

INSPECTION REPORT

BOSCO Centre

25 September 2003



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 learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning 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.

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

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BOSCO Centre

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The Bosco Centre (Bosco) is a registered charity which was established in 1984 to work with disadvantaged young people and their families in Southwark, an inner London borough. The centre runs a number of educational programme and activities for children and young people, which includes nursery and childcare, after-school clubs and a holiday scheme, based at its premises in Rotherhithe.

2. The Bosco Diamond project was established in November 1996 with the support of the Catholic Salesian Order to provide training for disadvantaged young people in Southwark. The centre places great emphasis on the development of young people to help them gain employment skills and personal social skills which will allow them to play their part in society.

3. Bosco has 12 staff involved in the Diamond project. The centre is managed by a director, who is a full-time volunteer. A management team of four, seven staff, a student on work placement and a number of volunteers assist the director. The director reports formally to the management committee of the charity on a quarterly basis, including the annual general meeting.

4. Bosco funds most of its training through the Central London Learning and Skills Council (LSC). There are several additional sources of funds, such as the Diversion from Crime initiative.

5. Programmes are offered in business administration, information technology (IT), childcare, and foundation programmes. All areas were inspected, except for IT which had only three learners at level 2 and 3. The other 39 IT learners were included in the foundation programmes. At the time of inspection there were 63 learners. All off-the-job training is given at the Bosco college centre in Rotherhithe, South London.

6. The rate of unemployment in Southwark is 6.2 per cent, compared with 2.9 per cent nationally. The 2001 census shows that the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups in Southwark is 37 per cent, compared with 9.1 per cent nationally.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Business administration, management & professional

7. There are 11 learners working towards a national vocational qualification (NVQ) in business administration, six at level 2 and five at level 3. Learners are able to take additional qualifications in literacy and numeracy. There is one advanced modern apprentice working towards a business administration qualification at level 3. Most learners are on work placements, but a few are employed. Learners following an entry to employment (E2E) programme can take taster courses in business administration. On

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average, Bosco's staff visit learners in the workplace every month to carry out assessments. Learners' reviews are carried out in the workplace and at the Bosco centre. Off-the-job training takes place at the Bosco centre every week. Learners are recruited from Connexions, the probation service and the mother and baby unit. All have an interview and an initial assessment.

Health, social care & public services

8. There are 10 learners on childcare programmes. Six are following a level 2 and four a level 3 NVQ in early years care and education. Eight learners have work placements. The two advanced modern apprentices are employed in a day nursery. Off-the-job training takes place at Bosco once a week. On-the-job training is provided at Bosco's nursery and two other commercial nurseries. The off-the-job training includes literacy and numeracy work, as required. Learners are assessed at least every month in the nursery setting. For the two advanced modern apprentices, assessment visits are planned each week.

Foundation programmes

9. Bosco provides foundation training for learners who have a wide range of emotional, social and learning needs. Since August 2003, learners on Life Skills and NVQ at level 1 programmes have been transferred to the E2E programme. There are 39 learners on the E2E programme, of whom 19 transferred from the Life Skills programme and six from the NVQ at level 1 programme. Fourteen learners have started in the current year. Learners all work towards literacy and numeracy qualifications at level 1 or level 2. In addition, 19 learners are working towards an NVQ at level 1 in IT. All training takes place at Bosco. Learners are required to attend Bosco for four days each week.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	24
Number of learner interviews	50
Number of staff interviews	32
Number of employer interviews	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	15

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

10. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, Bosco's leadership and management are good, as is its approach to equality of opportunity. Its quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. The quality of work-based learning in business administration, childcare and foundation studies is good.

GRADES

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	2
Quality assurance	3

Business administration, management & professional	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

Health, social care & public services	2
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

Foundation programmes	2
Contributory grades:	
Life Skills	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

11. Retention and achievements rates are good for business administration learners.

They have remained at above 70 per cent at level 2 and 50 per cent at level 3 over a three-year period. Learners achieve a range of additional qualifications in IT, literacy, numeracy and key skills. The development of technical and personal skills is good. Most learners make good progress in relation to their prior achievements. Not all learners have yet developed a work ethos.

12. Overall, achievement and retention rates for childcare learners are at least satisfactory. However, it is not possible to make a fuller judgement with such few numbers. For example, in 2002-03 there were only five learners. Of the 11 who started and left in 2001-02, six achieved all their learning goals. Learners develop effective interpersonal skills and are well motivated. Portfolios contain a good standard of work and are well organised. Many learners make slow progress in the early stages of their programme.

13. A good proportion of the learners on the foundation Life Skills programme achieved their learning goals. However, the rates have fallen slightly over the past three years from 60 per cent to 54 per cent. Over the same period, retention and achievement rates on

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the IT NVQ at level 1 programme are good, at 86 per cent, 92 per cent, and 90 per cent respectively. Learners make good progress in developing personal, interpersonal and academic skills. All types of achievements are fully recognised. Those taking the NVQ in IT, produce good documents. However, much of the evidence in one learner's portfolio is very similar to another, and not specific to the individual.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
Foundation programmes	0	3	12	0	0	0	0	15
Total	0	3	16	0	0	0	0	19

14. **All of the learning sessions were good or better.** The standard of teaching on all learning programmes is good. In business administration, sessions are stimulating with a good balance of background knowledge and practical activity. Tutors in childcare are skilled at providing a range of learning experiences which meet the wide range of learners' needs. The dynamic nature of the teaching sessions helps motivate the learners. Tutors on the foundation programmes are very good at meeting the individual learning and emotional needs of the learners. Bosco has very good staffing levels. Learners are taught in small groups and receive good individual support. Learners make good use of computers to enhance their work. Effective work taster and study skills sessions have been introduced. However, there is an over-dependency on paper-based learning resources.

15. Overall, the resources to support learning are satisfactory. The computing equipment in business administration is appropriate and staff are well qualified. In childcare the resources are limited. Due to decreasing numbers, the opportunities for learners to observe children at Bosco's nursery are barely satisfactory. Other work placements are good. Nursery staff are experienced and suitably qualified, but assessors who act as tutors are not teacher trained. Learning resources such as handouts are sometimes poor. The rooms used for teaching foundation classes are mostly satisfactory, but some computing rooms are inappropriate. The completion of an extension to the existing building, planned for five weeks after the inspection, will greatly improve the accommodation.

16. Learners' assessment and reviews are regularly carried out and are mostly satisfactory. In foundation, formal reviews are good and are used to discuss personal issues and progress towards individual learning goals. In childcare the reviews are good, but there is insufficient assessment by direct observation. Learners are set challenging but achievable targets. Progress reviews for business administration learners are sometimes poor. They are mostly pastoral and do not focus sufficiently on the learning process. Reviews do not result in detailed action-planning and do not sufficiently challenge learners.

17. **The initial assessment process is appropriate to identify learners' needs.** When a need is identified, learners receive good individual support in literacy, numeracy and IT. An in-depth interview is effectively used alongside the initial assessment, to provide a detailed picture of the learners social, emotional and learning needs. Staff who provide support in literacy and numeracy are appropriately qualified.

18. **Learners receive good individual support.** In business administration the outcomes of the initial assessment are used to create individualised programmes and identify appropriate work placements. Staff often give individual learners support, outside of normal hours. Staff have a very strong commitment to help learners achieve. Learners on childcare programmes are helped to develop mature attitudes to work. Support at Bosco's nursery is particularly effective. Foundation programme tutors carefully take into consideration the learners' personal circumstances. The Bosco centre provides a caring family atmosphere. Staff are friendly and approachable, but consistently enforce discipline when required. Induction for all programmes is thorough and appropriate. Learners receive good guidance on future learning options and employment possibilities.

19. **The transition from the old foundation programmes to the new E2E programme has not been fully effective.** Not all learners are clear about what has changed. Tutors are not sufficiently aware of the requirements of the adult basic skills core curriculum. However, learners still receive a good foundation learning experience.

Leadership and management

20. **The leadership of Bosco is outstanding.** The director sets out a clear vision and direction for the organisation and its staff. There is a strong emphasis on maintaining very good standards within a caring and supportive environment. All staff share this vision, and feel that their personal contribution is valued by the organisation.

21. **Staff value the professional and personal support they receive from their managers.** They are encouraged and supported to attend training activities which meet organisational and personal needs. The style of management is very open and encourages staff to share in the development of the organisation.

22. Bosco has satisfactory internal and external communications. There are satisfactory links and effective working relationships with a range of external organisations which benefit learners.

23. Bosco's business plan is satisfactory. The development and action plans are thorough and regularly updated. Overall, the management information systems are satisfactory. **Financial resources are effectively managed.** Financial information and learners' progress is systematically recorded. However, there are some deficiencies in the capabilities of the management information system. For example, reports do not effectively highlight slow progress by learners.

24. **There are good arrangements to support learners who have additional needs in literacy, numeracy and language.** Learners have good individual support. There are

adequate numbers of experienced staff to support the learners.

25. **Bosco has been slow to respond to changing management needs.** The organisation continues to grow with learner numbers increasing year on year. There are plans to open two new training centres within three years. In its attempt to maintain very good standards, the organisation has become too dependent on one person. The current management structure and skill levels are insufficient to respond effectively to the current and planned growth of the organisation.

26. **The policy for equality of opportunity is comprehensive and is supported by a code of conduct which is thoroughly applied.** Tutors immediately challenge discriminatory behaviour, offensive remarks or bullying. The induction process fully covers equality of opportunity. Learners continue to develop their understanding of equal opportunities during their training.

27. **The staff offer outstanding support for learners** who otherwise would be unable to access or cope with a traditional training programme. The personal and development programme is very effective. While in learning, learners can stay in a well-furnished hostel owned by Bosco or leave their baby at the nursery. The literature to promote the provision contains a good range of positive images. Employers are carefully checked before a learner is placed. Learners who are being unfairly treated by an employer are quickly moved.

28. **Equal opportunities data are regularly collected and summarised, but there is insufficient analysis.** Staff training is satisfactory, but there is insufficient understanding on the requirements of the Special Educational Needs Disability Act 2001. Learners who have restricted mobility cannot access any part of Bosco other than the ground floor. The new extension will not improve the situation.

29. **The quality assurance system is successful in raising the standards of teaching.** Teachers who are observed receive comprehensive and constructive advice and the feedback notes are extremely detailed. Observation forms contain good practical suggestions on how to improve the quality of the teaching and learning.

30. The management team has high expectations of individual learners' retention, progress and personal achievement. Learners' progress, attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored. Staff take immediate action if learners' performance or behaviour becomes unsatisfactory. Learners appreciate the quality of this caring approach and feel exceptionally well supported, both vocationally and personally.

31. The process for compiling the self-assessment report is satisfactory. Staff, learners, employers, parents and carers all make a contribution. Questionnaires are used regularly and have led to a number of improvements. However, those involved in the self-assessment process were insufficiently self-critical.

32. **There is a clear quality assurance framework.** This includes a satisfactory range of policies and procedures that form a quality assurance procedures manual. Generally

there is insufficient monitoring and inconsistencies of practice across all areas of learning. For example, there is no standardisation of internal verification. Assessors have little formal feedback to help them improve their assessment practices. There is inadequate monitoring of progress reviews to ensure that achievable targets are set for all learners.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- outstanding leadership which sets a clear direction
- effective management of financial resources
- good support for staff
- strong management focus on individual learners' needs
- clear focus on raising the standards of teaching
- very good promotion of equal opportunities

Weaknesses

- slow response to changing management needs
- insufficient monitoring of the quality assurance arrangements

Business administration, management & professional

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- very good support for learners
- good teaching

Weaknesses

- poor progress reviews
- weak internal verification

Health, social care & public services

Strengths

- good development of personal and vocational skills
- good teaching and training
- very good individualised support for learners

Weaknesses

- limited resources for learners
- insufficient recording of direct observation

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- effective teaching
- good support for learners
- good IT achievement

Weaknesses

- insufficient development of foundation programmes
- weak internal verification practice

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT BOSCO CENTRE:

- the lack of barriers to entry
- the support and mutual respect of other students – ‘we all look out for each other’
- the small number of learners in each group – ‘it’s much better than school’
- the way learners are given a second chance – ‘I used to be horrible –they’ve sorted me out’
- the approachable and helpful staff – ‘they talk to you like a friend’
- the friendly, caring atmosphere – ‘it’s like a big family’
- the practical rather than school like approach
- the supportive attitude of staff - ‘they made me feel welcome’
- the availability of hostel accommodation
- the flexibility of the centre - ‘I can arrange to come in outside normal office hours’
- the nursery and childcare provision

WHAT LEARNERS THINK BOSCO CENTRE COULD IMPROVE:

- more time to complete written work
- more use of computers
- larger kitchen facilities
- better sports facilities

KEY CHALLENGES FOR BOSCO CENTRE:

- develop the capacity of staff to take on a wider range of tasks and duties
- improve staff ownership and implementation of the quality assurance arrangements
- improve assessment and internal verification practice
- further develop the foundation programme to meet new standards and expectations
- maintain and improve retention and achievement rates
- keep up to date with new legislation such as the Special Educational Needs Disability Act 2001

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- outstanding leadership which sets a clear direction
- effective management of financial resources
- good support for staff
- strong management focus on individual learners' needs
- clear focus on raising the standards of teaching
- very good promotion of equal opportunities

Weaknesses

- slow response to changing management needs
- insufficient monitoring of the quality assurance arrangements

33. The director provides outstanding leadership which provides a clear vision and direction for the organisation and its staff. There is a well-defined and positive strategy for supporting disadvantaged learners. The management team sets high standards for its staff, with the emphasis on developing and maintaining a caring and supportive environment for learners. All staff share ownership of Bosco's vision, and feel that their personal contribution is valued by the organisation. The management committee demonstrates their full commitment to this vision. Most members have a direct personal involvement in the activities of the centre and personally know many of the learners. For example, they act as volunteers and attend internal award ceremonies.

34. There is effective management of financial resources. Learners directly benefit from the high staffing levels which allow very good individual support. The management team makes very effective use of income from a number of sources. There is careful monitoring of budgets. The financial secretary, overseen by the management committee, carefully checks the account every month. Through efficient financial planning by the director and management committee, the original Bosco centre is undergoing a substantial extension. The new rooms created by this work, will enable Bosco to increase the number of learners, as well as resolve some of the current accommodation problems. Financial issues are thoroughly reviewed by the management committee at three annual committee meetings.

35. There is good support for staff. Staff value the professional and personal support they receive. All of Bosco's employees have an individual six-monthly monitoring meeting with the director. Annual appraisals are thorough and they are used to review performance against targets and to discuss development needs. Staff are encouraged and supported to attend training activities which meet organisational and personal

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needs. The annual staff development plan clearly builds on the appraisal process. The style of management is very open and this encourages staff to share fully in the development of the organisation.

36. Bosco's business plan is satisfactory. The development and action plans are thorough and regularly updated. The development plan sets out clear expectations for the next three years and highlights significant growth. It also gives details of the overall targets for numbers in each programme area and the future use of the two proposed training centres. A draft three-year development plan was written just before the inspection with the support of the local LSC. The plan includes a good environmental review and a detailed analysis of Bosco's organisational strengths and weaknesses.

37. Overall the management information systems are satisfactory. Computers are networked and the management team uses the system daily. The financial information is detailed. Learners' individual progress, including unit achievements, is clearly and systematically recorded. The director is able to produce clear management reports. However, these are not regularly shared with other members of the management team as part of the monitoring process. There are some deficiencies in the capabilities of the management information system. For example, reports do not always effectively highlight the slow progress of some learners or where additional internal verification is required. At present the course director personally inputs all of the information on learners. Some assessors do not take sufficient responsibility for ensuring that achievement data are recorded.

38. Bosco has satisfactory internal communications. Informal communication between management, staff and learners is very effective across the organisation. There are regular scheduled meetings for managers and staff and notes are kept of most meetings. However, they are generally extremely brief and do not contain clear timescales or individual named responsibilities for action.

39. Bosco has satisfactory links and effective working relationships with a range of external organisations which benefit learners. Bosco currently has around 20 regular work placements. There are also good links with a range of external agencies which provide additional specialist advice and support for clients with specific learning and personal needs.

40. There are good arrangements to support learners who have additional development needs in literacy, numeracy and language. There are clearly defined and effective procedures for the initial assessment of learners. Individual learning plans are relevant to learners' needs and many learners receive good individual support. There are adequate experienced staff who are trained to support learners. Some learners are referred to external agencies for more specialist support.

41. Bosco has been slow to respond to changing management needs. The organisational and management structure is clear and understood by staff. The organisation continues to grow, with numbers increasing year on year and there are plans to open two new training centres within three years. The director of Bosco is

resolute that the high standards already achieved must be maintained and improved. However, the organisation has become too dependent on one person. The current management structure and skill levels are insufficient to respond effectively to the planned growth of the organisation. The increasing demands on the director's time to work more strategically are not reflected in their current operational workload. Bosco has recognised the weaknesses and has started to appoint new staff and develop existing management skills. However, the pace is slow. Operational managers have had few opportunities to develop management skills or gain experience. For example, some operational, administrative and quality assurance responsibilities have not been effectively delegated to capable staff.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

42. The policy for equality of opportunity is comprehensive and is supported by a code of conduct which is applied to all learners, visitors, children and young people and staff. It is displayed throughout the centre. In line with the Bosco's ethos, the policy stresses the importance of women being treated with respect in a male-dominated society. The policy was last reviewed in April 2003. However, the review did not explicitly take into account recent legislation. Tutors immediately challenge discriminatory behaviour, offensive remarks or bullying. Concerns are recorded, and if a learner's behaviour does not improve over a period of time, they are asked to leave. The complaints procedure is clearly written and understood by learners. The induction process fully covers equality of opportunity. Learners are encouraged to explore through discussion, issues related to discrimination, diversity and ways of handling difficult situations. Learners continue to develop their understanding of equal opportunities during their training. Work-related issues are carefully monitored.

43. The staff provide outstanding support for learners who otherwise would be unable to access or cope with a traditional training programme, for example, those with mental health and emotional problems, pregnancies, parenthood and homelessness. Central to Bosco's philosophy, is the importance of learners developing a sense of belonging. From the outset learners are encouraged to abide by a set of common core values. These include care, trust, respect, listening to others and self-worth. The personal development programme is very effective in helping learners deal with moral dilemmas. Learners who need a place to live can stay in a well-furnished hostel which is owned by Bosco. A key worker who lives at the lodge provides very effective support for up to six learners. Learners and staff with young children can leave their children at Bosco's nursery. The literature used to promote the provision contains a wide range of positive images. However, the website is unexciting. Some past learners have volunteered to promote their experience to wider audience. For example, a female learner who was a mother at sixteen, spoke at a teenage pregnancy workshop about her experiences at Bosco. She has recently started university.

44. Employers are carefully checked before a learner is placed. Only employers who are supportive of Bosco and its aims are used. During assessors' visits to the workplace, learners discuss equal opportunities and receive guidance on how to handle difficult situations. Learners provide continuous feedback about work placements, but the

standard questionnaires do not cover equal opportunities. Learners who are being unfairly treated by an employer are quickly moved.

45. Equal opportunities data are regularly collected and summarised. However, there has been insufficient analysis, for example, in relation to different groups achievements or why mostly female learners progress to level 2 and level 3 provision. Staff training is satisfactory, but there are very few explicit training events. However, this is balanced by the ongoing involvement of staff in the learners' personal development programme. For example, a theatre company that specialises in peer education, successfully ran a workshop on hate crime and domestic violence. All staff attended. Learners who have restricted mobility cannot access any part of Bosco other than the ground floor. The new extension will not improve the situation. The lack of understanding about the Special Educational Needs Disability Act 2001 is apparent. There is no equipment which would support a learner with a visual impairment and no thought has been given to the new colour scheme in the extension. Although great attention is paid to the needs of individuals, equal opportunities is not formally discussed at any meetings. The director does not produce a report on equal opportunities for the management committee.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

46. The quality assurance system is successful in raising the standards of teaching. Over a four-month period the director observes all teachers. Teachers who are observed receive comprehensive and constructive advice and the feedback notes are extremely detailed. In addition to highlighting the key strengths and weaknesses of teaching methods, they contain detailed comments on the impact of learning. The approach taken by the teacher is carefully analysed in the context of the topic and learners' preferred learning styles. Observation forms contain good practical suggestions on how to improve the quality of the teaching and learning. All aspects of the process are very thorough and detailed and lead to continuous improvements.

47. The management team has high expectations of learners' retention, progress and personal achievement. The director takes a keen personal interest in the wellbeing of all learners. Learners' progress, attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored and staff take immediate action if learners' performance or behaviour becomes unsatisfactory. Action can include individual counselling sessions by qualified and experienced staff. Learners appreciate the quality of this caring approach, and feel exceptionally well supported, both vocationally and as an individual.

48. The process for compiling the self-assessment report is satisfactory. All of the staff were involved at each stage of its development and contributed to the resulting development plan. The self-assessment process draws on detailed feedback from learners, employers, parents and carers, that has been collected through a series of regular questionnaires. As a result of systematic analysis there has been a number of improvements. The current questionnaire is too lengthy for some learners, and a new simplified one is to be introduced. Those involved in the self-assessment process were insufficiently self-critical. Some of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report were considered by the inspectors to be no more than normal practice and most of the

weaknesses were omitted. However, the grades given by Bosco were the same as those given by inspectors except for quality assurance, which was lower.

49. There is a clear quality assurance framework which highlights the key quality assurance criteria of the organisation, and links these to the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Bosco also has a satisfactory range of policies and procedures, which are included in a quality assurance procedures manual. Staff are generally aware of these procedures but do not always take full ownership of them. Generally there is insufficient monitoring and inconsistencies of practice across all areas of learning, for example, there is no standardisation of internal verification. Assessors receive little formal feedback to help them improve their assessment practices. There is inadequate monitoring of progress reviews to ensure that achievable targets are set for all learners. Some of the documents in induction packs and learners' portfolios are not up-to-date or are incomplete.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	11	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- very good support for learners
- good teaching

Weaknesses

- poor progress reviews
- weak internal verification

Achievement and standards

50. Retention and achievement rates are good. They have remained at above 70 per cent at level 2 and 50 per cent at level 3 over a three-year period. In 2001-02, the achievement rate at level 2 was excellent, when all 12 learners achieved their qualification aims. Learners are encouraged to take a range of additional qualifications. Most achieve an NVQ at level 1 in IT and additional qualifications in literacy, numeracy and key skills. Learners' success was identified as a strength in the self-assessment report.

51. The development of technical and personal skills is good. For example, the ongoing improvement in computing skills is valued by work supervisors. While on the programme, learners gain confidence and are able to work without supervision, often on their own initiative. They are enthusiastic about their work. Learners develop good research skills and demonstrate standards at or above those expected for their learning goals. The progress made by learners in relation to their prior achievements is satisfactory or better. Portfolios are well structured and reflect a good understanding of the background knowledge needed for the NVQ. Comparisons of learners' work over a period of time show there is steady improvement. Attendance and punctuality are sometimes poor as some learners have not yet developed a work ethos. Absences are followed up immediately, usually on the same day by telephone. Punctuality is a regular feature of weekly reviews.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			1													
Retained*			0													
Successfully completed			0													
Still in learning			1													

*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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			13		20		12									
Retained*			3		13		8	67								
Successfully completed			3		13		8	67								
Still in learning			8		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

Quality of education and training

52. Support for learners is good. Staff often give individual learners support, outside of normal hours. There is a very strong commitment to help learners achieve. For example, one member of staff stayed late every weekday evening until a learner achieved their level 2 qualification. Employers are also very supportive. They are willing to vary the learners' role in the workplace, to ensure that the necessary evidence is generated for the NVQ. One employer had a daily meeting with a learner to plan the day's activities against NVQ requirements and also acted as a coach on organisational procedures. Another employer kept a weekly log of work activities, so that they could be referenced against the NVQ standards. Learners speak positively about their learning experience and state that the programmes meet or exceed their expectations. For learners who have additional needs, Bosco can provide hostel accommodation and a daytime nursery. One learner in business administration has already made use of both facilities. The good support for learners was recognised in the self-assessment report.

53. The standard of teaching is good. All off-the-job training sessions are better than satisfactory. Classroom sessions are stimulating with a good balance of background knowledge and practical activity. Good use is made of question and answer techniques

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to check learners' understanding. Learners are given clear instructions and are encouraged to work independently. Trainers frequently check learners' progress and ensure that they understand what is expected of them. Some of the resource materials which are produced by staff are good.

54. The initial assessment process is appropriately used to identify individual needs. It includes an analysis of learners' literacy, numeracy and computing skills. The outcomes of this assessment are used to create individualised programmes and to identify appropriate work placements. If appropriate, learners receive individual support in English and mathematics and many go on to achieve nationally recognised qualifications. Tutors for literacy and numeracy liaise closely with assessors to ensure that the learners' needs are being met. Assessments are carried out regularly using an adequate range of methods. Observations in the workplace to assess performance evidence are carried out each month.

55. Communications with employers are satisfactory. Employers appreciate the initial information provided by Bosco. A work-placement officer makes an initial check for health and safety and visits at least three times a year. Employers are regularly asked to complete a short questionnaire on punctuality, attendance and other aspects of the learner's work. Any concerns are acted on immediately, but the results are not always communicated to the employer. Some of the employers are not aware what happens when a learner attends off-the-job training, although schemes of work are available.

56. Overall, the resources are satisfactory. Computing equipment is suitable for business administration training and industry-standard software packages are used. Staff are well qualified and they remain professionally updated by attending external events and courses. Learners are given an appropriate textbook for the duration of their programme.

57. Progress reviews are poor. Although reviews frequently take place at Bosco they are mostly pastoral and do not focus sufficiently on the learning process. Supervisors are not involved in the progress review process. Although targets are set, they are general rather than specific. Timescales for achieving the targets are not explicit and are not used to drive assessment and achievement forward. Reviews do not result in detailed action-planning and do not sufficiently challenge learners. Neither learners nor supervisors have a copy of the progress review paperwork.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The course team works well together and there is regular informal communication. Monthly meetings are well recorded. The documents are satisfactory and individual learners' progress is fully discussed. There is a well-planned programme for off-the-job training with clear schemes of work and lesson plans. Equality of opportunity is regularly promoted during teaching sessions and learners' understanding of their rights and responsibilities is regularly checked. There is a culture of valuing diversity and any form of oppressive behaviour is dealt with promptly. Internal verification is weak and does not assure the quality of the assessment process.

There is no overall policy for internal verification. Monitoring of assessors is very good, is carried out regularly and assessors are given detailed, focused and relevant feedback. However, there are no procedures for portfolio verification and no formal recording of final or interim verification. There is no written feedback to either the assessor or the learner. Learners are not involved in the process and internal verification records are not audited. To date, there have been no standardisation exercises.

Health, social care & public services**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	10	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of personal and vocational skills
- good teaching and training
- very good individualised support for learners

Weaknesses

- limited resources for learners
- insufficient recording of direct observation

Achievement and standards

59. Overall, achievement and retention rates are at least satisfactory. However, it is not possible to make a fuller judgement due to low numbers. For example, in the 2001-02 there were 13 learners, but in 2002-03 there were only five. Of the 11 learners who started and left in 2001-02, six achieved all of their learning goals. All of the learners who started in 2002-03 are still in learning.

60. Learners develop good personal and vocational skills. Many learners start the programme with low confidence and poor self-esteem. Bosco provides a caring environment which enables learners to develop effective interpersonal skills. For most learners, the completion of each NVQ unit increases their confidence and the belief that they can succeed. This significantly improves their motivation. Learners develop good time management skills. They understand the need to be punctual and gain a wide range of other employability skills. Learners' portfolios contain a good standard of work and are well organised. Many learners make slow progress in the early stages of their programme.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	2															
Retained*	0															
Successfully completed	0															
Still in learning	2															

*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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01									
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			5		13		4									
Retained*			0		6		2	50								
Successfully completed			0		6		2	50								
Still in learning			5		3		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

Quality of education and training

61. Teaching and training are good. Planned off-the-job teaching takes place one day a week at Bosco. Tutors are skilled at providing a range of learning experiences which cover the background knowledge requirements for the NVQ at level 2 and 3. Schemes of work and lesson plans are comprehensive and detailed. The trainers ensure that the content of each session is sufficiently differentiated to meet the wide range of learners' needs. Tasks enable learners to apply theory to childcare practice. Much of the teaching is on an individual basis to accommodate the roll-on roll-off nature of the programme. Learners have very good guidance in portfolio-building. The dynamic nature of the teaching sessions helps motivate the learners. Most of the learners use their study time effectively. Many learners begin their training in Bosco's nursery, where the supportive atmosphere enables them to learn and develop new childcare skills. Nursery staff are experienced and suitably qualified. They provide good training that helps learners develop the necessary skills to work competently in a childcare setting.

62. The learners have good individual support. Before joining a programme, learners attend an in-depth initial interview followed by an effective initial assessment. These provide a detailed picture of the learners social, emotional and learning needs, before

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constructing an appropriate programme. When possible, information from other agencies is used to complete the initial picture. Information is then passed to the most appropriate people which enables the tutor, nursery managers/assessors to help learners overcome their barriers to learning. Learners develop good, mature attitudes to work and sharing responsibility. Most of the support is individual. An appropriately qualified member of staff offers counselling. Good additional support and advice is given to single parent learners and an alarm clock is given to learners who struggle with punctuality. Several learners leave their children in Bosco's nursery. This is also used as the first work placement for most learners. Staff who work in the nursery provide effective guidance and advice for learners. The familiarity of the setting provides security for those learners who have little confidence.

63. A thorough induction gives learners a very good introduction into the different aspects of working with children. It includes information on health and safety, the safe care of children and equality of opportunity. Learners are able to recall important aspects of the induction and understand its relevance. Every week, learners meet with their assessor to review assessment plans or advise on aspects of childcare practice. Learners only go on work placements, other than at Bosco, when the staff feel that the intensive support is no longer required. Study time at Bosco and individual help are still available for these learners. The frequency of assessment visits to external work placements is guided by the needs of the learner.

64. Initial assessment and interview identify individual learning needs in literacy, numeracy and IT. Suitably qualified staff provide effective support. Learners are able to attend sessions during their study day where topics are relevant to childcare learners. Some of the completed work is used as evidence in learners' portfolios. Learners follow appropriate childcare qualifications. To enable learners to take optional units, work placements are often changed. The NVQ programme is carefully designed to allow learners to join the course at any time. The frequency of reviews varies depending on each learner's needs and everyone who is involved with a learner makes a contribution. Much of this communication is verbal. However, reviews are fully recorded and action points are agreed. Challenging but achievable targets are set with clear timescales. Towards the end of their programme, learners receive good guidance on future learning options and employment possibilities.

65. The resources to support learning are limited. Due to a change in funding source and extensive building works, the number of children using Bosco's nursery has significantly declined. However, the number of learners using the nursery for their work placement remains the same. Opportunities to observe children at different stages of development and to practise newly acquired childcare skills are barely satisfactory. The three other work placements, including a nursery attached to a primary school, provide excellent opportunities for learning and training. There are too few staff who support learners on the childcare programme. Assessors do not have any teaching or training qualifications. The number of assessors is only just sufficient for the number of learners. There is only one member of staff qualified to teach childcare practice to level 3. Each learner is given an appropriate textbook and other texts are available in the nursery, but not easily available in the teaching rooms. Photocopied handouts are frequently poor

with little attention paid to the overall presentation.

66. There is insufficient direct recording of learners' activities. Learners' portfolios contain very little assessment by direct observation. In Bosco's nursery, learners work alongside their assessors. There are many good opportunities to record observed activities. However, this happens infrequently and when it does, the time taken by the assessor is too short. Direct observation paperwork is often incomplete. Some learners' NVQ portfolios contain documents they have not produced.

Leadership and management

67. There is good, informal communication between members of the childcare team. They work well together and regularly meet to discuss learners' progress. Staff are very open with the learners and ensure that support needs are quickly identified and promptly dealt with. All of the childcare team was involved in the self-assessment process. Learners are able to explain and give relevant examples on a range of equal opportunities and diversity issues and demonstrate a good understanding. They are knowledgeable about the complaints procedure and the NVQ appeals procedure. Internal verification is satisfactory.

Foundation programmes**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Life Skills	39	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- effective teaching
- good support for learners
- good IT achievement

Weaknesses

- insufficient development of foundation programmes
- weak internal verification practice

Achievement and standards

68. Retention and achievement rates for the Life Skills/E2E programme are mostly good. However, they have fallen slightly over the past three years, from 60 per cent to 54 per cent. None of the learners who started in 2003-04 have left. Retention and achievement rates on the IT NVQ at level 1 programme are good. Six of these learners transferred to the E2E programme although they are not shown in the table overleaf. For learners who started in 1999-2000 to 2001-02, the retention and achievement rates are 86 per cent, 92 per cent, and 90 per cent, respectively. Of the 19 learners who started in 2002-03, seven of the 11 who left have achieved the targets on their learning plan. Half of the learners on the former Life Skills and IT NVQ programmes gained employment when they left the programme.

69. Learners make good progress in developing personal and interpersonal skills. They quickly gain confidence and embrace the positive values promoted by Bosco. They learn how to respond positively to other learners and staff. Learners can clearly explain what progress they have made. Learners' personal and academic achievements are fully recognised. Achievements are acknowledged and internal certificates are regularly presented. Birthdays and other important personal events are celebrated with all staff and learners. Learners develop good IT skills. Those taking the NVQ in IT produce good documents which are used as evidence for one of the units. However, much of the evidence in learners' portfolios is very similar, and not specific to the individual. Learners carry out tasks, and the evidence is given the same reference number in every learner's portfolio.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Life Skills																
	2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	14		43		28		7		5							
Retained*	0		13		15	54	4	57	3	60						
Successfully completed	0		13		15	54	4	57	3	60						
Still in learning	14		19		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

Quality of education and training

70. Tutors are skilled at meeting the individual learning and emotional needs of the learners. Learners are taught in small groups and have good individual attention. Lessons are well planned and enable learners to gain new skills. Tutors give clear, simple explanations which learners understand, and skilfully use a range of approaches and materials that reflect the learners' wide ability range. After their initial assessment, learners receive good individualised training in numeracy, literacy and IT. Effective work taster sessions have just started and outside speakers are occasionally invited to make presentations to the learners. Study skills lessons have been introduced. Other activities include a range of social and learning opportunities, for example, an outing to a theme park and skating trips. Learners use computers to enhance their work produced for communication, such as internet research and producing posters. However, opportunities for team building and problem-solving are weak. There is an over-dependency on paper-based learning resources.

71. Learners receive very good guidance and support. The initial interview is very thorough and tutors take into consideration any personal circumstances that could affect learners' progress while on the programme. The centre provides a caring atmosphere and a supportive environment. They operate an effective open-door recruitment policy and learners are given clear advice about employment, health and social issues. Staff are friendly and approachable, but consistently enforce discipline when required. Formal reviews are regular and effective and are used to discuss personal issues and progress towards individual learning goals. Learners can meet with their key worker at any time if they have an urgent personal problem. Recently the centre has implemented effective weekly reviews. In preparation for these, learners are required to complete a comprehensive self-assessment.

72. Teaching rooms are mostly adequate and, when possible, are adapted to meet learners' needs. The learning environment is greatly improved by colourful and attractive

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wall displays. However, some aspects of the accommodation are not satisfactory. For example, the current computer suite is spread over two small rooms which are not adjacent. When both rooms are in use, the tutor and the assistant have to constantly move between them. One computer room has poorly adjusting chairs and the room is very cramped. Currently only four computers have internet access. The pool tables in the recreation room are creatively used as desks. A link corridor passes through one room which is used for literacy and numeracy training, and this leads to disruption of lessons and learners' concentration. An extension to the existing building, planned for five weeks after the inspection, will greatly improve the accommodation. The redistribution of the classes and the location of the IT suite in one large room, will resolve most of the problems. In future all computers will have internet access.

73. The transition from the old foundation programmes to the new E2E programme has not been fully effective. Not all learners are clear about what has changed. Some old paperwork is still used. Staff are not sufficiently aware of the requirements of the adult basic skills core curriculum and no training has been planned. Old and new learners are still following Wordpower and Numberpower qualifications, although these are not now a part of the E2E qualification. Despite these failings, learners are still having a good foundation learning experience.

Leadership and management

74. There is good communication between staff, although much of it is informal. The foundation team work well together. Information about learners is thoroughly discussed and recorded at weekly staff meetings. Team members are clear about their responsibilities and good practice is shared. All of the team was involved in writing the self-assessment report. Quality assurance is generally satisfactory, but internal verification is weak. When an assessor is observed they have comprehensive feedback. However, when learners' portfolios are checked, the same comments appear on every feedback sheet. Assessment decisions are rarely challenged. The internal verification process does not sufficiently comment on the variable standards of learners' work. All portfolios and units are systematically sampled. However, there is insufficient recording of internal verification.