

REINSPECTION REPORT

The Bassetlaw Training Agency Limited Reinspection

15 September 2004



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. 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
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes 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.

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The Bassetlaw Training Agency Limited (BTA) is a private training provider located in Worksop, Nottinghamshire. In addition to running a private nursery school, the company provides foundation and work-based learning programmes for 66 young people in business administration, information technology, retailing and customer service, early years care and education, and Entry to Employment (E2E). Training is funded by Nottinghamshire Learning and Skills Council. The company has a board of three directors and the company's operations are managed by the managing director. There are 26 staff in total, 17 of whom work full time.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Health, social care & public services

2. There are 19 early years care and education learners, 12 of whom are foundation modern apprentices, six are advanced modern apprentices and one is working towards a national vocational qualification (NVQ). BTA provides training at its Worksop training centre where learners attend for half a day each week for background knowledge training, individual support, and key skills development. Three advanced apprentices are employed and the remainder work in placements in local children's nurseries and schools. Learners are recruited mainly through Connexions.

3. The early years co-ordinator is supported by two members of staff. Two of the staff provide training and all of them carry out assessments. Internal verification is subcontracted to a local childcare consortium. Support for literacy, numeracy and language needs is provided by specialist staff at BTA.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	2
Number of inspection days	7
Number of learner interviews	14
Number of staff interviews	6
Number of employer interviews	6
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	7

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

4. At the previous inspection, all aspects of BTA's provision were found to be satisfactory, with the exception of training in health and social care and public services. At the end of the reinspection, training in health, social care and public services was found to be satisfactory.

THE BASSETLAW TRAINING AGENCY LIMITED REINSPECTION

GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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

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
New Deal 18-24	3

Health, social care & public services	4
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	4

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Life Skills	3

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

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

AREAS OF LEARNING

Health, social care & public services

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	19	3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- good monitoring of learners' progress
- good individual support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates

Achievement and standards

5. Completion of the modern apprenticeship framework is still very poor. Eighty-six learners have started on the training programme in the past four years and although 19 are still in training, only two have successfully completed all aspects of the framework. To date, no foundation modern apprentices have completed the framework. However, achievement of NVQs is improving. In the past twelve months 11 learners have achieved their NVQ. Learners who have joined the training programme in the past 12 months are making good progress with all aspects of their qualification including working towards the key skills qualifications. However, a small number of learners who have been on the training programme for more than two years are still making slow progress towards achieving the NVQ. Seventy per cent of learners starting training programmes in 2003-04 are still learning.

6. Learners' portfolios are satisfactory. They are clearly referenced and well presented.

Quality of education and training

7. Target-setting and the monitoring of learners' progress which was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection, has improved significantly and is now good. Learners' progress reviews are detailed and thorough. Agreed targets are realistic and set to appropriate timescales. Learners' progress is effectively recorded. There is good involvement of employers in the progress review process and learners appreciate the clear focus on reviewed activity and future planning. In addition to progress review meetings every three months, learners receive interim reviews to consider short-term actions and to maintain their progress. The early years co-ordinator effectively monitors learners' progress towards completing the components of the framework on a well-

designed and functional wallchart.

8. Support for learners is good. BTA's staff respond well to the needs of learners by providing good individual coaching. In addition to weekend and evening support, additional visits to the work placement and referral to specialist agencies when required. One learner with dyslexia was provided with a voice recognition computer in the workplace. Employers are involved in supporting learners, providing opportunities in the work placement to reinforce learning and in gathering additional assessment evidence. Learners appreciate the support provided by BTA and believe that staff show a genuine concern and interest for their welfare.

9. The planning and delivery of training has improved and is now satisfactory. Appropriate schemes of work and lesson plans have now been written. Foundation modern apprentices attend the centre for training for half a day each. They receive useful information to support the technical certificate and to develop good background knowledge for the NVQ. This is also reinforced through additional individual coaching. Training for advanced modern apprentices is more informal, and is being delivered mainly through effective individual coaching sessions. Learners' portfolios contain sufficient evidence to demonstrate a sound understanding of their work.

10. Assessment and internal verification remain satisfactory. Assessors receive regular updates about the awarding body from the local childcare consortium that carries out internal verification. Staff attend relevant consortium team meetings. Assessment by observation takes place frequently in the workplace and portfolios contain a range of other evidence including reflective accounts, case studies and witness statements. Internal verification procedures are standardised with a sampling strategy for verifying and monitoring training and qualifications. Learners' progress is recorded by BTA and the system used to monitor learners' progress is updated regularly. Timekeeping, attendance and commitment to the programme are monitored and areas of concern are dealt with quickly.

11. The management of resources is satisfactory. Staffing levels are sufficient to provide appropriate training, assessment and support to learners. Staff have appropriate qualifications and industrial experience. Work placements are suitable for the qualifications. Learning resources including equipment, publications and journals for the background knowledge aspect of the qualification are also satisfactory. The designated early years care and education training room is adequately resourced and appropriately decorated for the occupational area.

12. The approach to the identification of and support for literacy, numeracy and language skills is satisfactory. Initial assessment procedures are thorough and all learners have their literacy, numeracy and language skills assessed. Where appropriate, additional support is provided by BTA's staff. Individual literacy and numeracy development and action plans are agreed with learners and are frequently reviewed. Learners identified as having their literacy support needs make good progress in developing these skills.

13. The planning and training for the key skills qualification has improved and is now

more effective. Learners who have joined the training programme since the previous inspection now start work for the key skills qualification much earlier in the programme. Key skills projects have been designed to provide evidence towards the technical certificate and NVQ. Some learners who have been in training for over two years have completed their NVQ but only recently started gathering evidence for their key skills qualification.

Leadership and management

14. Leadership and management of early years care and education are satisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator is well informed of programme performance and there are good working relationships and communication in the small staff team. Good progress has been made to implement improvements to the quality of the training programmes and to respond to the weakness identified at the previous inspection. Communications with employers are effective and take place frequently. The recently produced employers' handbook which provides relevant and detailed information is a good initiative to better involve employers in the training process. Initial assessment and selection process for the programme have been strengthened. Training is more structured and key skills training is delivered at a much earlier stage in the training programme.

15. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The report produced for the reinspection involved all members of the staff team and considered learners' and employers' views. The report represented a reasonably accurate description of the provision. Many of the initiatives introduced to improve the training programme are not well enough established to have had a significant impact on the achievements of learners on the modern apprenticeship training programme.

16. The number of learners recruited to the training programmes is declining. This problem has been identified by BTA. Additional work is being carried out with local schools as part of the increased flexibility programmes with 14-16 year olds to attract potential learners to this occupational area. Some learners may progress to modern apprenticeships in this area of learning from the company's E2E programme.