cent are still working towards their aims. The situation is similar on the advanced modern apprenticeship programme, where, from the 1999-2000 intake, just over 12 per cent have completed the full framework and 25 per cent are still working towards their aims. This improved for the 2000-01 intake, of whom 57 per cent have achieved their full framework already and the rest are still in learning, although total numbers are small. Achievement on the NVQ programme has been poor. For the period 1999-2001, just over a quarter achieved the qualification and none are still in learning.

22. Initial assessment is ineffective. It does not provide sufficient information on the prior skills and knowledge of learners. Previous experience, educational level and hobbies are recorded but are not used effectively to plan individual learning. There are insufficient links between the results of initial assessment and the level of training programme being followed. This weakness was partially identified in the self-assessment report.

23. Individual target-setting for learners is poor. Targets are usually too short-term or are standard for all learners. For example, target dates for the completion of all NVQ units are frequently the same as the end date of the programme. There are no targets

which reflect the individual needs of learners, and those established during progress reviews are not cross-referenced sufficiently with individual learning plans. JLP has developed a new process recently for compiling individual learning plans, but this is not in widespread use yet.

Retailing, customer service & transportation**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	164	3

24. JLP provides work-based learning in customer service, call handling and retail operations. Just under 13 per cent of learners on these programmes are based at a single location in Sunderland and the remainder are at locations in Greater Merseyside and Lancashire. There are 35 learners on advanced modern apprenticeships, 72 on foundation apprenticeships and 57 on NVQ programmes. Learners are recruited onto JLP's training programmes directly through employers, after recommendation by workplace supervisors. Most learners work in call centres run by national postal, Internet shopping and banking organisations. The remainder work in organisations such as optical retailers and legal and professional businesses. Learners can join the training programmes at any time. All occupational training is in the workplace. There are eight qualified assessors and five qualified internal verifiers, three of whom carry out internal verification. Assessments, progress reviews and individual training are carried out by JLP's staff, who visit the learners in the workplace at least once each month. All visits to learners are recorded and their frequency is monitored. Initial assessment and induction is carried out in the workplace by JLP's staff. The provision and assessment of training in Sunderland are carried out by the two members of JLP's staff employed through the joint venture.

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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	10		29		75											
Retained*	0		10		8											
Successfully completed	0		8		6											
Still in learning	9		11		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																
Foundation modern apprenticeships (FMA)																
	2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	67		52		4											
Retained*	1		15		1	25										
Successfully completed	0		6		0	0										
Still in learning	49		23		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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	67															
Retained*	3															
Successfully completed	3															
Still in learning	57															

*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

- particularly good pastoral and educational support for learners
- well-presented portfolios with a wide range of evidence
- particularly effective monitoring of learners' progress

WEAKNESSES

- slow rates of achievement of modern apprenticeship frameworks
- inadequate use of targets for learners

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better recording of information on individual learning plans
- more effective use of witness testimonies

25. There is good support for learners. Learners are visited frequently in the workplace by JLP's staff. Most learners are visited at least every two weeks. JLP has a flexible and responsive approach to learners' needs and staff visit learners more frequently if necessary in order to meet specific needs or to match learners' shift patterns. JLP's staff use these visits to provide effective additional vocational training and constructive guidance on evidence collection and portfolio-building. They use evidence from the workplace effectively to assess the learners' competence. Observation reports are detailed and well recorded. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report.

26. Learners produce good portfolios, which are well organised and cross-referenced clearly. Learners have a good understanding of how evidence from the workplace can be used for their NVQs and are proud of their work. Portfolios contain a wide variety of diverse evidence, which includes appropriately detailed personal accounts and good case studies written by the learners and verified by their supervisors or employers. These accounts accurately describe complex and varied interactions with customers.

27. JLP has particularly effective systems for monitoring learners' progress. There is good communication between assessors and internal verifiers across all sites, with frequent visits from internal verifiers, based in Southport, to assessors employed through the joint venture in Sunderland. Learners' records are accurate, well maintained, thorough and readily available to all staff. The internal verifiers make good use of these records to monitor learners' progress. The directors monitor progress through an effective system of progress checklists, which are updated weekly. Internal verifiers also produce monthly summaries of learners' progress, which assessors use to plan their work.

28. Learners are slow to achieve their full learning aims. Key skills requirements are introduced to learners on modern apprenticeship programmes too late, preventing timely achievement of the full frameworks. JLP identified its approach to key skills training and assessment as a separate weakness in the self-assessment report. For the 2000-01 foundation modern apprenticeship programme, only 12 per cent have so far achieved the full requirement of the programme and 44 per cent are still working towards their aims. There was no achievement from the previous intake, although total numbers were small. The situation is similar on the advanced modern apprenticeship programme, where from the 1999-2000 intake, 8 per cent have so far achieved the full framework and 20 per cent are still working towards their aims. This improved for the 2000-01 intake from which 28 per cent have so far achieved their aims, and 38 per cent are still working towards their aims. There are 11 foundation modern apprentices who have completed all the requirements of the framework and are awaiting final verification from the awarding body before certification. There is little meaningful data on NVQ achievement rates as these programmes are in their first year. Progress to date appears to be satisfactory.

29. There is inadequate use of targets for learners. Individual learning plans do not record all agreed objectives and have insufficient detail on the full requirements of the learning programme. There is inadequate recording of target completion dates for

individual units. Targets recorded during workplace visits are not precise and are difficult to measure. Employers are not involved effectively in the target-setting process. Previously agreed targets are not always reviewed on subsequent visits by JLP's staff. Learners have a poor understanding of what action they are expected to take and deadlines for the action.

30. The templates used for recording witness testimonies do not contain sufficient information to make them effective. Guidance recorded is often a duplication of evidence provided elsewhere.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	54	3

31. JLP provides modern apprenticeships and NVQ training in hospitality and catering in the Greater Merseyside area. This training is provided and assessed by the two JLP staff employed through the joint venture. There are 25 foundation modern apprentices, 10 advanced modern apprentices and 19 NVQ learners. All learners, with the exception of one NVQ learner, are in full-time employment in a variety of hospitality organisations, including hotels, restaurants, licensed premises and fast food outlets. JLP recruits learners to training programmes directly from the industry, after recommendation by workplace supervisors. All occupational training is carried out in the workplace by workplace supervisors and managers. Some additional training is carried out off the job by JLP's staff at the training centre. Laptop computers are available to help develop IT skills in the workplace and learners can also use the IT resources at JLP's offices. Learners collect evidence from the workplace for both the NVQ and key skills accreditation. JLP's staff visit the workplace to support learners and carry out progress reviews each month. Induction to the learning programmes and initial assessment is carried out in the workplace by JLP's staff.

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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	5		10		3											
Retained*	0		1		3	100										
Successfully completed	0		0		0	0										
Still in learning	5		3		2	67										

*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	11		65		20											
Retained*	0		31		12	60										
Successfully completed	0		13		11	55										
Still in learning	8		17		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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	24		7		2											
Retained*	0		1	14	0	0										
Successfully completed	0		1	14	0	0										
Still in learning	19		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

- well-presented portfolios with a wide range of evidence
- good variety of learning resources
- particularly good individual support for learners

WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement rates
- inadequate initial assessment

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more involvement of employers in learners' reviews
- better structure for induction programme

32. Portfolios of evidence are well presented and of good quality. At the start of the training programme, JLP's staff give a good introduction on how to organise the portfolios and how to record evidence in a systematic manner. Learners have a good understanding of how to cross-reference evidence to a variety of units, where this is appropriate. There is good use of supplementary questions to ensure learners' understanding. JLP's staff review evidence in the portfolios frequently and inform learners of their progress. Portfolios contain a wide variety of evidence from the workplace for both the NVQ and for key skills. The teaching of key skills is well integrated with the learning programmes. JLP's staff accredit prior achievements of learners where appropriate. For example, one learner who had partially completed a customer care NVQ was able to use evidence from this successfully for the food service programme. This also occurs with in-house training given by employers, which is well cross-referenced to the NVQ and to key skills requirements.

33. Learners have access to a variety of good learning resources. JLP's staff have developed a wide range of well-produced materials to help develop learners' understanding and knowledge while in training. These are good quality and have been designed effectively to meet the requirements of the NVQ units. JLP also lends relevant commercial textbooks to learners during their training. Learners can use videotapes and CD-ROMs, which illustrate processes and procedures for food preparation. They can use JLP's IT equipment and meet staff for further help and guidance. The staff who manage the hospitality and catering programmes have good experience and knowledge of the industry and training processes. This knowledge has been further developed by JLP with a programme of staff development. Workplace supervisors also have good knowledge and experience.

34. There is particularly good individual support for learners, which was recognised in the self-assessment report. Learners are visited frequently in the workplace, often weekly, and find it easy to contact JLP at other times, if necessary. JLP's staff arrange visits to suit the learners and their work schedules, which frequently involve unsocial hours. Learners are set good short-term targets to achieve between visits. There is good planning of key skills training, which makes it relevant to the workplace. Many learners take more NVQ units than are formally required, to further their knowledge and understanding. There is good continued support for learners who have not completed their training programme within the agreed period. However, there is insufficient involvement of employers in the review process.

35. Achievement rates have been poor for both modern apprenticeships and NVQs. During the period 1999 to 2002, no advanced modern apprentices have fulfilled all the requirements of the framework, although just over a half remain in learning. Of the foundation modern apprentices, only a quarter have completed the full framework in the same period, although a further quarter remain in learning. For NVQ achievement, 15 per cent achieved a qualification, with 57 per cent still in learning. Several learners are close to completion, and three foundation modern apprentices await certification. JLP recognised in the self-assessment report that retention rates were poor and has taken action to improve this with greater individual support.

36. Initial assessment of learners' needs is inadequate. It does not sufficiently investigate any additional support that individuals require. Results are not reflected adequately in individual learning plans. Target dates for the completion of all units are frequently the same as the end date for the training programme, which does not provide effective targets for learners to achieve during their programmes. This weakness was partially recognised in the self-assessment report and JLP introduced a more detailed and specific process in June 2002.

37. The induction programme is satisfactory. It includes relevant information on health and safety and equal opportunities. However, it is not structured well enough to help learners settle quickly into their training.

Good Practice

Many learners in hospitality work erratic shift patterns. To enable learners to contact JLP's staff for extra support, details of when trainers or assessors are on site are displayed on workplace noticeboards.

Foundation programmes

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Life Skills	19	2

38. JLP has been providing Life Skills programmes since March 2001. There are two full-time tutors and 19 learners, divided into two groups. Learners are referred by their Connexions adviser, who carries out some initial assessment and prepares an individual development plan, which is passed to JLP. Some learners hear about the programme from friends and ask to join. They are able to do so, if their Connexions adviser is prepared to refer them. On starting the 12-week programme, learners are given an interview and a basic skills test. An individual learning plan is then drawn up and they attend training for 16 hours each week, with a further four hours each week of homework. The content of the course is organised around the five themes of personal, community, jobs, words and numbers. Learners can join at any point and receive an in-house certificate for completing the programme. Learners take part in work taster sessions, if appropriate.

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											
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	46		29													
Retained*	20		26	90												
Successfully completed	20		26	90												
Still in learning	19		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

- excellent retention rate
- good progression of learners into employment or further education and training
- excellent pastoral support for learners
- stimulating learning sessions

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient account taken of individual learner's needs
- insufficient use of short-term targets

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- further development of resources for basic and key skills training

39. The retention rate is excellent. Since 2001, well over half of all learners have completed the programme and a quarter are still in learning. In the year 2000-01, the retention rate was 90 per cent, despite many learners facing barriers to participation. Of those who left early, most left because of circumstances beyond their control.

40. Since the training programme started, over 80 per cent of learners who completed the programme moved into employment, further education or mainstream vocational training.

41. Learners benefit from exceptionally good personal support, with a member of staff for every five learners. Staff are extremely aware of the barriers facing learners and make every effort to resolve practical issues, such as housing problems. Personal problems are dealt with calmly, sensitively and discreetly. Staff make full use of their links with outside agencies to provide specialist support, if necessary. Close links are maintained with personal advisers at Connexions, so that ongoing guidance is provided. Staff treat the learners with respect and build solid relationships based on trust. Staff provide stability and a sense of belonging, which enables learners, often for the first time in their lives, to begin to realise their potential.

42. Learning sessions are stimulating and help learners to develop the skills and knowledge they need in the wider world. The programme covers a comprehensive range of topics, including budgeting, using the telephone, health, and personal presentation. Some occupational elements are also included. For instance, learners who express an interest in working in the hospitality industry participate in basic food hygiene training. Topics are approached in an interesting way, often making use of practical, real-life activities. Staff make a concerted and sustained effort to create a good learning environment. The learners respond well and there is a purposeful atmosphere with good interaction.

43. Although the learning sessions are relevant and enjoyable, insufficient account is taken of individual learning needs. Individual learning plans are poorly constructed, simply listing the various topics that the training programme will cover with little individualisation. The starting point is the preset content of the programme, not the needs of the individual. Learning sessions are planned on the assumption that every group member needs to do the same thing. Some learners find the tasks too easy and

complete them faster than others. They are then under-occupied while others are struggling to keep up. Although there are always two members of staff with the group, they are often helping all learners to complete the same activity. They are not always deployed in ways that would allow sessions to be more differentiated, with varied activities at various levels taking place within the same group session. The resources and techniques used to develop learners' literacy, numeracy and key skills, while satisfactory, do not take into account individual needs sufficiently.

44. Insufficient use is made of short-term targets. All learners have a number of milestones on their individual learning plans, but these are poorly worded and many learners are not even aware of them. Learners are reviewed every two weeks, but no reference is made to the individual learning plan or to the milestones. The reviews mainly record what has happened since the last review, rather than setting targets for the future. When the future is referred to, it is often a vague, general statement, rather than a specific, agreed action.

Good Practice

JLP runs an Impact programme for under 16 year olds, which is funded by the LEA. Some learners progress directly from this programme to the Life Skills scheme, ensuring continuity in learning