

INSPECTION REPORT

Chiltern Training Limited

14 December 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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Chiltern Training Limited

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Chiltern Training Limited (CTL) was established in 1993 and is a privately owned company limited by guarantee. It provides training for apprentices and advanced apprentices in early years care and education and children's care, learning and development. All learners are based in childcare settings in Berkshire and the southeast of England. CTL contracts with Berkshire Learning and Skills Council for all of its apprenticeship provision.
2. CTL's managing director and training director have overall responsibility for the company. There are 18 other staff working from their main premises in Reading including administrative, financial and technical support staff. Specialist tutors provide tuition for additional qualifications such as food hygiene, moving and handling, and health and safety.
3. There are 234 learners on funded programmes, of whom 78 are apprentices and 156 are advanced apprentices. A further four learners are funded to complete a level 4 award in children's care, learning and development.
4. CTL is part of a centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) in children's care, learning and development in partnership with Berkshire College of Agriculture and Bracknell and Wokingham College. Through this relationship, CTL provides additional professional development courses for early years practitioners and a management programme for early years managers as well as apprenticeship programmes. CTL contracts with Thames Valley University to provide an alternative vocational education programme for 14-16 year olds. Nineteen per cent of CTL's work is privately funded.
5. CTL was inspected by the Training Standards Council in 1999 and by the Adult Learning Inspectorate in 2003.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 2

6. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is good.** CTL's leadership and management and quality improvement arrangements are outstanding. Its provision for equality of opportunity is good as is its training in early years.
7. **The inspection team had a high degree of confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process is very accurate and the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report are a good reflection of the provision. The self-assessment process is thoroughly inclusive, integrated with the strategic and operational running of the company, and focused on measuring and improving the learners' experience. CTL was very self-critical in its grading of the provision.
8. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to maintain the high quality of provision.** CTL is very effectively improving its provision through good self-assessment and action-planning. Key training activities are quality assured and

CHILTERN TRAINING LIMITED

improved in the light of useful feedback from learners, employers and staff. The weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been remedied, and the strengths maintained and further built on.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR CHILTERN TRAINING LIMITED:

- continue to improve success rates
- further improve the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in support of learning
- further develop the literacy, numeracy and language strategy
- continue initiatives to widen participation by members of under-represented groups
- maintain and further develop the good self-assessment process

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at inspection

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

Health, public services and care		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Early years</i>		2
Apprenticeships for young people	234	2

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

9. Three inspectors inspected, graded and reported on work-based learning programmes for young people in health, public services and care. Two visits were made to CTL, one in the week before the main inspection week.

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learners interviewed	55
Number of staff interviewed	24
Number of employers interviewed	11
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	12
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	2
Number of visits	2

Leadership and management

Strengths

- very effective communication with all those involved in training
- well-developed employer engagement strategy
- very good promotion of equality and diversity
- good collection and use of learners' and employers' feedback
- good quality improvement systems
- very accurate self-assessment report

Weaknesses

- incomplete literacy, numeracy and language strategy

Health, public services and care

Early years

Strengths

- good achievement of national vocational qualifications (NVQs) by advanced apprentices
- good target-setting
- good resources to support learning
- very good employer engagement to support learners
- good progression for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficiently focused support for learners with additional numeracy needs

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT CHILTERN TRAINING LIMITED:

- the very supportive tutors and assessors
- the nice relaxed atmosphere at the training centre
- 'building confidence and my skills'
- the way they teach - 'they're really thorough with information when you ask questions, and they let you work at your own pace'
- the flexibility
- meeting and discussing issues with other learners
- the tutors - 'they're very friendly in their approach with you, and you can have a laugh with them'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK CHILTERN TRAINING LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:

- 'more one to one's'
- 'increase the number of units you can submit in any one month'
- 'too much writing - more oral questioning could be done'
- 'I did not like doing the mathematics test' (failed twice)
- 'need more productive lessons'
- the availability of set texts - there are too few copies

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 1

Strengths

- very effective communication with all those involved in training
- well-developed employer engagement strategy
- very good promotion of equality and diversity
- good collection and use of learners' and employers' feedback
- good quality improvement systems
- very accurate self-assessment report

Weaknesses

- incomplete literacy, numeracy and language strategy

10. Communication is very effective throughout CTL, and with learners and employers. It was a strength at the previous inspection, and has been further improved since. There are staff meetings every week, and a more formal full staff meeting at least monthly. This covers a range of relevant topics and always includes actual and planned performance. There is an effective audit of learners' files to help ensure consistency of practice, changes to policies, equality and diversity, health and safety, targets for recruitment, good practice, and feedback from learners and employers. Meetings have agendas and very useful minutes are produced with timed action points and responsibilities, and are distributed to all staff on the same day. A professionally produced newsletter is distributed monthly to learners and employers. It is informative, promotes training well and includes celebrations of success as well as changes to training. CTL uses it to recruit experienced learners as buddies to those starting a new programme, and employers use it to advertise vacancies for qualified staff and trainees. The newsletter is popular with learners and employers and is also available on the CTL website. CTL has installed a new telephone system so that staff can have their own extension number and voicemail which they can access from home, improving communication with employers. The company has also upgraded its e-mail services to give staff their own e-mail addresses, and these have been shared with learners and employers through the newsletter. Learners are beginning to e-mail work to their tutors and assessors. Employers are very happy with the timely contact they receive if there are any problems with their learners. The director of training telephones employers regularly to ensure that they are happy with CTL's role in training their employees. CTL has good links with other providers through a provider network. It also has good community links. A local charity that supports young people with special needs makes presentations to all new groups of learners, and CTL's learners make up 10 per cent of their volunteers. There are also good links with Connexions, and many learners hear about CTL through them.

11. CTL has a particularly well-developed employer engagement strategy. All employers play an active role in the training of their employees and have a good understanding of apprenticeship frameworks. A number of employers are qualified assessors, and this role is promoted well by CTL, which offers free training for it. CTL has tried different methods

of getting employers to attend meetings, to gauge their views and to improve their involvement in training. Termly lunchtime meetings and meetings with guest speakers have been particularly successful and are well attended by employers. There is particularly good employer involvement in progress reviews, and employers are keen for their staff to develop by gaining nationally recognised qualifications. They are enthusiastic about working with CTL and appreciate the company's efforts to meet their needs through the introduction of e-learning and Saturday classes. Training advisers have good working relationships with nursery staff. Employers also give CTL staff invaluable experience to help update their professional practice. Some employers give talks and take part in off-the-job teaching sessions, advising learners on aspects of employment such as interview techniques. Employers report particularly good levels of communication and speedy responses to their queries and requests. Learners' progression to advanced apprenticeships is enhanced by the strong relationship between CTL and employers. CTL is registered as an umbrella body for Criminal Records Bureau checks, and as a service to employers, it helps provide checks for nursery staff. One of CTL's tutor/assessors also works as a work-based assessor and training officer in a local nursery.

12. Staff are suitably qualified for their roles and have appropriate occupational backgrounds. A thorough staff appraisal system is in place, comprising an annual appraisal and two interim reviews. The system involves feedback on performance from the management information and quality assurance systems and has good links with staff development to ensure that the business needs are met. Staff undergo regular professional updating. Issues affecting all staff are covered at termly staff awaydays. Some staff are beginning to take key skills qualifications in order to better understand the potential difficulties facing their learners. Staff receive an extended induction that introduces them to CTL and to their role as tutors or assessors. It involves shadowing job roles and carrying out supervised activities such as learners' progress reviews. CTL has a range of appropriate policies and procedures that are reviewed throughout the year at team meetings. They are dated and revisions are shared and agreed with team members.

13. Business and strategic planning are satisfactory and appropriate. They take account of previous successes, such as CoVE status, and future opportunities such as e-learning, which could affect training methods. Plans are made three years in advance and linked to operational management issues. Effective board meetings review all operational issues and are thoroughly minuted. CTL manages its resources efficiently and many improvements have been made that have resulted in them becoming a strength in the area of learning.

14. The management of health and safety is satisfactory. One member of staff is designated as health and safety officer. Several staff have completed a two-day course that equips them with the skills and knowledge to monitor employers' health and safety arrangements, and two members of staff have taken a more advanced qualification. External staff are used to carry out objective annual assessments on employers. Health and safety is part of the induction for all new staff and learners. Nurseries are monitored for accidents, and actions are taken if any concerns arise. CTL's newsletter includes updates on health and safety, and the company website includes links to useful booklets and changes in legislation. Staff have produced a bank of questions related to the workplace which they ask learners at progress reviews. This is having a positive effect on learners' understanding of potential problems. Health and safety was reviewed well as part of the self-assessment process.

15. CTL has recognised that its literacy and numeracy support strategy is incomplete. All current learners were screened at induction to ascertain their overall literacy and numeracy levels. Recently, CTL has introduced a paper-based diagnostic tool which identifies the specific areas in which learners need help. This part of the strategy has not been updated but the early results are already leading to improved learner information being passed to tutors. The current strategy does not include retesting with the new diagnostic tool to assess improvements to learners' literacy and numeracy levels. A free writing task that is given as part of learners' initial assessment has also been improved to provide more relevant information and improve the support given to learners. A member of staff with a school teaching background has been identified as the most suitable person to take a specialist support qualification, while other staff have been on short courses. CTL has links that have helped improve support for learners with additional learning needs such as dyslexia. Specialist equipment, such as voice recorders, is used with these learners, and oral rather than written assessments are arranged where appropriate. A learner for whom English was an additional language received support including interpreters for assessment.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

16. Equality and diversity are very well promoted at CTL. Equal opportunities policies and procedures are shared with learners at induction and are included in the recently revised learner handbook. The equality and diversity policy statement is comprehensive and relates to appropriate legislation including the most recent age equality legislation. This has recently been rewritten in more accessible language. Learners understand the meaning and value of equality and diversity. Their understanding is very effectively checked during progress reviews at work using a bank of questions which are well recorded, vocationally contextualised and their meaning continually reinforced throughout the learners' programme. Employers receive a handbook which includes CTL's policies and procedures, and their own approach to equality and diversity is checked. Posters are displayed throughout the training centre, portraying positive images of people from minority ethnic groups, and men and women in non-stereotypical roles. Other posters effectively inform learners of their rights and responsibilities. The five outcomes for 'Every Child Matters', the government's change agenda for children, are promoted in displays informing learners of the company's expectations of them. There are displays celebrating learners' success throughout the centre as well as articles in the monthly newsletter and on CTL's website. The newsletter also includes items that share good practice, including a series of six recent articles about equality and diversity written by a member of staff in response to employers' requests. All staff received equality and diversity training in June this year. CTL sponsors a learner to visit another country and develop their childcare practice, and as part of this process the learner sends monthly e-mails which are published in the newsletter. On their return, learners create a display about their experience, with photographs and accounts of their work, and give talks to their peers. Tutors adapt their teaching methods very effectively to meet the needs of learners with additional learning needs or different learning styles. These methods are included in lesson plans and were demonstrated in observed lessons. Equality and diversity impact measures have been set to increase the proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups to 9 per cent by 2008. The current participation rate is 7 per cent. This is above the regional average of 4.9 per cent, but below the Reading profile of over 13 per cent. Only 2 per cent of the learners are men. However, CTL has developed a good range of activities to widen participation both by men and by members of minority ethnic groups. These include providing

babysitting courses directed at youth centres, the scouts and schools in town centre locations which have a larger proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups.

17. CTL runs a summer school and Saturday training sessions offering individual support for learners with additional learning needs. These sessions are well attended. CTL works with Reading Dyslexia Association to better support learners. Additional learning aids are provided as needed. All teaching material is printed in one of two clear fonts, and walls on which there are whiteboards have been painted blue to enhance text and images on the screen. CTL has provided an interpreter to translate an entire portfolio from Urdu to English to enable the learner to achieve her qualification. CTL has staff who can speak Urdu, Polish, French and Arabic.

18. Since the previous inspection, CTL has relocated its entrance and turned a teaching room into a reception area to allow better access for people with mobility difficulties. Following an audit of compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, CoVE funding has been used to upgrade the lift. There is now satisfactory access to the training centre.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 1

19. The very good quality assurance systems at CTL are driving improvements to the provision and usefully informing self-assessment. The quality improvement cycle is represented on a monthly chart that clearly details the procedures that need to take place. A comprehensive and very effective observation system is used to monitor teaching, learning and assessment. There is a mix each year of observation by managers, qualified external consultants and fellow tutors. The observations by managers and external consultants are graded and quality assured through observations by the director of training. The grades awarded range from inadequate to good. Many of the findings of the observation system matched those of inspectors. Tutors whose sessions are graded less than good are supported, and their teaching improves. An example of this was in the records of one observed session where the tutor used a narrow range of learning activities. A few weeks later the tutor had taken the feedback on board and the observed session was much improved. Peer observations are not graded and take place in one particular week. The observer completes an observation record and an action plan for the tutor, and the tutor completes a reflection sheet to say how they felt the session went. The observations are used very effectively as part of the appraisal and review system, informing training plans. Each member of staff has had professional updating within a particular setting, using employer placements. Observation has also resulted in improvements being shared with all staff. For example, all lesson plans and schemes of work now include a profile of learners' needs, which helps tutors plan for differentiation in their teaching. One observation by inspectors clearly showed this working well. The observation process has been extended to assess the quality of progress reviews in the workplace, providing management information and identifying good practice. Good practice, particularly in the area of learner support, is recorded in a file and disseminated to staff to improve the experience of learners. Good use has been made of Excalibur products such as the good practice database to research ideas that might improve training. The recently introduced bronze, silver and gold employer awards, and the use of learning mentors in on- and off-the-job training are both examples of these. There is particularly good quality assurance of key training documents such as progress review records and individual learning plans. Review records are sampled by staff every month against a set of criteria that equates to a five-point grading scale, resulting in an overall

score. The member of staff reviewing the documents gives feedback to the person who completed them. The training director reviews the quality checks as part of her management of assessors. CTL has made substantial improvements that are affecting success rates. The rates have risen in the first four months of 2006-07 when compared with the previous year.

20. CTL's collection and use of learners' and employers' feedback and other data is very good. Employers' feedback is sought annually using a well-designed questionnaire, quarterly through employer meetings, and on a day-to-day basis through courtesy calls and visits. There are six-weekly meetings with larger employers. There is a good response rate to employer questionnaires, with over half being returned. This year, employers' feedback has resulted in the qualification standards and schemes of work being made available on CTL's website, the introduction of Saturday teaching, an increase in practical activities in teaching and learning, the setting up of health and safety and equality of opportunity links on the website, workshops to train employers' staff in skills such as team leading and appraisals, and a baby practitioner course. Employers' main complaint in the past year was about being able to contact tutor/assessors, and this problem was rectified with new telephone and e-mail systems. CTL surveys learners at the end of each of their three terms, using well-designed questionnaires, and records their views during observations and internal verification activities. The return rate for learners' questionnaires is high at over 80 per cent. Feedback is analysed very effectively and presented to all staff, and recommendations are made. Learners' feedback this year has resulted in the rewriting of the equality and diversity policy, the relocation of the learners' day room, the purchase of new computers, the introduction of online testing, the installation of air conditioning in classrooms, the payment of travel expenses in cash on demand rather than monthly by cheque, the establishment of a library, workshops in application of number, summer tutorials, the installation of vending machines, the development of a careers package resource, and bringing in representatives of employers to talk about employment opportunities. Further feedback is gained through a newly introduced learner council, which meets termly to present learners' views. The learner council comprises learner representatives and is facilitated by a non-teaching or assessing member of staff. Learners' feedback is also gathered during training observations and internal verification. There is an online feedback form on CTL's homepage on the web for learners and employers. Employers and learners receive feedback on their responses to questionnaires, particularly on the actions that have been taken to respond to requests for training or other improvements. The use of data in decision-making, a weakness at the previous inspection, is now good. There is a clear focus on learners' progression through the components of apprenticeships that provides information managers can use to improve performance. The management information system provides monthly reports that are used in staff meetings to clearly show the progress of the entire body of learners, with a focus on timely progression through all parts of a framework. The reports also show the performance of individual assessors. The director of training uses reports to look at individual employers and the performance of their learners. Potential problems are visible and are picked up at an early stage. Data analysis has helped CTL to identify the learners most at risk of leaving, so that the number of early leavers can be better managed. The information collected on learners' gender, ethnicity and additional learning or social needs is used to review recruitment targets and the support given to learners. Although one member of staff is responsible for the continuing development and promotion of the management information system throughout CTL, all staff can generate reports themselves and a comprehensive progress report is used as part of the review process.

21. The self-assessment process is very accurate. The strengths and weaknesses it identifies are a good reflection of CTL's provision. The report is very readable and the format of an inspection-style report works particularly well in presenting the findings. The report has been used to draw up a quality improvement plan which is regularly reviewed and updated. The plan is considered by all staff once a term at team meetings, and updated monthly at board meetings. This process is linked to monthly performance reviews. The self-assessment process is thoroughly inclusive, integrated with the strategic and operational running of the company, and is focused on measuring and improving the learners' experience. The process begins in September and entails all staff assessing the company performance during the previous year. Staff are divided into groups with a nominated group leader. Each group assesses the areas most specific to their job role. Feedback from employers and learners is analysed and presented to staff to help in identifying strengths and weaknesses. The group leader forwards the group's conclusions to the senior management team to be used in the first draft of the self-assessment report. The draft is circulated to all staff, who add their comments and suggestions. The final version is circulated and agreed by all staff, before being agreed by the directors. An external consultant is asked to give feedback on the final report. CTL was very self-critical in its grading. The grades given by inspectors were the same as those in the self-assessment report for the area of learning but higher for leadership and management.

22. Internal verification is satisfactory. There are effective sampling procedures and internal verification plans. There is at least one direct observation of work-based assessors, and there may be more depending on their experience or ability. Feedback is acted on. There is appropriate sampling of work-based and CTL assessors, and of a range of evidence across units and learners. There is sufficient capacity to minimise the possibility of staffing issues affecting internal verification, with a lead internal verifier and five other active qualified internal verifiers. Staff are encouraged to take internal verification qualifications as part of their development. External verifiers' reports are summarised and information is disseminated to staff in meetings or through the post. Standardisation meetings are effective. Six full assessors' meetings are held each year, and all work-based assessors are expected to attend at least two of them. The minutes of the meetings are circulated. Internal assessors' meetings are monthly. CTL has recently introduced a procedure that involves work-based assessors re-signing their assessor agreement every year to help ensure regular attendance at meetings. Portfolios are sampled by all five internal verifiers as a group to aid standardisation, and clear feedback is given to assessors and candidates every week. Where telephone conversations occur, these are recorded on professional discussion sheets. The process has identified a number of pieces of evidence that have not met standards, and corrective action has been taken. CTL and work-based assessors speak positively about the process and the support that they receive.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Health, public services and care

Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Early years		2
Apprenticeships for young people	234	2

23. CTL has 234 learners in early years programmes, working in a variety of childcare settings. There are 156 advanced apprentices and 78 apprentices. Twenty-five of the apprentices are following the programme-led pathways and are in work placements with employers. Learners can start their training in September, January or April. They can apply directly to CTL through their employer or the Connexions service. All learners receive an induction from CTL and a separate induction from their employer or work-placement provider. All learners complete an initial assessment which includes literacy and numeracy screening. Off-the-job training takes place at CTL's training centre in Reading. Other training is delivered at nursery facilities in the region. All learners are assessed in the workplace by CTL's tutors or by work-based assessors. Thirty-one per cent of learners have additional learning needs, 2 per cent are male and 7 per cent are from a minority ethnic group.

Early years

Strengths

- good achievement of national vocational qualifications (NVQs) by advanced apprentices
- good target-setting
- good resources to support learning
- very good employer engagement to support learners
- good progression for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficiently focused support for learners with additional numeracy needs

Achievement and standards

24. Advanced apprentices' NVQ achievement is good. In 2004-05, the rate was 57 per cent and in 2005-06 it had increased to 70 per cent. Success rates for apprenticeship programmes also show significant improvement. In 2003-04 the success rate was 3 per cent. This improved to 40 per cent in 2004-05, exceeding the national average of 36 per cent, and to 56 per cent in 2005-06. Advanced apprenticeship programmes show similar improvement over the same period, from 10 per cent in 2003-04 to 48 per cent in 2005-06, again exceeding the national average.

25. In 2006-07 to date, 39 per cent of apprentices have achieved a technical certificate, 48 per cent have achieved key skills in application of number and 70 per cent have

achieved key skills in communications.

26. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory and they receive detailed feedback on it. Learners' develop good work skills and grow in confidence in their childcare practice.

Programme	End Year	Success Rate	No, of learners	Provider NVQ Rate	National NVQ Rate	Provider framework rate	National framework rate
Advanced Apprenticeships	2003-04	overall	67	66	55	10	27
		timely	0	37	31	7	15
	2004-05	overall	72	57	49	10	22
		timely	0	19	26	5	11
Apprenticeships	2003-04	overall	59	63	49	3	21
		timely	0	39	2	0	7
	2004-05	overall	87	50	53	40	36
		timely	0	27	22	22	15

For details of how to calculate overall and timely success rates please refer to the "Quality Improvement Pack" (available from the Learning and Skills Council's website: www.lsc.gov.uk).

The quality of provision

27. CTL's good target-setting with learners helps them to make rapid progress. Learners receive effective and timely feedback on their work, and are set clear short-term and medium-term learning goals. They know what is required of them and when they are expected to complete assessment tasks. Learners take effective responsibility for their own learning. CTL staff assess learners regularly at work and work-based assessors provide additional assessment opportunities. CTL supports and develops work-based assessors in their work with learners. CTL's monitoring system identifies very effectively identifies where learners are on programme in relation to where they should be. Many learners exceed their target completion dates.

28. Resources to support learning are good. CTL has a purpose-built training centre with bright and attractively decorated training rooms where learners' work is displayed on the walls. CoVE funding supports a library and a recently refurbished ICT suite. Practical equipment is good. CTL provides a classroom for messy activities which has good access to a sink and storage for practical learning materials. Learners have ready access to textbooks and there is a good range of DVD and other teaching resources for learners and staff to use. CTL's website has a good range of learning resources and an electronic version of the newsletter, as well as very useful links to other resources and websites. A recently developed e-learning facility offers learners the option to study at a distance, and learners submit their assignments online.

29. CTL has very effectively engaged employers to support learners. Employers comment positively on the frequent and useful contact with CTL. They offer learners a range of additional learning opportunities such as child protection training, courses in managing behaviour and speech development programmes. Learners appreciate the support they receive from employers and the opportunities for additional training. Many employers also have work-based assessors and CTL is active in training them to complement its own

in-house assessors. Communication with employers is very effective and takes place through a regular newsletter, assessors meetings and an employers' forum. Employers consider CTL to be their preferred training provider. The CoVE status has helped reinforce CTL's standing and engagement with employers.

30. Good progression routes are available for learners at CTL. CTL has worked with a number of local schools on an increased flexibility programme, introducing 14-16 year olds to childcare. In 2005-06, 66 per cent of apprentices progressed to advanced apprenticeships with CTL. A range of management qualifications is available to learners, of whom nine are currently completing a level 4 programme in children's care, learning and development. Progression routes are developing learners' careers and meeting employers' needs for learners to fulfil supervisory roles at work.

31. Teaching is satisfactory. Training is planned with clear aims and objectives that link well to the NVQ units in childcare learning and development. In the better learning sessions, learners are encouraged to review their learning and are closely involved throughout. Careful consideration is given to learners' individual needs and tutors adapt their teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles. A session on interview techniques and curriculum vitae writing used role-play with two teams acting as interviewers and interviewees. Learners were helped to prepare for the session by a nursery manager and CTL's recruitment officer. Difficult questions that might be encountered during an interview were identified, and coping strategies offered. During the role-play, 'time out' was allowed on up to three occasions, enabling consultation with other team members. When the roles were reversed, learners had improved the way they dealt with questions and their confidence was clearly greater. However, in some teaching sessions there are too few learning activities and learners remain passive. Sessions are not always effectively linked to wider reading and additional learning materials. Tutors make little use of ICT to support learning and some sessions were poorly attended.

32. Induction is satisfactory. All learners receive an initial induction from CTL and from their employer. Induction effectively introduces the learners to their programme of study and covers appropriate topics such as health and safety, equality and diversity, and complaints. Learners get a helpful handbook for later reference which clearly sets out CTL's policies and procedures.

33. Assessment is satisfactory and is well recorded and internally verified. Learners receive good feedback after their assessments. Some learners have additional opportunities for assessment by work-based assessors, many of whom have been trained by CTL.

34. Reviews are conducted well and take place at least once every 12 weeks. Employers are fully involved in the process and make comments on learners' progress. All aspects of the review are appropriately recorded. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity and health and safety is effectively checked and reinforced during the review process.

35. Supportive tutors are appreciated by learners. A flexible approach to learning ensures that learners have access to support in the evenings, at weekends and by telephone or e-mail. Learners are positive about the arrangements for on-and-off-the-job training. CTL offers weekly training in the centre for the technical certificate and to support learners with their NVQ in children's care, learning and development. Learners who are unable to

attend these sessions are offered support at work or online. Some early years settings make their premises available for learners to attend outreach training sessions.

36. For some learners, additional learning support in numeracy is insufficiently focused. Initial screening identifies learning gaps but support for these is not consistent. For example, one learner identified gaps in her application of number, and has failed the numeracy test on a number of occasions. Another is not clear what aspects of numeracy she needs to concentrate on in order to pass her test. Initial assessment is taken into account by tutors but support for learners' numeracy needs is not sufficiently planned. CTL has recognised this and recently changed to a more comprehensive diagnostic test which provides specific feedback to learners and staff regarding gaps in their learning. Current learners are taking the tests at level 2 and there is a plan to introduce level 1 tests in the future. Tutors have recently attended a three-day course in supporting numeracy and literacy in the curriculum.

Leadership and management

37. Staff support is good and there is regular and productive communication between staff and managers. Staff have clear job roles. Workloads, although high, are regularly reviewed. Target-setting for staff and learners is transparent and is discussed weekly. Staff have annual appraisals and quarterly reviews. Good staff development is supported by CoVE funding. Staff are completing appropriate training and vocational updating. The internal verification policy and procedures are satisfactory with effective sampling plans for all aspects of the qualifications. Staff are fully involved in the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report identifies the same strengths found by the inspectors and some of the weaknesses.

