

INSPECTION REPORT

Stockwell Education and Training

22 September 2005



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

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 aged 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.

Pre-inspection analysis

The resources allocated to a cycle 2 inspection are primarily determined by the findings from the previous inspection. Account is also taken of information about achievement and retention obtained from the funding body, and any significant changes in the size or scope of the provision.

Where a provider has received good grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is relatively light. If the provider offers a number of areas of learning, a restricted sample is inspected.

Where a provider has received satisfactory grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is less intensive and it is possible that not all areas of learning are included.

Where there are significant unsatisfactory grades from cycle 1, the intensity of the cycle 2 inspection is broadly the same as cycle 1, and all significant areas of learning are inspected.

Providers that have not previously been inspected will receive a full inspection.

Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half of the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and in at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning.

Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes, as well as to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes equality of opportunity and quality assurance. The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - inadequate*

INSPECTION REPORT

Stockwell Education and Training

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Stockwell Education and Training (SET) operates under the management of Stockwell Park High School, a large school for pupils aged 11 to 16 in the London Borough of Lambeth. In the past five years, the school has significantly increased the number of pupils achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education at grade C or above, from 11 per cent to 58 per cent. In the autumn of 2003, the school started providing post-16 learning programmes. The post-16 department, SET, is based in the Stockwell City Learning Centre which is a facility for the Lambeth Community located on the site of Stockwell Park High School. The director of post-16 learning reports directly to the headteacher and, through her, to the board of governors of the school. The current director started in August 2005. There are three full-time tutor/assessors and two work-based assessors. A business development officer, who was appointed approximately nine months ago, is responsible for employer links. The department has one full-time administrator and one apprentice on work placement, supporting the administrator. SET has one subcontractor who delivers technical certificate training for business administration. This arrangement started in August 2005.

2. Stockwell Education and Training (SET) is located in one of the most socially disadvantaged areas of London as highlighted in the local authority index of deprivation. Learners are recruited from an area representing one of the poorest by income, child poverty and crime. This area is highly diverse ethnically with over 55 per cent of the population coming from black or other minority ethnic communities. Over 90 per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 4

3. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate.** SET's leadership and management are inadequate, as are its arrangements for quality improvement. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. SET's provision in health, public services and care and in business administration and law are inadequate.

4. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process,** which had been improved during this, its first cycle. Satisfactory use of feedback from learners is made and many staff are involved in the process. Each successive version of the self-assessment report is better than the previous one. The most recent report is detailed and accurate.

5. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** A number of recent improvements have been made to the provision. These have focused on critical aspects of the process and include the delivery of the full framework and improvements to the quality improvement process. Several of these have already had an impact on the learners' experience. Action plans are now detailed and progress is regularly monitored.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR STOCKWELL EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

- significantly improve framework completion rates
- maintain high standard of support
- establish effective quality improvement activities
- establish effective contingency planning
- improve engagement with employers

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = inadequate

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

Health, public services and care			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Early years</i>		4	
Apprenticeships for young people	42	4	

Business administration and law			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Administration</i>		4	
Apprenticeships for young people	45	4	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

6. The provision in business administration and in early years care and education was inspected. SET also has a contract for providing training in customer service. However, no learners had been recruited at the time of the inspection.

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	4
Number of learners interviewed	29
Number of staff interviewed	14
Number of employers interviewed	13
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

7. **Many learners improve their employment skills.** Many learners have a poor academic record or a history of exclusion and have a range of additional needs. They improve their confidence, maturity and other employment skills during their training.

8. **None of the learners have completed an apprenticeship framework.** Key skills and technical certificates have only recently been introduced.

9. **Retention rates are poor in both areas of learning.** There has recently been an upward trend and SET has successfully persuaded a number of learners to return to, or stay on, the programme.

10. **Learners in business administration are making slow progress.** Several have not completed sufficient units of the national vocational qualification (NVQ).

The quality of provision

11. **Support for learners is good.** This covers a range of topics in individual and group sessions. Support has effectively resolved behavioural problems such as anger management.

12. **Resources and accommodation at the training centre are good.** A range of modern training aids are used well by training staff. Accommodation is modern and accessible.

13. **Links between on- and off-the-job training are very weak.** Employers and SET's staff have little knowledge of what training is being offered by the other. Employers are not sufficiently involved in progress reviews.

14. **The technical certificate and key skills have only been introduced in the past six weeks in both areas of learning.**

Leadership and management

15. **A range of improvements have recently been made.** It is now accredited to deliver technical certificates in early years care education and business administration. In addition,

it has a subcontract for the delivery of technical certificates for business administration. Improvements have been made in reviews, minutes of meetings, observations of staff and the self-assessment process.

16. The management of literacy, numeracy and language support is good. Support is offered in individual and group sessions on a range of topics. Good use is made of links with school staff, and specialist help is procured when necessary.

17. Efforts to widen participation are effective. SET aims to bring learners with challenging problems back to education and training. Many of them are lone parents and have had a poor experience at school. SET re-engages these learners.

18. The focus on learners' achievement is insufficient. SET continued to recruit learners without any effective arrangements to deliver technical certificates. Learners and some of the staff have insufficient knowledge of apprenticeship programmes and their requirements.

19. Interim arrangements to manage the provision are weak. SET has had difficulty in recruiting and retaining a director of post-16 learning. Interim arrangements are not thorough and have placed too much reliance on existing staff.

20. Quality improvement arrangements are incomplete. Several aspects, including observation of staff and the use of employer feedback are not effective. Some recent improvements have been made.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good management of pastoral and additional support for learners
- wide range of recent improvements
- effective efforts to widen participation

Weaknesses

- inadequate focus on framework completion
- weak interim arrangements to manage provision
- incomplete quality improvement arrangements
- poor monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace

Health, public services and care

Early years

Grade 4

Strengths

- good development of practical skills
- very effective, recently improved progress reviews
- good resources and accommodation in the training centre

Weaknesses

- no framework completion
- poor retention rates
- some weak assessment practice
- late introduction of technical certificate and key skills
- some inaccurate record-keeping

Business administration and law

Administration

Grade 4

Strengths

- good distance travelled for learners with additional learning needs
- good support for learners
- good work placements

Weaknesses

- no framework completion
- poor retention rates
- slow progress
- very weak links between on- and off-the-job training

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT STOCKWELL EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

- the staff - 'good support from them, they are thorough and professional, ready to help you any time you need assistance, even with an accommodation problem'
- the recent improvements - 'they are more organised', 'they have done their best to help'
- the support - 'it is very good, the help with reading and writing'
- the work placements - they are supportive 'you learn a lot there'
- the work rate - 'I like working at my own pace'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK STOCKWELL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COULD IMPROVE:

- the information given - it was not sufficient 'it was bad telling us about key skills and technical certificates after I thought I had finished'
- the waiting time for placements
- the rooms - they are sometimes stuffy and the chairs are hard
- the targets - make them more challenging

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

Strengths

- good management of pastoral and additional support for learners
- wide range of recent improvements
- effective efforts to widen participation

Weaknesses

- inadequate focus on framework completion
- weak interim arrangements to manage provision
- incomplete quality improvement arrangements
- poor monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace

21. Management of pastoral and additional support for learners is good. Governors are fully involved and committed to the provision which meets the needs of learners. Good use is made of school knowledge and links between pre- and post-16 staff are used effectively to support learners. The provider is clearly aware of support needs and provides immediate and detailed specialist help. Support is provided on an individual basis and also in class. This support helps the teacher as well as the learners and has a significant and positive impact on learners' behaviour. Clear and detailed records of support are kept.

22. A wide range of improvements have recently been made to the provision. The successive versions of the self-assessment report show significant improvement over the previous ones. Reviews have significantly improved. The provider has just gained accreditation to deliver technical certificates for learners in early years and business administration. Employers and learners comment favourably on the recent improvements. Several learners have been effectively persuaded to stay on, or return to the programme in order to complete their framework. Some improvements have made a clear impact on the learners' experience. However, it is too early to judge the full effect of a few of them.

23. Business planning is satisfactory. Post-16 learning forms a part of the school's medium- and long-term plans. These plans are clear and well articulated. They are effectively integrated with the pre-16 programme and are intended as an optional progression route.

24. Staff training and development are satisfactory. Staff receive regular feedback on their performance and have monthly review meetings. Training and development needs are identified and met. Staff have attended a number of training courses to improve their competences. Resources are managed well. Good use is made of existing school resources and links. The post-16 department makes good use of the resources in the city learning centre. Management information is clear and accurate records are kept on learners and their achievements.

25. Communication is satisfactory. Regular meetings are held which cover a range of topics. Minutes of meetings detail the discussion, but actions are not recorded adequately. The provider is aware of this and has amended the format for the minutes of meetings.

Communications with employers are satisfactory and management of placements has recently been improved. More detailed records are now kept.

26. The provider does not focus on the completion of frameworks. SET has continued to recruit learners onto the early years programme, even though learners have not been able to complete it. Until recently, the provider has not been accredited to deliver the technical certificate and key skills, and there have been no arrangements with any other providers to deliver them. There has been insufficient strategic focus on overall programme achievement. Many learners and some of the staff, are not sufficiently aware of all elements of the programme. Many learners think they are on an NVQ programme.

27. Interim arrangements for the management of the provision are weak. The provider has had difficulties in recruiting and retaining a director of post-16 learning. A range of interim arrangements involving existing staff has been tried. Meetings have focused on minor issues rather than on this significant weakness. Staff at all levels of management are not sufficiently aware of the requirements of an apprenticeship programme. There has been an over-reliance on department staff members, several of whom have had too high a workload. The provider is aware of this weakness and has recently recruited an experienced post-16 learning specialist.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

28. SET has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy which includes current legislation. It has recently been reviewed and updated. The provider aims to increase the levels of employment in the area by increasing the skills levels of the local diverse workforce.

29. Efforts to widen participation are particularly effective. Strategic focus on equality of opportunity is good. Senior management is keen to provide a service that is accessible to all learners who want it. They provide a range of support services to help learners who have difficulties. They take effective steps to widen participation by recruiting from the school and from the surrounding areas of London. They specifically target learners who face a range of challenges, including young lone parents who have not completed their school education, and those who have a poor academic record or have been excluded from school. SET has been successful in bringing these young people back to education and training.

30. The organisation collects and analyses recruitment statistics and uses them to focus its promotional activities. However, with poor framework achievement it is not possible to analyse success rates by ethnicity, gender or disability. The provider has now started to target and monitor specific learner groups through monitoring from recruitment to external progression.

31. All learners are trained in equal opportunities during induction and some receive additional training as part of their NVQ. Reviews include equality of opportunity, but this is sometimes superficial and does not effectively reinforce training. Reviews for early years learners appropriately focus on equal opportunities. Questions are used well to enable assessors to gain an insight of the learners' understanding. This is appropriately recorded, but does not include an input from the employer or workplace supervisor.

32. The provider has taken steps to better reinforce the learners' knowledge of equality, but this has yet to be fully included in learning sessions. A few learners have a poor

understanding of equality of opportunity. The providers' statement of equal opportunities is well publicised throughout the centre and focuses on the need for racial and cultural harmony. It promotes recognition of diversity and gives a positive response to harassment. The centre is accessible for those with restricted mobility.

33. Staff meetings do not include discussions on equal opportunities. However, the staff have recently attended training in the teaching of strategies for inclusive learning. This included best practice training strategies for learners with a variety of physical and learning disabilities.

34. Monitoring of equality of opportunity in the workplace is poor. The employer guidance paperwork does not include information on equal opportunities. Checks to ensure employers comply with current legislation and SET's equal opportunities policies and procedures are not always made. Employers do not routinely share information about their policies, and no monitoring of equal opportunities takes place by SET's placement officers.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 4

35. The self-assessment process has been improved and is now satisfactory. Staff have been involved in the process although not all work-based assessors have had the chance to contribute. This is the first self-assessment cycle that the provider has gone through. The reports have improved significantly over the process. The latest one is clear and fully explains the strengths and weaknesses. The report is a critical and honest assessment of the provision. It recognised most of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors.

36. The use of feedback from learners is satisfactory. Learners' views are collected, analysed and used for planning. Learners meet each month with staff to discuss the provision. Detailed records are kept and learners' views are acted upon. The monitoring of the subcontractor is satisfactory. SET has carried out detailed observations of training delivery. Internal verification is satisfactory and meets the requirements of the awarding bodies.

37. Arrangements for quality improvement are incomplete. Responsibilities for quality assurance are not clear. Audits of paperwork are not thorough. Observation of staff is not sufficient. Some observations have taken place, but they only focus on support for teachers and dealing with behavioural problems. There has been little systematic observation of training and assessment. Use of feedback from employers is limited. There have been no surveys of employers and many of them have little knowledge of the provision. Programme reviews are not effective in identifying major weaknesses such as the lack of framework achievement.

38. The provider is aware of its weaknesses and has made a number of recent improvements to the process. They have produced detailed action plans which are thorough and cover all aspects of the provision. Progress towards implementing these plans is monitored effectively. A regular pattern of observations has started and feedback on those that have taken place is clear and detailed. However, it is too early to judge the effect of these improvements.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Health, public services and care

Grade 4

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Early years</i> Apprenticeships for young people	42	4 4

39. There are 39 apprentices and three advanced apprentices in early years care and education. Two of the learners are men and 38 are from minority ethnic groups. Twelve learners have an additional learning need and are receiving literacy and numeracy support. All learners are in training for 12 months and are either employed or on a work placement in community, private or local authority playgroups, nurseries or school settings. Both groups of learners work towards technical certificates and key skills as part of the apprenticeship framework.

40. Learners attend off-the-job training sessions at the training centre in Stockwell for at least one day each week. Assessors visit the learners at work to complete progress reviews and observe working practices. There is one full-time tutor/assessor and one work-based assessor for early years. Both are occupationally experienced and qualified as early years workers and assessors. SET has recently recruited a key skills tutor who provides key skills training and visits learners at work. Internal verification is provided through two external consultants.

Early years

Grade 4

Strengths

- good development of practical skills
- very effective, recently improved progress reviews
- good resources and accommodation in the training centre

Weaknesses

- no framework completion
- poor retention rates
- some weak assessment practice
- late introduction of technical certificate and key skills
- some inaccurate record-keeping

Achievement and standards

41. Learners develop good practical skills at work and are very competent in the practical aspects of their job. Placement providers and employers are positive about the learners' acquisition of skills and their ability to adopt an approach to working with young children that reflects good practice and complements the nursery teams. They are impressed by the learners' attitude and commitment to early years work. At one nursery there is a good

mentoring scheme where staff record training in nursery practice and their learning at work. This is then used as evidence for the NVQ. Portfolios of evidence are well presented and reflect a thorough knowledge of practical activities with young children. Learners use information technology (IT) well and present evidence with pictures, text and the use of other interesting formats to best illustrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The development of practical skills also improves the learners' confidence.

42. None of the learners have completed the full framework since SET started the programmes in 2003. In 2003-04, 32 learners started the programme and there are still 12 in learning. In 2004-05, 35 learners started and 24 are still in learning. Key skills have recently been introduced and SPHS has just received accreditation to deliver the technical certificates. All current learners have achieved the NVQ at level 2.

43. Retention rates are poor. On the apprenticeship programme only 38 per cent of learners have been retained from 2003-04. This has improved to 69 per cent for learners who started in 2004-05. Some learners have left the programme thinking that they have completed it. SET has recently worked effectively to re-engage some of these learners. Learners who achieved NVQs this year have been brought back to SET to complete the technical certificate and key skills.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Advanced apprenticeships	2005-06																
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	3																
Retained*	3																
Successfully completed	0																
Still in learning	3																

*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	2005-06		2004-05		2003-04												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	3		35		32												
Retained*	3		24		12												
Successfully completed	0		0		0												
Still in learning	3		24		12												

*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

The quality of provision

44. Accommodation and resources at the training centre are good. Learners have access to the school's learning support teachers and 12 learners have either had individual support or have attended group lessons in literacy and numeracy. The accommodation is spacious and well designed with large rooms and good IT facilities. Learners have good access to

computers and teachers have smart boards, videos, projectors, televisions and video playback facilities. Appropriate early years resources are available, such as textbooks, articles, play equipment and materials. The main training room is bright and attractive, displaying a range of posters and children's work to stimulate learners.

45. The recently improved progress reviews are very effective. There is a good rapport between learners and assessors. Assessors are supportive and encourage good discussions. Assessors encourage learners to relate their own experiences. Careful attention is given to equality of opportunity. Assessors ask how equal opportunities applies to the learners' work setting and to their own position at work. Learners make good reference to activities they carry out with children on gender, culture, race, religion and disability. Learners understand their role and responsibilities. However, some employers are not involved in the review processes and have not been asked to give comments on learners' progress.

46. The induction is satisfactory. Most learners understand their rights and responsibilities and the NVQ process, but some have not been told about the technical certificate and key skills. More recent learners are given correct information. The needs and interests of learners are appropriately met. The working relationships between SET and placement supervisors are satisfactory. SET arranges for learners to attend different placements to accommodate additional assessment needs and to cover the requirements of the NVQ. Progression from the courses for 14-16 year olds to the vocational training has been good. The early years tutor teaches on the child development course and knows learners well before they start their vocational training.

47. Some of the assessment practice is weak. There has not been enough observation of learners at work. SET has had to find additional placements to cover this. The main assessor has been covering all the off-the-job training and assessment requirements. The internal verification has inappropriately concentrated on only two units of the NVQ. The external verifier has highlighted the problems and appropriate action has been taken to deal with the concerns.

48. Key skills and technical certificates were not introduced at the start of learners' training. Some learners have made slow progress and there have been no achievements to date. Staff are unaware of the requirements of the frameworks and learners have been led to believe that they have completed all components of the apprenticeship. Learners have only recently been told about key skills and technical certificates, in many cases after they have achieved their NVQ. SET has recently taken action to deal with this. Further placements have been found to allow learners to complete the key skills and technical certificate. Many learners have been persuaded to rejoin the programme to complete all elements. It is too early to judge the effect of these measures.

Leadership and management

49. Internal verification and assessor meetings have taken place and external verifier action points have been dealt with. More recently, course reviews have been completed and the monitoring of learners' progress and recording of outcomes are now satisfactory. Meetings to discuss course developments are appropriately recorded and clearly identify actions and individual responsibility for them. Quality assurance arrangements are incomplete. Although the learners' files are checked, the quality assurance arrangements have not picked up some significant inaccuracies in recording and correspondence. For example, a few learners have been advised in writing that they had completed the framework when

they had only achieved the NVQ. Another learner was told that they were registered for the technical certificate at a time when SET was not accredited as a centre. Recent improvements have been made in reviews and assessment practice. Staff are appropriately appraised and have access to satisfactory training and development opportunities. Early years staff were involved in developing the self-assessment report.

50. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. It is included in the induction and reinforced through progress reviews. The learners' understanding of equality and diversity is checked by the assessor. Learners are aware of the complaints procedures and are confident enough to use it. Images of under-represented groups are displayed in the training rooms and clear statements concerning respect for others and appropriate behaviour in the training centre are reinforced.

51. Learners' literacy and numeracy needs are appropriately supported. Learners access support in the school, either individually or on a group basis. Initial assessment identifies the learners' starting point and determines the level of support needed. Assessors offer good informal support through frequent visits and additional help during off-the-job training sessions. More recent lesson planning includes using different approaches for each learner to best meet their needs.

Business administration and law**Grade 4**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Administration Apprenticeships for young people	45	4 4

52. SET offers training programmes in business administration at level 2. The programme is managed by a tutor, assisted by two assessors, one of whom is work-based. There are 45 apprentices. Many of the learners gain employment with their work-placement providers or elsewhere during or after the training programme. Since August 2005, off-the-job training for the technical certificate is provided at the centre on one day a week. It is provided under subcontract by another London-based provider and by the tutor/assessor. Initial assessment and induction takes place at the centre. All NVQ assessments and progress reviews take place in the workplace.

Administration**Grade 4***Strengths*

- good distance travelled for learners with additional learning needs
- good support for learners
- good work placements

Weaknesses

- no framework completion
- poor retention rates
- slow progress
- very weak links between on- and off-the-job training

Achievement and standards

53. Learners develop a wide range of administrative skills which increases their employability. This is especially noticeable in learners with additional learning needs, who make significant improvements. Many learners are either lone parents, have a poor academic record or been regularly excluded from school. SET works well with these learners and helps them to overcome their barriers. Many learners have progressed to full-time employment with their work-placement provider. The standard of learners' work in portfolios is satisfactory and meets the awarding body's requirements.

54. In the past two years over 100 learners have started, but none have completed, the full framework. Forty-two learners have achieved the NVQ, but none have completed the key skills or technical certificate. Retention rates are also poor. However, there is an upward trend. The rate for 2003-04 was 22 per cent and 58 per cent for the following year.

55. Current learners are making slow progress towards completing the framework. Many have been on the programme for some time and have made insufficient progress. In one case a learner has been training for nearly a year and has only achieved four units of the

NVQ. Another learner has been on the programme over six months and has only achieved two units. The key skills and the technical certificate were not introduced at the start of the programme. The subcontracted training for technical certificates only started in August 2005.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Apprenticeships	2005-06		2004-05		2003-04												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	3		55		46												
Retained*	3		32		10												
Successfully completed	0		0		0												
Still in learning	3		32		10												

*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

The quality of provision

56. Work placements are good. Employers and work placements are carefully selected by the provider to ensure that they can offer good vocational facilities and effective support. Staff in work placements encourage learners to carry out a wide variety of jobs, to enhance their experience and to provide good evidence for their portfolios. Staff effectively arrange work schedules to enable learners to attend day-release training at the centre and to provide time for evidence collection and portfolio-building. Many placements provide good coaching and ensure effective job rotation to extend the range of experience. Some learners attend extra training in subjects such as health and safety, IT and additional literacy and numeracy instruction.

57. Learners benefit from good vocational, pastoral and additional support. Employers and work placements take a keen interest in their learners and provide extra vocational support when necessary. Tutors visit learners at regular intervals and give additional help and effective vocational support including extra help with key skills. Learners benefit from good personal support which is readily available. Tutor/assessors encourage learners to contact them if they have a problem. One member of staff is a trained counsellor. Several learners have received extra support in anger management. Access to external agencies is effectively promoted. Many learners have received motivational training, and additional support by qualified teachers is available for learners who have literacy and numeracy needs. Learners also benefit from well-planned jobsearch training which includes effective curriculum vitae preparation and practice interviews.

58. Satisfactory progress reviews are carried out at four-weekly intervals and include the setting of targets and clear objectives for training and assessment. Reviews are linked into an assessment and the action plan becomes amalgamated with the review process. Some learners are confused about this and it tends to lessen the effect of the review which focuses on short-term objectives. Individual learning plans are not routinely updated.

59. Formal and informal training at the centre is satisfactory. Staff prepare adequate instructional materials which learners use for the background knowledge element of the NVQ. The use of teaching resources is satisfactory. Assessment is effective and meets the

requirements of the awarding body. The training programme meets the needs of employers and learners, but the lack of framework completion has an adverse effect on their progression to higher qualifications.

60. The links between the off-the-job training at the centre and the on-the-job instruction at work placements are very weak. Although most work placements provide a structured on-the-job programme, this is usually based on the placement's own assessment of the learners' needs. Many placements do not have a copy of the NVQ standards and are not involved in the planning of the off-the-job training. The off-the-job tutors are frequently unaware of the coaching taking place in the placement. This is particularly important when the learner is employed.

Leadership and management

61. The programme is managed by one of the experienced assessors. Staff work as a team and are responsive to the learners' needs and work-placement requirements. The staff meetings are regular, relevant and suitably recorded. Staff are appropriately qualified, have a good range of experience and have a strong commitment to the learner. Reinforcement of equality of opportunity is unsatisfactory at reviews and learners' awareness of equality and diversity is poor in a few cases. There have been some recent improvements in the quality of the provision. Internal verification arrangements are now satisfactory and ensure consistency of assessments. Learners' files are kept up to date. Equality of opportunity is satisfactorily managed, but is not adequately reinforced at reviews. The self-assessment report was prepared in consultation with staff. Subcontractors and employers were not included. The report was redrafted before the inspection and identified the strengths and some of the weaknesses identified by inspectors.

