

INSPECTION REPORT

Barnardo's

09 June 2006



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
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**).

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*

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Barnardo's is a company limited by guarantee. It is the United Kingdom's largest children's charity serving 50,000 children, young people and families annually through more than 300 projects. Two projects provide work-based learning funded by the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). These projects are Palmersville Training in Newcastle upon Tyne, which began in 1983, and Dr B's in Harrogate, which began in 1984. Dr B's offers training for a small number of learners in hospitality and catering in its own restaurant and through work placements. Palmersville Training offers off-the-job training and work placements to young people who have social, emotional and academic barriers to learning. Palmersville Training has a large number of learners involved with E2E programmes and a small number of apprentices in business administration, information and communications technology, painting and decorating, retailing and distribution, hospitality, and hairdressing and beauty therapy. A separate Barnardo's project specialises in Entry to Employment (E2E) for young people with severe social needs. Barnardo's is the contract holder for E2E in North Tyneside and, as well as delivering its own programme, it subcontracts to four other providers, North Tyneside Training Services (NTTS), Northumbria Youth Action (NYA), The Base, and Pathways to Work (Pathways). The 17 learners at NTTS are out of scope of this inspection. However, these learners are included in the data for E2E. Barnardo's is operationally managed by a programme manager and a team of six senior managers.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

2. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** The leadership and management of Barnardo's is good, as is quality improvement. Equality of opportunity was found to be outstanding. The provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy is good and the provision in E2E is satisfactory.

3. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process includes all members of staff who understand their responsibilities and the value of the process in promoting continuous improvement. The process includes feedback from learners, employers and key stakeholders. The self-assessment process is carried out systematically and the resulting development plan is clear and used effectively to improve the quality of provision. The self-assessment report was broadly accurate, identifying most of the strengths and weaknesses found at inspection. The report was sufficiently critical and had sufficient supporting evidence. However, data on individual E2E programmes was insufficiently used to inform the self-assessment report.

4. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes and improvements made to the provision. The weaknesses present at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The development plan is well constructed and has clear strategies to maintain the existing strengths and deal with identified weaknesses. Senior managers have a strong focus on quality improvement and use the development plan as a tool to

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measure progress.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR BARNARDO'S:

- improve progression rates in E2E
- make target-setting more effective for specific E2E areas
- maintain the very effective partnerships to promote social inclusion
- share good practice in the recording of learners in E2E
- improve and ensure consistent success rates on hairdressing apprenticeships frameworks

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at inspection

Leadership and management		2
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		1
Quality improvement		2

Retail and commercial enterprise			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Hairdressing</i> Apprenticeships for young people	16	2	
<i>Beauty therapy</i> NVQ training for young people	10	2	

Preparation for life and work			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Employability training</i> Entry to Employment	126	3	3

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

5. A team of four inspectors inspected the provision over four days in one week. Two of the areas of learning offered by the provider were reported on which were hairdressing and beauty therapy, as part of retail and commercial enterprise, and preparation for life and work. There were insufficient numbers in the other areas of learning to warrant them being reported on separately. However, they were considered in the making of judgements about leadership and management overall.

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learners interviewed	54
Number of staff interviewed	48
Number of employers interviewed	4
Number of subcontractors interviewed	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	14
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

6. **Overall apprenticeship success rates have improved between 2004 and 2005 by 14 per cent.** During the same period, the retention rate has improved on apprenticeship programmes by 20 per cent and on E2E programmes by 10 per cent.

7. **Learners on hairdressing and beauty therapy courses develop a good range of skills.** They have a professional approach to their work and are confident in suggesting hairdressing and beauty services to clients. Learners quickly develop good practical skills in hairdressing and beauty therapy.

8. **Learners on E2E programmes develop good vocational and personal skills.** Learners become more confident and are fully involved in a wide variety of activities that encourage independence and team work. Learners improve their time management, listening and communication skills.

9. **Success rates on hairdressing apprenticeship programmes for 2004-05 are low at 20 per cent.** This is a reduction from 60 per cent for the previous period. However, during 2004-05 the number of learners was low and of the learners who left the programme, two achieved the full framework, four went into employment, one moved into further education and one left for personal reasons. All current learners on hairdressing and beauty therapy programmes are due to achieve their qualification by their target date. Success rates on beauty therapy programmes are satisfactory.

10. **On E2E programmes, progression rates are poor and have fallen from 44 per cent in 2003-04 to 37 per cent in 2005-06.** There is a wide variation in progression rates

between the different vocational areas and subcontractors. The provider has analysed the reasons for early leavers and is developing strategies to improve areas of weak progression.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Retail and commercial enterprise	0	3	1	0	4
Preparation for life and work	0	2	4	0	6
Total	0	5	5	0	10

11. Learners on hairdressing and beauty therapy courses receive good practical training and are able to develop their skills in a safe and supportive environment. Learners receive good individual coaching and are encouraged to suggest appropriate services to their hairdressing and beauty models. Tutors give clear explanations of difficult techniques and successfully link background knowledge with practical work.

12. Teaching and learning on E2E programmes encourages learners to complete work successfully. Group management is good and learners are encouraged to work well. Some handouts use language that is difficult for learners to understand.

13. Learning programmes in E2E are highly responsive to individual learning needs. The wide range of provision within Barnardo's, its subcontractors and other partners offers a variety of opportunities for learners.

14. Learners have access to good pastoral and vocational support in hairdressing and E2E programmes. Staff are skilled at identifying the needs of learners and frequently work at overcoming barriers to learning. On E2E programmes, support is exceptional and focuses on individual need. Each learner has a key worker whom they can contact with any concerns. The most vulnerable learners are provided with intensive personal support to enable them to stay in learning.

15. Hairdressing and beauty therapy courses are particularly well managed. Regular meetings take place that focus on the quality of training, and there is a strong emphasis on quality improvement. Staff have clear targets for achievement and have a good understanding of the overall objectives of the company.

16. On E2E programmes, individual learning plans do not always set measurable targets for learners. There are inconsistencies in the use of activity plans, which sometimes do not include comments from staff.

Leadership and management

17. Senior managers set a very clear strategic direction for achieving Barnardo's core objectives to provide a good learning experience for learners who may have severe obstacles to learning. Senior managers give strong leadership in developing strategies to meet these objectives. Staff are clear about the overall objectives of the company and the priority in meeting these needs.

18. Barnardo's has made a high level of investment in resources to improve the

provision. Training rooms have been refurbished to a good standard. Additional support staff have been recruited and developed. Facilities have been introduced to provide additional opportunities for learners. Staffing levels are good and enable learners to receive a high level of individual support.

19. **Staff are well managed** and regularly meet with senior managers to review progress. Staff have good opportunities for additional training and staff development. Communication is very effective and staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.

20. **On E2E programmes there has been insufficient target-setting in relation to specific areas such as the subcontractors and vocational areas.** This has been identified by the provider and a system has been introduced to provide better information, on which to set targets for each individual area of the E2E provision.

21. **Barnardo's strategic approach to equality of opportunity demonstrates a significant commitment to equality and diversity and is the core of the company's objectives.** Good strategies have been developed that support learners who have many barrier to learning. Barnardo's successfully matches work placements to learners and supports learners and employers in the workplace.

22. **Staff and learners successfully create an effective training environment, to promote social inclusion and mutual respect.** Barnardo's has a set of values and core standards, which provides good guidelines for staff and learners.

23. **Barnardo's is outstanding in its collaborative work with external partners in widening participation and promoting social inclusion.** It has been successful at identifying training opportunities in the areas that meet the individual needs of learners and has successfully worked with these partners to improve learners' experience.

24. **Barnardo's has introduced good strategies to improve the overall provision with a strong focus on the learners' experience.** Strategies to improve retention rates have been successful and improvements to the quality assurance arrangements have achieved continuous improvements.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good strategic leadership
- outstanding collaborative work with external partners to widen participation
- good strategies to meet learners' diverse needs
- high level of investment in resources
- good strategies to improve provision

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting for specific E2E areas

Retail and commercial enterprise

Strengths

- good skills development
- good off-the-job training
- very good pastoral and vocational support
- particularly well-managed programmes

Weaknesses

- some low success rates of hairdressing apprenticeship frameworks

Preparation for life and work

Employability training

Strengths

- good development of vocational and personal skills
- highly responsive individualised learners' programmes
- exceptional support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor progression rates in some areas of E2E
- some poor recording of learners' achievement

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT BARNARDO'S:

- 'the way I am treated like an adult'
- 'the opportunity to learn new things'
- 'meeting new people'
- 'the residential visits'
- 'learning to read and write better'
- 'the friendly approachable staff'
- 'the support I get from the staff'
- 'the way training has turned my life around'
- 'the way everyone gets on together'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK BARNARDO'S COULD IMPROVE:

- the rates of pay
- the number of external visits - not enough
- the amount of practical work - not enough

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- good strategic leadership
- outstanding collaborative work with external partners to widen participation
- good strategies to meet learners' diverse needs
- high level of investment in resources
- good strategies to improve provision

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting for specific E2E areas

25. Senior managers set a very clear strategic direction to achieve Barnardo's core objectives. There is a clear set of values and aims that focus on providing a good learning experience for learners with severe barriers to learning. Senior managers provide strong leadership in developing strategies to meet learners' needs, and are encouraged to engage and develop new projects, internally and externally, to help achieve the company's key objectives. All staff clearly understand the overall objectives of the company and how to meet these needs. Good use is made of development planning in which all staff are fully involved. Development plans are clear and well understood by staff, and are used at meetings to measure progress. They are frequently updated to ensure objectives are achieved.

26. To improve the provision, Barnardo's has invested considerably in resources such as new facilities and equipment, staff, staff training and development, and programme development. Resources were good at the previous inspection and have continued to improve. Much refurbishment of training rooms and upgrading of equipment has taken place. More good learning resources and additional support resources have been purchased. A new, practical activities area and good facilities have been introduced. Barnardo's provides a wide range of learning opportunities and programmes to ensure individual learners' needs are met. For example, additional training areas have been introduced, such as those for horticulture, to enable learners to develop good employability skills to meet local needs. Additionally, learners following catering courses are taught in a recently refurbished modern restaurant that is open to the public.

27. Staffing levels are good and enable staff to work effectively with individual learners. Additional support staff have been recruited and developed to improve learner support. Staff training and development is well resourced. An effective appraisal process is in place to identify training needs. This is linked to a development plan for each staff member. Staff are well qualified for their vocational areas and are involved in a good range of highly appropriate internal and external training events. Barnardo's provides a very good and effective system of support for staff who often have to deal with difficult and stressful situations.

28. Staff are well managed and are involved in regular individual supervision sessions with experienced colleagues. Barnardo's provides a good induction for staff, which includes valuable training to enable them to work in a way that focuses on individual learners' needs. Communication is very effective and staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. Regular meetings take place between Barnardo's and subcontractor staff. These provide key information on the company and progress being made. Managers meet with their staff on a weekly basis and have a clear focus on learners' needs. In the vocational areas staff are set clear targets to improve retention and achievement rates. Overall success rates have improved by 14 per cent between 2004 and 2005 and this trend continues in most programmes. Retention rates have also improved.

29. The management of provision for literacy, numeracy and language training is well planned. Initial assessment is comprehensive and appropriately identifies learners who require additional help with their literacy and numeracy or other specific individual support needs. Barnardo's has a good proportion of staff with appropriate qualifications to carry out this work and also uses other specialists if required. There is an appropriate skills for life strategy in place and this is reviewed regularly. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language.

30. There is insufficient target-setting for specific E2E areas. Targets for E2E in relation to specific programme areas and subcontractors were previously not recorded clearly or consistently. In 2005, the Barnardo's development planning process had no clear recording or analysis of data on achievements in E2E. There were no interim targets and/or measurable outcomes recorded consistently across individual programmes to identify E2E priorities and to enable performance to be measured and evaluated regularly. In E2E particularly, the recording systems do not enable clear measurement of progress towards completion to be reported and analysed. This weakness was identified by managers some time ago and the decision to introduce a new management information system was made in early 2005. The recent full implementation of the system has provided managers and teams with much improved information upon which judgements and decisions about programme outcome performance can be made. Monitoring and review systems for work with subcontractors have developed. Monitoring, quality improvement, and reporting arrangements have been improved and fully implemented.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 1

31. Barnardo's strategic approach to equality of opportunity demonstrates a significant commitment to equality and diversity issues and is at the core of the company's objectives. A key strategic priority, which is clearly achieved by Barnardo's, is to enable individual young people with unsatisfactory education and training experiences, and barriers to learning, to access and participate in training. Barnardo's has an open-door policy and achieves a high level of inclusion of young people who typically would not be involved in training.

32. Barnardo's has developed good strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners and to promote social inclusion. A clear direction is set by senior managers to meet learners' needs and is fully understood by all staff. Strategies are in place to support learners' needs in the training centre and to deal effectively with inappropriate behaviour in a positive way. Barnardo's successfully matches work placements to the needs of the employer and learner, with full regard for the psychological needs of the learner. Support is provided for the learner and the employer by a skilled team of support workers. Staff and learners in

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the training centre work effectively to provide a good supportive learning environment that promotes social inclusion and mutual respect. Barnardo's strategy to promote social inclusion within the community has been successful in attracting learners from under-represented groups. Staff attend events at local schools and other events within the community to challenge the stereotypical views that learners may have regarding training. Several female learners have chosen to follow the painting and decorating programme. Equality of opportunity and diversity imagery is displayed in prominent positions throughout the training centre to challenge stereotypical views, raise cultural awareness and promote a socially inclusive environment.

33. Barnardo's provides an outstanding range of learning opportunities for learners. Many learners make significant progress in personal and social development. Learners have good opportunities to achieve accredited and non-accredited qualifications in addition to their main programme aim.

34. Barnardo's has an established set of values and core standards that provide good guidelines for staff and enable them to work in a way that focuses on individual learners' needs. Staffing ratios and the way programmes are planned support this approach. There is good promotion of participation by learners. Feedback mechanisms are used well to improve standards of service. Staffing, policies and practices reflect well the values of Barnardo's.

35. Barnardo's is outstanding in its collaborative work with external partners to widen participation and increase access for learners to a wide variety of good training. Barnardo's is involved in making a significant strategic contribution to the development of education and training opportunities for young people in the area. Barnardo's has been very successful and innovative at identifying training groups within the local area with particular specialist training skills to meet learners' needs, such as working with groups that specifically target young offenders. Barnardo's has very effectively supported and worked with these groups to ensure the quality of the learners' experience. Very effective external partnership links include, for example, participating actively in a learning partnership, chairing a work-based learning group, and working very successfully with a range of other agencies to improve and promote effectively work-based learning for young people. This strategy has been successful at reaching learners in difficult-to-reach groups.

36. Barnardo's collaborative strategy includes good work with a range of other youth support agencies to better integrate provision and services for young people in the area. Barnardo's has a particularly good partnership with a local college creating good opportunities for learners to progress. Good links with schools involve a range of work including tasters and vocational courses from which learners are able to progress and make better choices.

37. There is good collaborative work with the youth service and other specialist services that include some exceptional expertise and provision for working with Barnardo's client group. Many young people benefit from these arrangements and make significant progress. Barnardo's subcontracts some of its E2E provision to specialist youth projects and this enables learners' individual needs to be better met and widens the range of choices available to them. The subcontracting relationships work well and Barnardo's has provided very good support to better develop the E2E provision made by these projects. There is particularly good practical involvement with Connexions. Collaborative work was

judged a strength at the previous inspection and it has continued to develop very well and achieve more successful outcomes for young people.

38. Barnardo's approach to equality of opportunity was judged to be outstanding at the time of the previous inspection and this has been maintained and improved. The high standard of internal arrangements, highly appropriate policies and practices and strong promotion of equality of opportunity with learners continues. Staff are regularly involved in updating and training to further develop their expertise and skills for equality and diversity. For example, all staff, with the exception of three new members, have achieved a specific qualification and attended a short course to enable them to be better able to manage learners' behaviour problems in a positive way.

39. Equality of opportunity and diversity policies, issued to staff, learners, employers and subcontractors, are comprehensive and give clear guidance on how the relevant legislation is interpreted by Barnardo's. Equality of opportunity is monitored regularly in work placements and throughout the subcontractors. Staff and learners have a good understanding of equality of opportunity. Staff are fully involved in raising the profile of equality of opportunity and diversity, both at a programme level and in the contact they have with employers and subcontractors.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

40. Barnardo's prioritises improvement to the learners' experience and has introduced good strategies to improve the provision. For example, to improve retention rates, additional support staff were recruited and they are very effectively deployed to meet the individual needs of learners, to follow up non-attendance, work with personal and social challenges facing young people and, in some cases, to bring back into learning individuals who had left the provision early. Some good results have been achieved and retention in apprentice programmes has been improved by 20 per cent and in E2E overall by 10 per cent between 2004 and 2005. This improving trend has continued in 2006. Other strategies for improving retention include very thorough analysis of reasons for leaving and specific actions to prevent future occurrences as well as changes to arrangements in the early period of learners' programmes. Other improvements have included developing the new ways of delivering key skills and additional qualification in new vocational areas. Pass rates in key skills have improved and more learners are now accessing additional qualifications.

41. Barnardo's works very effectively with subcontractors. Good practice is shared well and joint training events are held regularly. Effective monitoring, support and development take place. Barnardo's works successfully with subcontractors to improve the provision.

42. Barnardo's has improved the quality assurance arrangements since the previous inspection. Internal audit arrangements work effectively and managers take responsibility for improving standards and implementing actions to achieve continuous improvements. An appropriate system for the observation of teaching and learning is now in place and works effectively to improve the learning experience. The observation of teaching and learning is graded and the results are used at appraisal to improve tutors' skills. The results of observation of teaching and learning are systematically reviewed and moderated by the senior management team. Grades given during the inspection broadly reflect those awarded by Barnardo's.

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43. Barnardo's approach to self-assessment is good overall and fully involves subcontractors and staff. Feedback from learners and employers is used well to help produce the report. The report is generally accurate and sufficiently critical. The development plan is clear in its expectations. It has clearly defined performance indicators and is used as a working document to review progress. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process and have a clear understanding of the importance of the process in ensuring quality improvement. Managers have a clear focus on quality improvement and discuss it at senior management meetings. Action plans are put in place to remedy weaknesses identified through the self-assessment process. Barnardo's has been successful at rectifying all of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The report did not examine E2E provision within the different vocational areas of learning. It did not propose judgements for the whole of the E2E provision within the Barnardo's Palmersville Training project. Management information systems and the use of data for evaluation have improved. However, some of this is very new and is yet to fully contribute to management decision-making and evaluation within the self-assessment process.

44. There are some inconsistencies in the approach taken to aspects of recording and target-setting, particularly in E2E provision. This has been identified by Barnardo's and, although remedial action and training have been implemented, some of these problems have continued, as identified in the E2E report. Some written procedures do not sufficiently reflect the requirements of the E2E programme. For example, there is no specific procedure for the way in which progressions within individual areas of E2E are to be recorded.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Retail and commercial enterprise

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Hairdressing Apprenticeships for young people	16	2
Beauty therapy NVQ training for young people	10	2

45. Currently, 26 learners are on hairdressing and beauty therapy training programmes, of whom 16 are following modern apprenticeships in hairdressing and 10 are working on locally agreed LSC temporary apprenticeship frameworks in beauty therapy. Most learners are placed in hairdressing or beauty salons in the Newcastle upon Tyne area. Off-the-job training is provided in the Barnardo's training centre situated close to the city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne. Learners attend for two day each week for practical and theory training. Assessment takes place in the training centre and the workplace. Three full-time and one part-time member of staff are involved in the delivery of the hairdressing and beauty therapy training which is overseen by the training co-ordinator who acts as lead internal verifier.

Strengths

- good skills development
- good off-the-job training
- very good pastoral and vocational support
- particularly well-managed programmes

Weaknesses

- some low success rates of hairdressing apprenticeship frameworks

Achievement and standards

46. Learners develop a good range of skills. Learners have a professional approach to their practical work and can give clear explanations of the techniques they use. In their client consultations, learners use their communication skills confidently to suggest different hairstyles and beauty treatments to their clients. They also have a good awareness of the importance of health and safety particularly when carrying out chemical treatments. They routinely ensure working areas are kept neat, clean and tidy and wear appropriate personal protective equipment when required. In beauty therapy, many learners have developed good skills particularly in manicure and nail art. Hairdressing learners quickly produce a good standard of hair cutting. The standard of learners' written work is good. Learners use the internet to carry out research and use visual imagery in their assignments.

47. On beauty therapy national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses, success rates are satisfactory. In the period 2003-04 the overall success rate and timely rate was 100 per cent. However, this was based on only two learners. In 2004-05, the overall success rate

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was 53 per cent. Of the 10 learners currently on programme all are making good progress.

48. Success rates on the hairdressing apprenticeship programme are low. Success rates on hairdressing apprenticeship programmes fell from 60 per cent in 2003-04 to 20 per cent in 2004-05. However, learner numbers were low and several learners left the programme early due to personal reasons. All current learners are progressing well and some show particularly good progress and are ahead of target. Of the 11 learners remaining on programme from 2004-05, eight are due to complete within the next two months. The five learners who joined the apprenticeship programme in 2005-06 are all making good progress with their NVQ and key skills.

The quality of provision

49. Learners receive good off-the-job training. Tutors provide a good training environment where learners are able to develop their hairdressing and beauty therapy skills and the confidence to recommend hairdressing and beauty therapy techniques to their clients. The ratio of tutors to learners is good with one tutor to seven learners. Learners receive individual support and coaching to enable them to develop their skills quickly. Tutors encourage learners to give clear explanations of the techniques they are using and where they could be used. Tutors give clear explanations and demonstrations of difficult techniques and help learners link background knowledge and key skills to their practical work. Learners have a clear understanding of health and safety and the indications that prevent treatments being carried out. Practical training sessions benefit from a good range of hairdressing and beauty models for learners to develop their practical skills on different types of hairdressing and beauty models. Tutors are careful to match hairdressing models to the needs and abilities of the learners to ensure assessment is carried out at appropriate times. Background knowledge sessions are well structured and use a variety of different techniques to engage learners. Learners are confident in group and individual work. Good handouts are used by tutors to support and reinforce key learning points. Practical training takes place in an environment which is modern and reflects a commercial salon, both in hairdressing and beauty. Background knowledge sessions take place in classrooms that are well equipped with good access to information technology (IT). Good use is made of a range of appropriate imagery displayed on the walls.

50. Learners have access to very good pastoral and vocational support. Many of the provider's learners have severe barriers to learning and require a high level of support to enable them to continue with their learning. Barnardo's staff are very skilled at identifying the needs of learners and frequently work with the designated support workers to help learners overcome social problems that may interrupt their learning programmes. Tutors and support workers frequently help learners in financial difficulty or who are experiencing housing problems. Learners also receive good individual support from the vocational work tutor who frequently ensures working programmes allow learners to complete their written work. Learners requiring additional practical support have access to a tutor who will help them develop their practical skills. Work placements are carefully matched to the needs of each learner and Barnardo's staff are skilled at supporting learners in their work placements by frequent visits and responding to the needs of employers and learners.

51. Assessment practice is satisfactory and in line with awarding body assessment

strategy. Assessors give learners constructive, supportive feedback. Assessment planning in the training centre is appropriate and assessment opportunities are effectively utilised for the benefit of the learners. Learners are frequently assessed in their work placements and in the training centre.

52. Induction is well planned and takes place before learners start their programme. Learners are given training on health and safety, equality of opportunity, and diversity. They are given clear guidance on what is required for their qualification and how they will be assessed. Learners have a good understanding of the NVQ and key skills. Initial assessment takes place to identify learners' literacy and numeracy needs. Learners requiring help with their literacy and numeracy receive support from Barnardo's staff on an individual basis.

53. Progress reviews take place every four weeks at the training centre. These are comprehensive and cover progress made since the previous review. Learners and tutors agree targets to be achieved by the next review and these are clearly linked to assessments needed to progress towards completion of their qualification. The review process covers the vocational and personal needs of the learners, with Barnardo's frequently intervening on learners' behalf to help solve problems arising in the work placements. A second review takes place in the learners' work placements to provide valuable information to the employer about the progress of the learners and to link the employer with training taking place in the training centre. At this review, health and safety and equality of opportunity in the workplace are monitored and useful promotional materials are used to raise employer awareness.

Leadership and management

54. Hairdressing and beauty therapy programmes are particularly well managed. Senior managers are fully involved in driving forward quality improvement. There is good communication with hairdressing and beauty staff who clearly understand the overall objectives for the company. The training co-ordinator who manages the day-to-day operational aspects of the training programme meets staff every month to review the progress being made on each of the programmes. Targets for learner achievement are agreed for each assessor. Team meetings take place on a weekly basis where individual needs of learners are discussed. Support workers attend these meetings and are available to support learners who may leave the programme early. Tutors and assessors have clear monitoring systems in place to ensure that learners are making sufficient progress. Over the past two years, all staff have been supported in achieving additional teaching qualifications.

55. Management of off-the-job training is good with a systematic approach to practical and background knowledge training. Lesson observations are carried out frequently and good feedback is given to tutors. Development needs identified by this process are linked to staff development plans and all staff are actively encouraged and supported in achieving additional qualifications.

56. Internal verification is satisfactory. Internal verification is planned in advance and a sampling plan includes sufficient observations of assessors. The training co-ordinator acts as internal verifier for hairdressing and beauty therapy.

57. The self-assessment report broadly reflects the strengths and weaknesses identified

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during inspection. The report was critical with sufficient evidence to support judgements. The report correctly identified most of the strengths and weaknesses. Tutors are fully included in the self-assessment process and have a clear understanding of the importance of the process in driving quality improvement.

Preparation for life and work**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Employability training</i>		3
Entry to Employment	126	3

58. There are currently 23 learners at NYA, 14 learners at The Base and 12 learners at Pathways. Sixty learners are at Barnardo's. Eighteen of these learners are on the generic citizenship programme and the other 42 are based within vocational areas working towards related qualifications at level 1 NVQ or equivalent. A further 17 learners are at NTTs but are out of the scope of this inspection. There are also close links with two European Social Fund projects. The Preparation for Progression project is a pre-E2E project and the E2E Enhancement Project provides funding for additional activities such as residentials.

59. Connexions refers all learners to the weekly referral panel at Barnardo's, where the Connexions personal adviser, Barnardo's, and the subcontractors, review each referral and decide on the most appropriate provision. The learners are interviewed by their referred provider within a week. All learners have an induction during their first week followed by five weeks of initial assessment. Attendance starts at 16 hours a week and increases during learners' time on the programme.

60. The programme and quality manager has overall responsibility for E2E. Within Barnardo's, each learner has a key worker as their main link person within the area they are placed in. There are also three support workers. Each subcontractor is linked to a senior member of staff.

Employability training*Strengths*

- good development of vocational and personal skills
- highly responsive individualised learners' programmes
- exceptional support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor progression rates in some areas of E2E
- some poor recording of learners' achievement

Achievement and standards

61. Barnardo's accepts all learners referred by Connexions. A high proportion of learners have a variety of barriers to learning. The initial assessment period identifies their specific needs to help develop their individual learning plan. There is good development of vocational and personal skills. Learners become more confident and are involved in a wide variety of activities that encourage independent working and teamwork skills. Learners improve their time management, listening and communication skills. Learners in

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the vocational areas are in real work environments where they follow standard working practices. They develop the skills required to use tools and equipment safely and produce a high standard of work. Many achieve either a full NVQ at level 1 or relevant units. E2E learners in hospitality work within the restaurant at Barnardo's, which offers a full service to the public. Hairdressing learners work within the hairdressing salon. Other learners have work tasters and placements and many progress to employment.

62. To date, 48 per cent of those who finish their programme also achieve additional qualifications including key skills, adult literacy and numeracy, a foundation certificate for health and safety in the workplace, and first aid. Overall, 64 per cent of learners are at levels 1 or 2 for literacy when they start on E2E with 7 per cent at entry levels 1 or 2. In numeracy, 44 per cent are at levels 1 or 2, and 13 per cent are at entry levels 1 or 2. Overall, 82 per cent of learners have improved their literacy skills and 57 per cent their numeracy skills.

63. Overall, progression rates have dropped from 44 per cent in 2003-04 to 37 per cent in 2005-06. There is a wide variation in progression rates between the different vocational areas and subcontractors. For 2005-06, these range from 9 per cent in one vocational area to 77 per cent at one of the subcontractors. Barnardo's has analysed the reasons for these leavers and is developing strategies to support learners. Initial assessment identifies where the E2E provision is not appropriate and learners are referred back to Connexions or moved to another training provider. Some learners move from some subcontractors into custodial sentences. Pregnancy and childcare issues account for other leavers. Comprehensive support is given to subcontractors to identify improvements that can be made. Some learners progress from the more generic areas to vocational areas within E2E. For example, 26 per cent of learners on the citizenship programme in 2005-06 have moved to other areas. Good working relationships with the local college enable learners in all vocational areas to progress to enrolment at the college and complete appropriate vocational qualifications such as the foundation certificate in construction.

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

LSC funded work-based learning																	
Entry to Employment	2005-06		2004-05		2003-04												
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Number of starts	256		366	100	207	100											
Progression ¹	49		135	37	91	44											
Achieved objectives ²	49		130	36	82	40											
Still in learning	122		0	0	0	0											

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

The quality of provision

64. Learning programmes are highly responsive to individual learning needs. The wide range of provision within Barnardo's, its subcontractors and other partners offers a variety of opportunities for learners. The referral panel decides which of the areas offered most

meet the learners' needs and interests. The results of the initial assessment period are shared with the learner and an individual learning plan produced. Programmes are designed to include sessions that support the achievement of objectives set out in the learners' E2E Passport. They also include activities which meet emerging learning needs. The balance between the three strands of E2E is individual to the needs of each learner. For example, learners at The Base and Pathways have a higher number of activities within the personal and social development and basic and key skills strands, whereas those learners within the vocational areas are more likely to focus on the vocational area with other activities. Enrichment activities such as residentials, football tournaments and food preparation make a significant contribution to learners' enjoyment and achievement. Where appropriate, learners have attended work tasters or work experience. Some learners start within Barnardo's before progressing to an external placement.

65. Support for learners is exceptional and focuses on their individual needs. Learners are supported to remain on E2E or to move to more appropriate provision where identified. Each learner has a key worker who is their first point of contact for any issues or concerns. Three full-time, specialist staff provide a dedicated support service for learners with specific personal issues such as substance misuse, mental health difficulties, homelessness, pregnancy, depression and offending. Staff accompany learners to medical appointments and court hearings and carry out home visits where appropriate. The most vulnerable learners, particularly those leaving care or at risk of reoffending, are provided with intense personal support to enable them to stay in learning. Where appropriate, specialist external support is accessed and there are good working relationships with external agencies. The excellent partnership with the link Connexions personal adviser enables learners to readily access advice and guidance about jobs and other opportunities. This support is added to a learner's programme if they are unlikely to achieve a positive progression.

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors encourage learners to complete work successfully and provide them with oral feedback. Group management is good and learners are encouraged to work well. Lessons include a range of activities, such as individual written work, group discussions and practical tasks. Learners work well together. They listen to instructions and ask questions to confirm understanding. Resources are used effectively to promote learning. Literacy and numeracy are included in the vocational learning sessions as well as in separate workshops. Learners' confidence increases in reading and working with written information. There is satisfactory promotion of health and safety and equal opportunities. Class sizes are small and staff give good individual support to learners. However, in a small number of classes, activities were not clearly introduced and resources were not effectively used. The text on some handouts is too complex.

67. All staff are aware of learners' progress and achievements and discuss these with their learners. However, there is some poor recording of this information. Individual learning plans do not always set measurable targets for learners. Modules and tasks to complete do not always have a target date. There is inconsistent use of activity plans. Some learners do not regularly complete them, whereas others use them as a comprehensive planning and review record. Activity plans do not always include comments from staff. Discussion and feedback at reviews is satisfactory but recording of feedback is inconsistent. Some is comprehensive with feedback from all staff who are involved with the learners, whereas other feedback is recorded in poor detail. Effective practices in

some areas, such as monitoring systems and learners' diaries, are not shared with other areas.

Leadership and management

68. Staff make effective use of the many external partnership links to improve E2E. Communication is satisfactory, with planned weekly staff meetings and monthly supervision. Informal communication among staff is effective. Staff are experienced and well qualified within their specialist areas and ongoing training and appraisal supports their development. Specific targets have not been set for the different E2E areas and staff have only recently been using data reports to monitor their performance.

69. Outstanding equality of opportunity supports the strengths in E2E. Learners are encouraged to respect others and themselves. Inappropriate behaviour and language are challenged effectively. There is a strong shared ethos and commitment to widening participation for those with significant barriers to learning. Staff promote the well being of learners by creating a safe environment in which they can develop skills and learn.

70. The ongoing self-assessment process involves all staff. The action plans are regularly reviewed and updated. There was insufficient use of data to aid judgements in the self-assessment report. The vocational areas of E2E were included in the self-assessment and it was sometimes difficult to identify which judgements applied to E2E. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements, but identified the additional weakness of poor progression rates.

