

INSPECTION REPORT

Independent Training Services Ltd

05 November 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 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
- **learndirect** 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.

INSPECTION REPORT

Independent Training Services Ltd

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Independent Training Services Ltd (ITS) is a registered charity which has been training young people in Barnsley since 1981. At the time of its previous inspection in 2001 it was known as Barnsley Youth Development Association (BYDA). Its purpose, at that time, was to provide training for young people with behaviour problems or deprived backgrounds.
2. The board of trustees that oversees the organisation comprises representatives of the local community, local businesses and the education sector. In 2002, the board and senior managers decided to expand the provision to include training for adults, and no longer operate only in Barnsley. At this time the company was renamed Independent Training Services Ltd.
3. The senior management team comprises a general manager and a centre manager. The general manager is responsible for business development and external relations, and the centre manager has day-to-day responsibility for training. They are supported by six managers who are responsible for areas of learning and administrative support. There are five administration staff and 28 trainers. Of the 41 staff, 37 work full time and four work part time.
4. ITS is funded by South Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council to provide motor vehicle, manufacturing, retailing, customer service, hospitality, care, and foundation programmes. It is a main contractor for Entry to Employment (E2E) and in addition to its own E2E programme, it subcontracts this provision to six other providers. It has a significant number of learners on the employer training pilot, but this programme is subcontracted from another provider.
5. In the area served by ITS there are three main employers. These are a large bakery, which employs over 1200 people, the local council and the local NHS trust. However, more than 90 per cent of employers in the area have 10 or fewer staff. Growth areas for employment include call centres, the licensed trade and food processing and manufacture.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

6. There are 49 learners on engineering training programmes. All are employed or have work placements in the motor vehicle sector. Three of the learners are advanced apprentices, 33 are apprentices and the remaining 13 are working towards a national vocational qualification (NVQ). ITS has links with more than 50 local garages, of which 31 are currently providing work placements and on-the-job training for learners. All learners attend one of two colleges of further education on day release to work towards a technical certificate and key skills if appropriate. Learners' progress reviews take place

every 10 weeks in their workplace.

7. Learners have an initial assessment at the start of their programme. Induction takes place in the training centre and on employers' premises. Learners' skills and knowledge are assessed during on-the-job training visits by ITS assessors. They visit learners at least every four weeks.

Health, social care & public services

8. ITS has 51 learners on care or early years care and education programmes. Three are advanced apprentices, 38 are apprentices and 10 are taking NVQs at level 2. Twelve of the apprentices are on early years care and education programmes. Their training and assessment is contracted out to a local nursery where they attend weekly off-the-job training. The care learners are trained directly by ITS. They attend the centre every fortnight for off-the-job training towards the technical certificate and key skills qualification, or receive individual tuition from their assessor. Learners are employed or on work placements in local nursing homes, residential homes and private nurseries. ITS assessors visit the learners approximately once a month to plan and carry out assessment of work practice.

Foundation programmes

9. ITS provides training for 93 E2E learners. The programme is run by one full-time manager, four full-time tutors and one part-time tutor. In addition, there is a full-time schools co-ordinator and a member of staff responsible for learners' progress reviews. An additional member of staff is seconded to the department to teach literacy and numeracy. Learners are referred to the programme by Connexions or other agencies, or are self-referred. E2E is designed for learners who are not yet ready to enter mainstream education, training and/or employment. Learners follow a range of programme options including personal and social development, information and communications technology (ICT) and literacy and numeracy. They attend the programme for a minimum of 16 hours each week. Seven learners attend a separate programme for pregnant teenagers called young mums to be. They work towards externally accredited modules that prepare them for parenthood. E2E learners may attend work experience or a work placement during their programme. There are currently 39 learners on work placements, of whom 19 are working towards an NVQ at level 1. Learners have an opportunity to gain externally accredited certificates in literacy, numeracy, first aid, health and safety, manual handling and food hygiene.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	4
Number of learner interviews	81
Number of staff interviews	32
Number of employer interviews	15
Number of subcontractor interviews	13
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	30

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

10. The quality of provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training in health, social care and public services is satisfactory, as is foundation training. Training in engineering, technology and manufacturing is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management and equality of opportunity are satisfactory, but quality assurance is unsatisfactory.

GRADES

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

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

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Motor vehicle/cycle - Work-based learning for young people	49	4

Health, social care & public services		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Care - Work-based learning for young people	39	3
Early years - Work-based learning for young people	12	3

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Employability/employment training - Entry to Employment	93	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

11. **Most motor vehicle learners achieve additional qualifications** that are relevant to the main programme of learning. They include qualifications in health and safety, manual handling and first aid. Almost half the learners on E2E programmes also achieve additional qualifications.

12. There are **poor retention rates on motor vehicle programmes**. On NVQ programmes, for example, only 20 per cent of the 2001-02 intake and 38 per cent of the 2002-03 intake were retained. However, many learners leave their programme early because they gain jobs or join other training programmes. Retention rates on motor vehicle programmes have recently improved, but it is too early to say whether this will be sustained. Retention rates on care programmes have been poor but they have improved over recent years and are now satisfactory.

13. There are **poor achievement rates in engineering and care**. Of 18 motor vehicle learners who started apprenticeships or advanced apprenticeships in the three years up to 2002-03, only one has successfully completed. In care there is poor achievement of apprenticeship frameworks, with many learners failing to achieve their key skills qualifications at the appropriate time.

14. **In E2E there is good development of learners' personal, social and employability skills**. Learners gain a wide range of transferable skills, develop their confidence and overcome personal barriers to learning. Progression rates from E2E programmes into work-based learning, further training or employment are satisfactory.

Quality of education and training

15. There is **good teaching in care**. Lessons are well planned and tutors use a range of teaching and learning techniques to keep learners interested and motivated. In motor vehicle, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. **In E2E, there is some unsatisfactory teaching**. In these sessions, tutors do not have contingency plans for learners who finish their tasks quickly, and learning materials are not differentiated for

individual abilities. However, there is also some very good teaching on care programmes, and overall teaching and learning are satisfactory in this area of learning.

16. **All learners at ITS are very well supported.** In motor vehicle and care, assessors visit the workplace at least every four weeks, in addition to progress review visits. All assessors have a supportive and encouraging manner towards learners, and when learners have personal difficulties, and many have, they are given effective pastoral support. This is particularly evident on E2E programmes whose learners receive formal counselling sessions and are referred to specialist agencies when appropriate. Progress reviews are satisfactory and carried out at least every 10 weeks.

17. In engineering, there are **good partnership arrangements with schools** to promote engineering as a career. School pupils attend ITS for training in cycle maintenance and performing engineering operations.

18. **In E2E, vocational training is well developed** and there is a wide range of well-resourced vocational placements. E2E learners are placed with a wide range of training partners or employers that offer occupational training in horticulture, hairdressing, retailing, care, engineering, equine care, hospitality, ICT and construction. Arrangements for providing work placements for motor vehicle learners are satisfactory, with learners placed in suitable local garages.

19. Assessment and verification are generally satisfactory. Assessors make frequent visits to the workplace and give good feedback to learners and employers. Internal verifiers observe each assessor twice a year and give verbal and written feedback. Internal verifiers and assessors hold regular standardisation meetings, and where issues have been raised by external verifiers, managers have been quick to deal with problems.

20. Programmes offered by ITS adequately meet the needs of learners and local employers. Many learners progress from E2E programmes onto higher-level vocational qualifications. In some areas, however, the replacement of NVQ programmes with apprenticeships is placing greater demands on learners. It is too early to judge whether the learners recruited by ITS will be able to cope with the requirements of the apprenticeship framework.

21. **In E2E, the support for learners with literacy and numeracy needs is inadequate.** There are too few staff with adequate teaching qualifications or experience of literacy and numeracy support. Learning and display materials are poorly designed and learning sessions do not always meet individual needs. In other vocational areas, support for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, although in care the support is not always sufficiently well recorded.

Leadership and management

22. Leadership and management of vocational areas are satisfactory. In care, the training manager has only been in post since August but has already introduced a number of improved practices. In E2E there are regular training updates, including sessions on the core curriculum and literacy and numeracy awareness. In engineering, as elsewhere, **there is a clear management structure, communications are good and the staff work well as a team.**

23. Internal communications are good. Staff and managers meet regularly, and all meetings have agendas and clear minutes. Members of staff are invited to board meetings and trustees have regular contact with a wide range of staff and managers. ITS has introduced a company newsletter and developed a comprehensive intranet.

24. ITS has **strong links with a range of external organisations.** The company has taken a strategic decision to develop its business through working with a wide range of partners and external organisations. These include schools, training partnerships and subcontractors.

25. There is **good, highly personalised support for learners.** Many learners at ITS have major barriers to learning. Staff are sensitive to this and give high levels of individual support to learners. This support extends to the very good canteen facilities, where all learners receive free, nutritious meals.

26. There is **good physical access to training.** The company operates from a former school building which has been sympathetically and thoughtfully restored to facilitate access for a wide range of people. As well as good access for wheelchair users, there is an induction loop and all staff have had deaf awareness training. The premises are well decorated and welcoming.

27. **Engineering learners have a poor understanding of equality of opportunity.** Equal opportunities is covered at induction but not adequately reinforced at learners' progress reviews. Staff carrying out reviews have had insufficient training on equality and diversity.

28. There has been a **slow strategic response to identified weaknesses.** Poor rates of retention and achievement and ineffective management information systems were identified as weaknesses at the inspection in 2001. Senior managers and trustees have failed to deal with these key weaknesses satisfactorily.

29. **The quality assurance system has failed to bring about measurable improvements.** Several new quality assurance procedures have been introduced recently. Since 2001, a quality assurance manager has been appointed, and the management information system has been further developed. The new systems are well matched to the needs of the company, but they have not yet had an effect on the quality of provision or contributed to continuous improvement.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good internal communications
- strong links with external organisations
- good, highly personalised pastoral support for learners
- good physical access to training

Weaknesses

- slow strategic response to identified weaknesses
- failure of quality assurance system to bring about improvements

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Motor vehicle/cycle

Strengths

- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good partnership arrangements with schools to promote engineering

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates
- poor understanding of equality of opportunity by learners

Health, social care & public services

Care

Strengths

- good teaching in vocational training sessions
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement of apprenticeship frameworks

Early years

Strengths

- good teaching in vocational training sessions
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses identified

Foundation programmes

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good development of personal, social and employability skills
- wide range of well-resourced vocational placements
- good pastoral support

Weaknesses

- inadequate support for learners' literacy and numeracy needs
- unsatisfactory teaching in some training sessions

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT INDEPENDENT TRAINING SERVICES LTD:

- the friendly and approachable staff
- the good personal support
- everything (from several learners)
- making new friends
- learning and building knowledge
- 'everyone is very helpful'
- 'learning and having a laugh as well'
- 'assessors are easy to talk to and visit when I ask them to'
- getting a good work placement
- 'lots of hands-on experience in the programme'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK INDEPENDENT TRAINING SERVICES LTD COULD IMPROVE:

- nothing (from many learners)
- the amount of outside activities
- accommodation - learners would like a social room and a smoking shelter
- the ICT sessions so that they make sense and are interesting (E2E)
- learning at college - it is boring
- the car parking at college
- the rates of pay

KEY CHALLENGES FOR INDEPENDENT TRAINING SERVICES LTD:

- respond strategically to weaknesses identified during inspection
- introduce effective strategies for improving retention and achievement rates
- ensure that an effective quality assurance system is implemented
- better develop the professional skills of teaching staff
- ensure that all areas have good learning resources and use them appropriately
- improve literacy and numeracy support to meet the needs of individual learners
- ensure that all learners are recruited onto the most appropriate programme for them
- develop effective strategies to recruit from under-represented groups

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

Strengths

- good internal communications
- strong links with external organisations
- good, highly personalised pastoral support for learners
- good physical access to training

Weaknesses

- slow strategic response to identified weaknesses
- failure of quality assurance system to bring about improvements

30. Internal communications at ITS are good. Staff and managers have regular opportunities to meet and share good practice. Staff are invited to attend board meetings and board members regularly meet staff, both as a group and individually. All meetings have agendas, and are clearly minuted. Staff find managers approachable and receptive to new ideas and suggestions. Since 2001, ITS has introduced a newsletter and developed a comprehensive intranet. The newsletter is valued both by staff and by learners. Learners particularly appreciate the way it celebrates their achievements. Staff regularly use the company's intranet to access a range of information, quality assurance materials, and other standard documents.

31. ITS has developed strong links with a range of external organisations. It has taken a strategic decision to develop its business by working with a wide range of partners and external organisations. It is involved in local and regional training partnerships, and has links with local schools, subcontractors and other groups and organisations. ITS has successfully provided vocational training in motor vehicle studies for 14-16 year old school pupils at its training centre. It also provides catering training on school premises, and its assessors are working with school pupils who are completing a manufacturing NVQ at a local manufacturing company.

32. There are satisfactory procedures for staff recruitment, appraisal and training. New members of staff are mentored by more experienced colleagues, and a new system of lesson observations has been introduced. The E2E staff are relatively new to the company and are still being trained in their roles, so these learners are not mentored by occupational experts. The staff appraisal system is satisfactory. Targets are adequately reviewed and any training needs are identified and acted upon. All staff have their training clearly linked to the strategic plan, and all have generic as well as occupational training. All training is evaluated and the centre manager reports to colleagues on the effectiveness of each training course.

33. ITS has been slow to respond strategically to identified weaknesses. It has known about problems with retention and achievement rates and the management information system for almost four years. Senior managers and board member have failed to deal with these weaknesses satisfactorily. Retention and achievement rates show recent improvements, but they are still poor. The current business plan does not identify improving them as a key target. Although there has been significant investment in, and development of, the management information system, senior managers are not asking for the reports they need to adequately monitor learners' performance and achievements. However, the system does capture all the relevant data on learners, and it is regularly updated.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

34. There is good, highly personalised pastoral support for learners, a strength identified in the provider's self-assessment report. Many learners have barriers to learning. Staff are sensitive to this and give good individual support. For example, the company is paying for one learner to attend slimming classes with her mother and a member of the provider's staff to help to improve her poor self-image and confidence. Innovative and effective learning resources are deployed well to help learners with different learning styles, for example sand boxes are used as a kinaesthetic aid for people with dyscalculia. There is a learners' handbook which contains valuable information on a wide range of community groups and charitable organisations, with very clear instructions and advice on exactly what they do and how to approach them for help. Some representatives from these groups are invited in to speak to learners. Learners' success is celebrated and in-house certificates are produced for those achieving personal goals. The company runs motor vehicle workshops for schoolchildren with disabilities to help them to see what they can achieve. Canteen facilities are very good, and all learners receive free, nutritious meals made on the premises.

35. ITS manages its human and physical resources effectively and there is good physical access to training. The company operates from a former school building which has been sympathetically and thoughtfully restored to facilitate access for a wide range of people. The provider has identified this in its self-assessment report. There is adequate parking, including wide spaces for people with disabilities. The entrance has access ramps and automatic external doors. Internal doors are operated by low-level push pads. There is an induction loop, and all staff have had deaf awareness training. There are toilet facilities for people with disabilities. The premises have been decorated recently, and most colour schemes adequately identify doors, windows and radiators to help people with visual impairments. One of the computers has a touch-screen facility. However, signs and notices, including safety notices, are often written in capital letters, and sometimes with decorative typefaces, making them difficult to read for learners with weak skills in literacy.

36. ITS has an equal opportunities policy dating from November 2002, which does not currently make adequate reference to relevant legislation. This was recognised in the company's self-assessment report. The policy is available to all staff, learners and employers. The company checks whether employers have an equal opportunities policy,

and if they do not, gives them a copy of its own as an example to work from.

37. The company has well-publicised grievance and complaints procedures. Learners know what to do if they have problems, and they have a satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities. ITS monitors employers informally through learners' progress reviews. If problems are identified they are dealt with by staff. The company intervenes on behalf of learners when necessary, and has broken links with employers when they have failed to rectify problems. This was identified in the self-assessment report. A more formal monitoring system is being introduced, but this has not yet had an effect on the provision. Inspectors identified some inappropriate practice in some workplaces which had not been picked up by the provider's staff.

38. Data is collected and analysed for equal opportunities purposes to give a profile of learners. This has shown that minority ethnic groups are under-represented on all programmes, and there is a gender imbalance in some programmes. ITS has approached some minority ethnic groups to try to attract them into provision, but so far this has not been successful. There has been no specific targeting of the gender imbalance, although a successful female learner in motor vehicle training is acting as a role model at some presentations.

39. Equality and diversity have a high profile in the company. Many measures have been introduced recently to reflect this. An equal opportunities forum has been established, and the company is trying to attract greater participation by employers and learners. Most staff have received training in various aspects of equality and diversity. Learners generally have good awareness of equality and diversity issues. However, engineering learners have a poor understanding of equal opportunities, which is not adequately promoted in their progress reviews. Teaching and learning materials are currently being monitored for best practice in equality and diversity. Some materials still show traditional, stereotypical images, and some documents aimed at learners are misspelt and incorrectly punctuated.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

40. The quality assurance system has failed to bring about measurable improvements in the quality of training. Many new quality assurance procedures have been introduced in the past two years, and a new quality manager has been appointed. The quality assurance system is accessed and used by staff through the company's intranet. The new systems are well matched to the needs of the company, but most have not had sufficient time to affect the quality of training or contribute to continuous improvement.

41. There are low rates of achievement and retention in vocational programmes. This has been the case for several years, and although there has been some improvement recently, the rates remain low. Data is collected and analysed to give a profile of learners and outcomes. The company sets its own targets to increase participation, and exceeds them, but has not analysed data to identify effective ways of matching programmes to learners' needs, and of improving learners' success rates. ITS does not use the information gained from analysis of data to target specific types of learners. Many

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learners are recruited through Connexions, and some through school links or self-referral. Advertising materials are in written format. There is currently no general information available in audio or other formats, even though most of the potential learners have weak literacy skills.

42. Since ITS identified that many learners were leaving the programme during the first few weeks, it has lengthened and considerably improved the induction process. The process gives learners a good deal of information on the programme requirements and company policies. It takes place following a series of interviews and initial assessments over a one- to three-week period.

43. Learners' progress reviews are satisfactory. Staff set achievable targets and help learners to understand their progress with their programme and what they need to do next. Internal verification is thorough and constructive.

44. ITS uses evaluation sheets and discussions to gather feedback from learners at various points in their programme. In addition, the company uses questionnaires to check learners' and employers' satisfaction and obtain general feedback, though there has been a poor response to these. Questions are not always specific enough to elicit meaningful, useful feedback.

45. There is inadequate monitoring of new subcontracting arrangements. Individual service level agreements are drawn up with all subcontractors. These are monitored and action points are identified and followed up. However, this monitoring does not extend beyond the service level agreement, so the quality of provision has so far not been examined by ITS. Some of the new service level agreements are not sufficiently clear about roles and responsibilities. This was not identified in the self-assessment report.

46. The company has produced five self-assessment reports. The fifth was written collaboratively with contributions from different teams, and it incorporates findings from learners' and employers' feedback. It does not fully identify all the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors, and there is no clear focus on some of the major problems faced by the company. Self-assessment reports are approved by the board of trustees, but they are not directly involved in the self-assessment process and do not adequately evaluate their own performance.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Motor vehicle/cycle - Work-based learning for young people	49	4

Motor vehicle/cycle

Strengths

- good achievement of additional qualifications
- good partnership arrangements with schools to promote engineering

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates
- poor understanding of equality of opportunity by learners

Achievement and standards

47. There are poor retention and achievement rates on the motor vehicle programme. Of the 188 learners who started motor vehicle training since 2000-01, 49 are still in learning. Eighty per cent of those leaving the programme have not achieved their primary qualification. Retention rates on the NVQ programme are low. Only 20 per cent of the 2001-02 NVQ intake and 38 per cent of the 2002-03 intake were retained on the programme. NVQ achievement rates over the same periods have also been poor at 13 per cent and 29 per cent respectively. Of the six advanced apprentices who have started over the past four years, none has completed the framework and three have already left the programme. Of the 47 apprentices who have started over the past four years, only one has successfully completed and 13 have left with no qualifications. A large proportion of early leavers go into employment or other training. Between 2000 and 2004, 86 learners left the NVQ training programme, many before the end. Of these, 35 went into employment and 16 went into other training.

48. There is good achievement of additional qualifications in health and safety. Seventy-eight per cent of learners achieved a foundation health and safety certificate, 42 per cent successfully completed a manual handling course, and 68 per cent achieved a first aid qualification. Additionally, all NVQ learners take vocational courses at college. The technical certificate was introduced in May 2002 and since then 25 learners have begun working towards it. It is too early to judge achievement rates for the technical certificate. However, many learners who gain additional qualifications have failed to complete their NVQ or apprenticeship framework.

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49. Partnership arrangements with schools have resulted in good achievements by school pupils. Last year, 50 pupils on the schools programme passed their cycling proficiency test. The programme also included pedal cycle construction and maintenance. All learners build their own pedal cycle and receive training in re-spoking wheels. They also develop basic mechanical skills. Over the past two years, 20 learners from this programme have progressed onto an accredited engineering programme with ITS. They are taking a two-year, level 2 NVQ programme in performing engineering operations. One learner has completed three of the four units, four learners have completed two units and five have completed one unit.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced apprenticeships																
	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			2		1		1		2							
Retained*			2	100	1	100	0	0	0	0						
Successfully completed			0	0	0	0	0	0	0							
Still in learning			2	100	1	100	0	0	0	0						

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Apprenticeships																
	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts	16		17		7		3		4							
Retained*	0		0	0	3	43	1	33	1	25						
Successfully completed	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	25						
Still in learning	16		13	76	3	43	1	33	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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training																
	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Number of starts			15		24		45		51							
Retained*			2	13	9	38	9	20	14	27						
Successfully completed			2	13	7	29	6	13	10	20						
Still in learning			10	67	3	12	0	0	0	0						

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

Quality of education and training

50. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Learners gain appropriate skills that enable them to contribute towards the effectiveness of the garage where they work. In most cases, training is not formally planned, but learners progress from simple tasks under close supervision to more complex tasks with minimal supervision.

51. Garages used for ITS learners' work placements are satisfactory. There are a few main dealerships where training and resources are good. Most work placements are at small establishments and deal with servicing, repair and vehicle testing. In all garages staff are experienced and help learners develop their skills. Training is carried out on customers' vehicles. In one garage the workshop supervisor had an NVQ at level 3 and guided his learners to develop the skills they needed to provide NVQ evidence. ITS staff have many years of experience in the motor vehicle industry. They have a wide range of skills and a range of personal contacts in local industry. ITS has a small vehicle workshop for school programmes. A new vehicle lift has been fitted within the past 12 months and there are several new vehicles for learners to work on. Two older vehicles are used for learners to develop their skills. In addition there is a small engineering workshop for school pupils. All the facilities are fit for their intended purpose.

52. Assessment is thorough and well planned. Assessors visit learners in the workplace at least every four weeks. At the end of each visit the assessor completes an action feedback form. This gives the learner feedback on the assessment and includes a section for the employer or work-placement provider. All parties receive a copy of this document. Internal verification is thorough. The internal verifier observes each assessor making assessment decisions biannually, and provides them with written and verbal feedback. Internal verification is planned and documented well.

53. The range of qualifications offered by ITS is appropriate for the employment opportunities offered by local garages. However, NVQ-only training is no longer available and learners recruited onto motor vehicle programmes must now enter training at a higher level. It is too early to judge whether ITS's learners can successfully complete an apprenticeship framework.

54. There is good support for learners. Learners appreciate the frequent visits from their assessors. All learners are given their assessor's mobile telephone number, and contact the assessor if they need to be observed doing a particular job. One learner is employed by a mobile body and paint business. He contacts his assessor when an assessment is due or when a particularly demanding job is to be completed, and gives the assessor directions to the place he is working in. Assessors act as mentors, help learners to identify suitable evidence and guide them in portfolio production.

55. ITS contracts with local colleges to provide background knowledge teaching leading to technical certificates and key skills qualifications. Learners receive good support for literacy and numeracy from the colleges. Assessors also provide literacy and numeracy support when they visit learners in the workplace. Several learners who have completed

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their planned apprenticeship programme early are now taking level 3 college courses funded by ITS. All NVQ learners attend college and take a technical certificate.

56. Progress reviews are satisfactory and take place every 10 weeks. They are carried out by staff who are not vocational specialists but who liaise closely with assessors. NVQ targets from the vocational assessor, and targets from the college on key skills and technical certificates, are discussed and progress recorded. Until recently, the learners did not always receive a copy of the review document. This has been rectified. Review documents are now copied and forwarded to the workplace.

Leadership and management

57. There are good partnership arrangements with schools to promote engineering as a career. Currently, 67 pupils from six local schools attend the training centre. The programme has been extended this year to include a motor vehicle maintenance course. Twelve per cent of the current pupils who are undergoing motor vehicle training are girls. There is also a group of 20 school pupils with learning disabilities. They undergo training on a day release.

58. There is a clear management structure for engineering training. Training in the centre is well managed. Communications are good and all staff work as a team to support learners. All learners' progress is well recorded on the management information system, and internal verifiers look at this before interviewing candidates.

59. Learners have a poor understanding of equal opportunities. Equality of opportunity is covered during their induction, but it is not adequately promoted in progress reviews. Equal opportunities questions have recently been introduced as part of the review, but it is too early to judge the effect of this on learners' understanding. Staff carrying out the reviews have had insufficient training in equality and diversity. Learners' understanding of the company's grievance and appeals procedures is satisfactory.

60. The self-assessment process for engineering involved most staff in the area. The report covers all the key questions in the 'Common Inspection Framework' and is very detailed. However, it does not identify all the strengths and weaknesses identified during the inspection, and is not clear about the poor retention and achievement rates.

Health, social care & public services

Health, social care & public services		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Care - Work-based learning for young people	39	3
Early years - Work-based learning for young people	12	3

Care

Strengths

- good teaching in vocational training sessions
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement of apprenticeship frameworks

Early years

Strengths

- good teaching in vocational training sessions
- good support for learners

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses identified

Achievement and standards

61. The rate of achievement of apprenticeship frameworks is poor. This was recognised in the self-assessment report. Only four apprentices have achieved key skills qualifications in the past four years. Achievement by NVQ learners has been better, with 40 per cent successfully completing in 2000-01 and 60 per cent the following year. Numbers of advanced apprentices are too small to make a valid judgement. There have been recent improvements in the achievement of key skills qualifications, and ITS has introduced cash incentives for learners who achieve units. Retention rates have also been poor, but have steadily improved and are now satisfactory. Assessors' workloads have been reduced to ensure that they can visit learners regularly. They set clear targets and learners are progressing satisfactorily. There are no early leavers from the intake which started in August 2004. The standard of work in portfolios is good and learners show a good level of competence and understanding.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts			1		3		5		7						
Retained*			0	0	1	33	2	40	3	43						
Successfully completed			0	0	1	33	0	0	1	14						
Still in learning			1	100	1	33	1	20	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

LSC funded work-based learning																
Apprenticeships	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	24		15		8		14		19						
Retained*	0		0	0	4	50	9	64	5	26						
Successfully completed	0		0	0	1	12	0	0	1	5						
Still in learning	24		12	80	2	25	0	0	0	0						

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

LSC funded work-based learning																
NVQ Training	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01							
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts			23		23		35		20						
Retained*			6	26	15	65	22	63	10	50						
Successfully completed			6	26	12	52	21	60	8	40						
Still in learning			6	26	4	17	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

62. There is good teaching and learning, both in care at ITS and in early years at the subcontractor. Although learners were given individual tuition for the technical certificates, group teaching sessions were not in place at the start of the programme in September 2004. Previously, learners had been supported individually by their assessors. There is now a flexible rolling programme of training so that learners can opt into units as they need to. All the vocational training sessions observed were good or better. Sessions are well planned and tutors use a range of teaching and learning

techniques to keep learners interested and motivated. Learners find the sessions enjoyable and helpful. Where learners find it difficult to attend, assessors make arrangements for individual teaching. Tutors and assessors are now effectively integrating key skills into training and assessment in the vocational area. All learners know their targets for key skills. All staff have gained or are working towards key skills awards.

63. Learners are very well informed and supported. This was identified in the self-assessment report. There is thorough initial assessment with elements which are specific to care programmes, a comprehensive week-long induction in the centre, a workplace induction, and a further induction to the vocational qualification so learners are well informed at the start of their training. Assessors visit the learners at their work placements at least monthly. They also invite learners to additional sessions at ITS if they need extra help. Learners can ring at any time for help and there is a speedy response. Assessors plan work carefully with learners and give effective feedback, both verbal and written, on every visit. The 10-weekly progress reviews are thorough and monitor learners' progress effectively. Individual learning plans are regularly updated and learners are clear about their targets. Assessors have a very supportive and encouraging manner. When learners have personal difficulties they are given very effective pastoral support. There is good verbal communication between ITS and employers about the learners' progress. Employers receive copies of the action plans on every assessment visit. Progress reviews take place every 10 weeks and employers receive copies of the review documents. However, they have not been given a copy of the programme of training for the technical certificate. Every learner has a mentor in the workplace who supports them well. One assessor has worked with an employer to develop a risk assessment for a pregnant learner. Learners value the support they receive at ITS. Learners with additional learning needs can either attend the training centre for support or be visited in their workplace. Qualified tutors give specific support for literacy and numeracy. However, in one support session observed the teaching was unsatisfactory, and support is not always sufficiently well recorded.

64. Teaching resources are satisfactory for care learners. Learners receive appropriate handouts and are encouraged to use the internet for research. Some buy the recommended textbook, but there are no textbooks or journals for them to refer to in the training rooms. Early years learners have access to good resources. They are lent a textbook for the duration of their training and there is a good selection of books and up-to-date government publications in the training room.

65. Assessment and verification are satisfactory. Problems with standardisation were identified in a recent external verifier's report. A new care training manager was appointed in August and has responded quickly to the issues. She has developed new strategies to ensure that all assessors adhere to good assessment practice. All assessors are now using the same process and documents. Holistic assessment is being developed. Internal verifiers and assessors are holding regular standardisation meetings to review the assessment process and share good practice. There is a new internal verification strategy which includes twice-yearly observation of assessment and regular sampling of evidence, but it is too early to see the effect of this yet. There is some inconsistency in recording and referencing evidence in portfolios. Some assessors leave

direct observation until learners have worked through a set of written tasks, rather than using it as a starting point. Early years portfolios have a good range of evidence based on work practice but too great a proportion of written evidence. Early years learners only spend three half-day sessions in their work placement. This is insufficient time to gain the skills and competence needed for assessment purposes.

66. Programmes adequately meet the needs of the learners and local employers. Some learners have progressed from E2E training to the NVQ or apprenticeship programmes. Many progress to further training or employment within the sector. Employed care workers can also access training through the employer training pilot.

Leadership and management

67. The new care training manager has already made significant improvements. She is currently piloting and evaluating a new style of off-the-job training. She runs each training session in conjunction with one of the assessors. This serves as a development strategy for the assessors and enables the activity to be evaluated. All teaching sessions are evaluated by the learners and the tutors and improvements made as necessary. However, it is too early to judge the full effect of the new strategies. There is good team working and good opportunities for staff development. Staff were involved in developing the self-assessment report. This identified some of the same strengths and weaknesses as those found by the inspectors. However, some of the language used in the report was not clear.

68. Arrangements for equal opportunities are sound. Staff ensure that learners are aware of their rights and are being treated fairly in their workplace. In one workplace where a learner was treated unfairly she was withdrawn and ITS no longer uses the placement. ITS has been very supportive of the nursery training subcontractor in setting up early years training and implementing key skills strategies. However, there is a discrepancy between what is written in the service level agreement and the subcontractor's understanding of who has responsibility for key skills training and literacy and numeracy support, and for monitoring work placements.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability/employment training</i> - Entry to Employment	93	3

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- good development of personal, social and employability skills
- wide range of well-resourced vocational placements
- good pastoral support

Weaknesses

- inadequate support for learners' literacy and numeracy needs
- unsatisfactory teaching in some training sessions

Achievement and standards

69. There is good development of learners' personal, social and employability skills. Learners attend a wide range of sessions in the training centre to develop transferable skills such as teamwork, communication, planning, budgeting, presentation skills and confidence. They can demonstrate skills and knowledge of practical subjects such as cookery, personal hygiene and sexual health. Learners' success is celebrated by displaying copies of certificates on the wall in the ITS centre. Learners on the young mums to be programme gain good parenting skills. They develop a sound knowledge of diet, nutrition and citizenship. Learners' portfolio work is of a high standard. The young mums to be have a weekly visit from the local midwife. This develops their confidence, allays fears of giving birth and helps them to develop their individual birth plans. On work placements, learners develop self-confidence and team skills. Many learners have successfully overcome personal barriers of shyness, personal hygiene, dress sense and punctuality.

70. Rates of progression rates into work-based learning, further education and/or employment are satisfactory. In 2003-04, 34 per cent of learners progressed to one of these outcomes. The average length of stay on the programme is 20 weeks. The achievement of key learning goals is low at 11 per cent, but half of learners achieve at least one additional qualification.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Entry to Employment	2004-05		2003-04		2002-03		2001-02		2000-01								
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
	Number of starts	51		244													
Progression ¹	8		82	34													
Achieved objectives ²	0		27	11													
Still in learning	36		57	23													

1. Measured in terms of learners' movement to further training, education or employment, during or after their training

2. These being the key objectives identified for each learner while on E2E

Quality of education and training

71. There is a wide range of well-resourced vocational placements. The vocational aspect of E2E is well developed. Learners who attend the ITS centre have specific learning sessions on job-related activities. There are many opportunities for them to practise skills learnt in a work context. Learners are placed with a wide range of training partners or employers offering occupational training in horticulture, hairdressing, retailing, care, engineering, equine care, hospitality, ICT and construction. There are good opportunities for learners to gain NVQs and other qualifications. Work placements are well resourced, enabling learners to work to a high standard and meet their NVQ evidence requirements.

72. ITS provides good pastoral support for learners. When problems are identified, staff work effectively with learners to support them, offering formal counselling sessions and referral to specialist agencies where appropriate. Good examples have been seen of the involvement of outside agencies in helping to solve learners' ongoing problems. All learners can have a free breakfast and lunch in the ITS canteen. In the independent living centre, learners who may not be living at home can use washing machines, tumble dryer and showers.

73. Resources at ITS are satisfactory. There are high ratios of staff to learners in all taught sessions, to the benefit of individual learners. There are enough computers available for learners to develop ICT skills and to word process some of their written work for their portfolios. Most computers are of industry standard. However, there is poor use of accommodation in a computer suite that is set out in small booths for national online tests. It is difficult for tutors to manage the space or the learning. There is also some use of inappropriate software packages that contain spelling and grammatical errors and do not accurately test learning.

74. The learners' understanding of key induction topics such as programme content, health and safety, and equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Arrangements for initial

assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory. Additional learning support has begun late for most learners. Learners complete an initial screening test to identify their literacy and numeracy needs, and then a further diagnostic assessment that has recently been introduced. In some cases no further action has been taken. Personal and social needs are identified through discussions with learners and observation of their behaviour. Assessment and moderation of qualifications are satisfactory.

75. Planning of individual learning programmes for vocational and personal needs is good. Although there is some good planning to meet literacy and numeracy needs, in other cases the planning is incomplete and does not meet individual learners' needs. In some instances there is very good differentiated individual tuition but in other instances targets are often vague, such as 'improve spelling' or 'support literacy'.

76. In the subcontracted provision, some learners are receiving good individual tuition in literacy and numeracy. Others only receive literacy and numeracy support as part of their vocational training. Some very good examples were seen of vocationally related literacy and numeracy portfolios, and there was evidence of vocational and additional learning tutors working together. In other cases there was no differentiation and it was difficult to see from learners' vocational portfolios how literacy and numeracy learning was being linked to vocational training. Learners are not always set clear, measurable targets. While some of the subcontractor's staff are well qualified, others have no teaching qualification and are not working towards either a general qualification or literacy and numeracy qualification.

77. Reviews of progress and development for learners who are on work placement are satisfactory but do not always involve the employer. For other learners, reviews involve the personal adviser and E2E officer. Problems are discussed sensitively and learners are encouraged to negotiate and set manageable targets for improvements in attendance, attitude and performance.

78. Support for learners' literacy and numeracy needs is inadequate. ITS staff are new to the E2E programme and are all working towards qualifications in learning and development. There are too few staff with adequate teaching qualifications or experience of literacy and numeracy support. Learning materials are in small fonts with complex vocabulary and too few pictures. Tutors use capital letters inappropriately in handouts and on flip charts, and there are many errors in displayed materials. Tutors do not always have learner profiles before sessions so that lessons can be planned to suit learning styles. Sessions are generic and not always designed to meet individual needs. Schemes of work and lesson plans are not all matched to national standards for literacy and numeracy.

79. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory. Inspectors observed some very good teaching. In one session, the tutor had researched special teaching and learning techniques to overcome severe barriers. Other sessions showed the good use of laptop computers and other learning resources. Most lessons were well planned. However, there was unsatisfactory teaching in 22 per cent of observed sessions. For example, inexperienced tutors do not always have contingency plans for learners who finish tasks

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quickly, and learning materials are not differentiated for individual abilities. Some tutors use capital letters on flip charts and whiteboards and some planning and classroom management is weak.

Leadership and management

80. Communication is satisfactory. Staff regularly discuss problems and ideas. Arrangements for staff development are good and all staff are working towards formal level 3 qualifications. There are regular training updates, including sessions on the core curriculum and literacy/numeracy awareness. Staff and learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity issues.

81. The self-assessment report was evaluative and considered the provision against the seven key questions of the 'Common Inspection Framework'. It recognised most of the strengths and weaknesses found at inspection.

82. The monitoring of subcontractors is incomplete and concentrates on checking service level agreements. There is little checking that individual learning needs are being met. The standard of literacy and numeracy support is very variable across the subcontractors. Some very good practice was seen and some poor practice. There is no sharing of good practice.