

# City Technology College trading as Kingshurst Training

---

Inspection date

3 May 2007

---

Inspection number

316532

## Contents

Background information .....	3
Inspection judgements .....	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider .....	4
Summary of grades awarded .....	5
Overall judgement .....	6
Effectiveness of provision.....	6
Capacity to improve .....	6
Key strengths .....	6
Key areas for improvement .....	7
Main findings.....	8
Achievement and standards .....	8
Quality of provision .....	8
Leadership and management .....	9
Equality of opportunity .....	9
What learners like.....	11
What learners think could improve .....	11
Sector subject areas .....	12
Early years and playwork .....	12
Learners' achievements .....	15

## Background information

### Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

#### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

### Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Early years and playwork

Other sector subject areas in which Kingshurst Training offers learning contributed to the findings in the overall effectiveness and main findings sections of the report.

## Description of the provider

1. Kingshurst Training is the work-based learning division of City Technology College (CTC), Kingshurst. It offers work-based learning for young people in early years and playwork, and an entry-to-employment programme (E2E). It also delivers Train to Gain programmes for adults in early years and playwork and for teaching assistants. Kingshurst Training works with two local schools and other agencies to deliver training in early years and playwork for pupils aged 14 to 16. Most learners are directly recruited from local schools apart from those on E2E programmes, who are recruited through referrals from Connexions.
2. Training is offered at Kingshurst Training's own centre on the site of CTC and through an inner-city satellite centre in St Paul's district of Birmingham.
3. At the time of inspection there were 102 work-based learners and 29 school students on early years and playwork programmes, 26 learners on the E2E programme and seven teaching assistants on Train to Gain.
4. About a third of the early years and playwork learners are employed by Seesaws Day Nursery, to which Kingshurst Training subcontracts the training and assessment of these learners.
5. Kingshurst Training is managed by an operations manager who reports to the trustees. The provider employs 20 staff of whom four are in management positions and 13 carry out training, assessment and internal verification activities. The remainder of the staff work in administration and support functions.
6. Kingshurst Training is funded through a contract with Birmingham and Solihull LSC. Although the unemployment rate in Solihull is low at 1.9%, the rate for the local wards of Fordbridge and Kingshurst is 4.6% compared with a national rate of 3.5%. Minority ethnic groups make up 5.4% of the population of Solihull according to the 2001 census.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Unsatisfactory: Grade 4
Capacity to improve	Unsatisfactory: Grade 4
Achievement and standards	Unsatisfactory: Grade 4
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Leadership and management	Unsatisfactory: Grade 4
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

## Sector subject area

Early years and playwork	Unsatisfactory: Grade 4
--------------------------	-------------------------

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

Unsatisfactory: Grade 4

7. The overall effectiveness of the provision is unsatisfactory. Achievement and standards, leadership and management and provision in early years and playwork are unsatisfactory. The quality of provision and equality of opportunity are satisfactory.

### Capacity to improve

Unsatisfactory: Grade 4

8. Kingshurst Training has not sustained the previously good standard of its early years and playwork programme since it was inspected in July 2003. Achievement rates fell following inspection and have only improved to about the national average since. Some areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been implemented. However, some aspects of the provision have declined. Kingshurst Training has been slow to implement improvements to its quality assurance system and has not made improvements in target-setting. The organisation has responded to the changing demands of the apprenticeship programme by investing in new staff and creating teams to deliver qualifications in key skills, skills for life and the technical certificate for apprentices. In the past 12 months there has been a concerted effort to raise achievements and to reduce the number of learners that take too long to complete. However, these arrangements are insufficiently systematic. Current in-year data indicates that these efforts are beginning to have an effect, but it is too early to be sure.
9. The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process. All staff were involved in the self-assessment process which used feedback collected from learners, partners and employers. The self-assessment report is clear and some of its judgements match those made by inspectors. However, the report significantly understates the areas for improvement and does not identify the low success rates for apprentices as an area for improvement.

## Key strengths

- Good actions to widen participation
- Very supportive and learner-centred culture
- High qualification achievement rates for E2E

## Key areas for improvement

- The low success rates for apprentices
- The weak target-setting
- The ineffective use of management information
- The ineffective quality improvement system

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

Unsatisfactory: Grade 4

10. E2E learners achieve good success at key skills, but too few progress into work or other training programmes. Many E2E learners rapidly develop good interpersonal skills and confidence, joining in well with group discussions and taking responsibility for their learning records.
11. The standard of learners' work in portfolios is satisfactory. The portfolios are generally well presented and contain an adequate range of differing evidence.
12. Achievements and standards are unsatisfactory. Too few learners complete their full apprenticeship and too many do not achieve in time.
13. The previously high success rate for advanced apprentices fell significantly from 54% in 2003-04 to just 29% in 2004-05 and has remained below the national average since. The success rate for apprentices was significantly below the national average in 2003-04, at just 31%, and although improving remains low at just 44% in 2005-06.

### Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

14. Support for learners is good. The initial assessment of learners' needs is thorough and effective. Learners with an identified need in literacy or numeracy receive particularly good support. Support is provided regularly in the training centres and in the workplace for those who do not attend off-the-job training. The initial advice and guidance given to learners is satisfactory. Trainers and assessors provide good pastoral support for all learners, particularly those with significant social and personal problems.
15. Progression routes for learners are good. A small number of learners have already progressed from key stage 4 and E2E programmes on to apprenticeships. A high number of those on level 3 programmes have progressed from level 2 programmes.
16. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Clear lesson plans show an appropriate level of content to help learners achieve the lesson objectives. Trainers provide good links between theory and workplace practices. In E2E there is good classroom management and learners are challenged to join in discussions. Teaching support materials are generally of a high standard. The arrangements for assessment are satisfactory. Assessors provide detailed feedback on all assessments and provide learners with appropriate advice for future improvements.



17. Resources to support learning are satisfactory. Learners have access to computers, textbooks, professional journals and a good range of craft materials to support activities in lessons. In E2E there is insufficient use of computers and the Internet alongside other teaching activities. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Accommodation overall is satisfactory. However, the accommodation at the satellite training centre is of a lower standard.
18. Target-setting for apprentices is inadequate. Although short-term targets for learners are clear, measurable and timebound, medium and long-term targets are inadequate and unhelpful. Assessment plans are too vague and do not give sufficient information about the focus and purpose of the assessment visit.

## Leadership and management

Unsatisfactory: Grade 4

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

19. Actions to widen participation are good. Kingshurst Training has developed good links with the community. It provides training at a community centre in another district and runs childcare programmes for key stage 4 and post-16 school students.
20. Kingshurst Training's highly supportive and open culture is well understood by staff and learners. Communications are positive and open and staff are well informed about the aims of the organisation. Staff training and development is extensive. There is a strong emphasis on supporting learners and ensuring their safety and welfare.
21. The E2E programme is well managed. The programme has been restructured and staff work well together to develop learners' confidence and skills.
22. Communications are satisfactory overall. Teams meet regularly to discuss relevant issues and concerns. However, insufficient attention is given to recording and following up agreed actions.
23. Links with employers are strong. Assessors and tutors regularly visit employers and keep them informed about learners' progress.
24. Kingshurst Training has appropriate arrangements in place to monitor and manage its subcontractor. Managers meet monthly to monitor the programme and assessors and tutors from the subcontractor attend meetings and training events.
25. The internal verification of assessment is systematic and comprehensive. Appropriate sampling of assessors' work and observation of assessment takes place regularly. Standardisation meetings are well structured.

- 
26. Equality of opportunity is well promoted within Kingshurst Training. There is a strong emphasis on equality and diversity in the E2E programme and learners demonstrate an improved understanding in a short time. Kingshurst Training has a small number of men on its early years and playwork programmes and actively encourages men to apply. Promotional materials and teaching materials positively promote diversity. Complaints or concerns of learners are dealt with effectively.
27. The self-assessment process is systematic and includes the views of all staff, learners and employers. The findings of the report generally match those of inspectors for E2E and leadership and management. However, the significance of some areas for improvement was understated and the report was insufficiently critical.
28. All teaching and learning is now observed every six months. Although most teaching is satisfactory or better, observations in early years and playwork are too descriptive and do not give enough direction to help tutors improve further.
29. Kingshurst Training has suitable child protection arrangements. Appropriate checks have been performed on all staff and E2E staff have good links with appropriate external agencies.
30. The management of literacy, numeracy and language support is satisfactory. Kingshurst Training has established a team to deliver additional support and this is now effective.
31. Too many learners have a poor understanding of equality and diversity. Incorrect and naive answers to questions in their portfolios are not sufficiently challenged by staff and some learners' work shows poor and inappropriate levels of understanding.
32. Kingshurst Training does not use management information sufficiently to monitor performance and support improvements. Overall success rates are reported at staff meetings, but there is insufficient use of this in action-planning. The organisation does not analyse performance of some components of programmes, such as pass rates for the technical certificate in childcare.
33. Quality improvement systems are ineffective. A new policy and quality improvement cycle have been written, but have yet to be fully implemented. There are a number of key processes established, including the observation of teaching and learning, internal verification, gathering feedback from learners and employers and self-assessment. However, these processes are concerned with maintaining minimum standards and do not sufficiently promote improvement.

## What learners like

- Weekly visits from the skills for life tutor
- The good support from tutors and assessors
- Making progress
- Gaining a qualification
- Gaining confidence
- The pace of the programme

## What learners think could improve

- The number of group activities in E2E
- The rate at which learners progress through programmes
- The number of changes of assessor
- The time taken to mark assignments
- The number of disruptions to lessons due to staff meetings

## Sector subject areas

### Early years and playwork

Unsatisfactory: Grade 4

#### Context

34. Kingshurst Training provides early years and playwork training across East Birmingham. Approximately 40% of learners are employed by Seesaw Day Nurseries and training and assessment for these learners is subcontracted to their employer. Learners are recruited by referral from employers, through individual applications by potential learners and through the Connexions service. At the time of inspection, there were 102 learners of whom two were men. Sixty-six learners were apprentices, 33 were advanced apprentices and three were on a Train to Gain programme. Off-the-job training is provided at the training centre in Kingshurst and at a satellite centre in the St Paul's district.

#### Strengths

- Good individual support for learners
- Good progression routes

#### Areas for improvement

- Unsatisfactory success rates
- Inadequate monitoring of learners' individual progress
- Inadequate medium and long-term target-setting
- Insufficient understanding by learners of equality and diversity

#### Achievement and standards

35. The standard of learners' work in portfolios is satisfactory. Portfolios are generally well presented and contain an adequate range of evidence from different sources. The best examples include word-processed assignments, which clearly demonstrate a good understanding of theory and refer to examples of relevant research.

36. Most learners are making appropriate progress towards completion of their apprenticeship. However, 11 of the current 99 learners have already exceeded the planned duration of their programme.

37. Success rates for apprentices are unsatisfactory. The previously high success rate for advanced apprentices fell significantly from 54% in 2003-04 to just 29% in 2004-05 and has remained below the national average since. The success rate for apprentices was significantly below the national average in 2003-04 at just 31% and, although improving, remains low at just 44% in 2005-06. According to Kingshurst Training's own data, framework completion rates have continued to

improve in line with the national average in 2006-07, but many learners are still in learning and it is too early to judge the overall improvement in performance.

### Quality of provision

38. Learners receive good support throughout their training. Dedicated staff provide effective support in literacy and numeracy for those who need it, both in the training centre and at work. Learners receive particularly good pastoral support. Staff provide good support for all learners throughout their training, and in particular those learners with significant social and personal problems. Learners feel confident to talk to staff and receive good advice and support in relation to work, training and social issues.
39. Progression routes for learners are good. Progression from apprenticeships to advanced apprenticeships is good. A high proportion of those on level 3 programmes have progressed from level 2. Learners are able to progress from E2E programmes through level 2 qualifications to an advanced apprenticeship in childcare. Some learners have successfully progressed from key stage 4 programmes on to apprenticeships.
40. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lesson planning is effective. Clear lesson plans show an appropriate level of content to help learners achieve the lesson objectives. Tutors provide good links between theory and workplace practices. Learners are attentive and produce some good work, which shows a clear understanding of relevant theory and health and safety considerations. Tutors encourage learners with positive feedback and provide learners with effective individual support during sessions. Arrangements for assessment are satisfactory. Assessors provide detailed feedback with advice for future improvements.
41. Resources to support learning are generally satisfactory. Learners have access to computers, textbooks, professional journals and a good range of craft materials to support activities in lessons. Accommodation is satisfactory. However, the accommodation at the satellite centre is dowdy. Some employers provide additional textbooks and other resources in the work place. Staff are appropriately experienced and qualified.
42. Target-setting for the medium and longer term is inadequate. Although short-term targets for learners are clear, measurable and timebound, learners do not have adequate medium and long-term targets. Progress reviews do not give learners sufficient information about what they should achieve by the next review. Assessment plans do not sufficiently indicate what will be assessed during the next visit. Learners receive insufficient detail to help them understand what they need to do to complete their qualification. Expected completion dates for programmes are too often based on the duration of funding and not on learners' individual needs and circumstances. Insufficient attention is given to intermediate targets such as targets for the completion of the employment rights and responsibilities workbook. Many learners have not completed the activities in this workbook after six months in the workplace.

## Leadership and management

43. The monitoring of learners' progress through their programme is inadequate. Learners' progress in each of the component parts of the programme is not sufficiently recorded. Staff regularly discuss learners' individual progress and identify learners who are not progressing well. However, this information is not sufficiently recorded or reported to managers. The management information system does not effectively identify learners' individual progress. Most learners are unsure of the progress that they have made towards their qualification.
44. Learners have insufficient understanding of equality and diversity issues. Learners receive training on diversity issues throughout the programme and are aware of relevant legislation. However, this is insufficiently expressed through their written work, which for some demonstrates a poor understanding. Learners frequently refer to the need to treat all children the same without explaining how they meet the individual needs of children in their care.

## Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes managed by the provider 2003 to 2006

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider/college framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	03-04	overall	28	79	48	54	31
		timely	25	36	30	12	19
	04-05	overall	28	36	48	29	34
		timely	29	21	31	17	21
	05-06	overall	19	53	54	42	44
		timely	18	0	34	0	27
Apprenticeships	03-04	overall	39	31	47	31	32
		timely	42	2	24	2	16
	04-05	overall	34	47	50	32	38
		timely	43	5	29	0	22
	05-06	overall	52	60	58	44	53
		timely	50	14	38	10	33

\* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

\*\* College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

Table 2

Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the provider 2004 to 2006

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
03-04	-	-	-
04-05	42	52	50
05-06	96	51	30

\* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

\*\* Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period