

Shape Training

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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.

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), 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:

- Health, public services and care
- Preparation for life and work

Description of the provider

1. Shape Accredited Training Centre (Shape) was formed in 1978 as part of the Cleveland Youth Association. Shape's head office is in Middlesbrough and has additional training facilities in Redcar, North Ormesby and Peterlee in County Durham. Shape employs 22 training and four administrative staff.
2. Shape contracts with both Tees Valley and County Durham LSCs for work-based learning. Shape has 248 learners of whom 67 are apprentices, 47 are advanced apprentices, 63 are Entry to Employment (E2E) learners and 71 learners are on Train to Gain.
3. Shape has 185 learners on programmes in health, public services and care with apprenticeships in care and early years, advanced apprenticeships in care and dental nursing and Train to Gain for adults in social care and dental nursing. Shape is one of only two providers in the area who offer dental nursing programmes. An E2E programme in the Tees Valley has 63 learners. A European Social Fund contract for national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in care recently ended. At the previous inspection, Shape offered training in construction and business administration but has not done so since 2004.
4. Shape works with many learners from the deprived wards of Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland. The number of young people not in employment, education or training is high, for example 11.3% in County Durham. Some 40% of wards in the Tees Valley and 30% in County Durham are in the 10% most deprived in England. The 2001 census figures show that only 2.8% of the population of Tees Valley and less than 1% of the population of the catchment area in County Durham are from minority ethnic groups compared with 9% nationally.

Summary of grades awarded

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

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: Grade 3
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Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: Grade 3
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievements and standards and the quality of provision are satisfactory as are leadership and management and the arrangements for equality of opportunity. The quality of provision for apprenticeships in health, public services and care is satisfactory but is unsatisfactory for Train to Gain learners. The quality of provision for E2E learners in preparation for work is satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

6. Shape has demonstrated that it has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Success rates for apprentices in early years have improved to above the national average. During 2006-07, success rates for dental work and the numbers of learners who progress to employment, education or further training from E2E programmes also improved but not enough to exceed national averages. Care success rates remain low. Further improvements have been made in the first quarter of 2007-08 in all areas. Progression rates for E2E have improved during the first quarter, particularly for those entering education or training.
7. Shape has a very detailed quality improvement plan but it is too complex, containing actions to address areas for improvement identified during self-assessment and Shape's organisational annual delivery plan. Many quality improvement actions have outcomes that are insufficiently detailed or measurable. A shortage of suitable staff and two recent ambitious contracts for NVQs in care provided Shape with some difficult challenges. A recent restructure of the care area has redefined job descriptions, clarified roles and responsibilities and established new management strategies to improve performance. However, the structure is new and it is too soon to judge the impact. Shape has recently improved the use of management information systems to monitor recruitment, retention and achievements of learners. Performance monitoring has recently improved with more accountability placed on staff teams to achieve organisational targets. Shape has partially remedied weaknesses from the previous inspection.
8. The self-assessment process is satisfactory with staff comments and relevant data informing the judgements. Inspection findings broadly matched those in the self-assessment report but Shape did not identify the significant areas for improvement in E2E in their self-assessment. A number of strengths in the self-assessment report were no more than satisfactory. Inspection grades for health, public services and care and E2E were lower than those in the self-assessment report. The inspection grades for achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management matched those of self-assessment, as did the equality of opportunity grade. Inspection findings graded capacity to improve a grade lower than self-assessment.

Key strengths

- Good success rates in early years

- Good vocational opportunities for learners
- Particularly effective individual support for learners
- Good and very effective partnership working

Key areas for improvement

- Slow progress for many care learners
- Some poor accommodation and learning resources
- Slow actions to improve poor performance
- Insufficiently thorough observations of teaching and learning

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

9. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Shape identified this in their self-assessment report and have implemented a number of actions to improve success rates. Overall success rates on health, public services and care are satisfactory, they are good within early years and satisfactory and improving for dental learners. Success rates for care learners are unsatisfactory but improving. Progress for most care learners is unsatisfactory. Many learners have been on their programmes for several months and have not yet had an assessment for their NVQ.
10. E2E progression and qualification success rates are satisfactory and improving. Learners with multiple barriers to learning progress well to further education, training or employment. A number of E2E learners have successfully completed apprenticeships in early years or dental nursing with Shape or transferred to other providers. Standards of work for apprentices and E2E learners are good.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

11. The quality of provision is satisfactory overall and was recognised as such in the self-assessment report. Management are effectively implementing actions to address identified areas for improvement.
12. Learners have good opportunities for vocational experience or employment. Over 90% of E2E learners have work or vocational experiences. Apprentices work in appropriate placements. Very effective liaison with most employers supports learning and evidence collection for learners' portfolios.
13. Guidance and support for learners are good, especially for those with personal issues, with effective links to relevant agencies. Learners respond well to the time and effort taken by staff to support them, especially those learners with extensive barriers to learning. Regular reviews take place with learners and most employers are effectively involved. Recent developments in progress monitoring are being effectively implemented in most areas.
14. The range of programmes to meet the needs of learners is satisfactory. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Shape has good links with other local providers to ensure that learners can access programmes they do not offer. Employers' needs are effectively met.
15. Support for learners with literacy, numeracy and language needs is satisfactory. Well-qualified specialist staff support learners with literacy, numeracy and key skills when needed. They also offer invaluable advice and training to assessors to integrate key skills into the programmes. Specialist training in specific learning needs is well-planned and delivered, with appropriate referral to outside agencies, for example for learners who are dyslexic.

16. Resources are satisfactory in the main centre with a good range of books, activities and materials although some handouts on E2E programmes are not appropriate. Accommodation and resources at the additional sites used by E2E learners are inadequate.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

17. Leadership and management overall are satisfactory as identified in the self-assessment.
18. Partnership working with a wide range of organisations and employers is good and very effective. The chief executive has a key role in the Tees Valley Work Based Learning Network and works closely with several local authorities to reduce the number of learners not in education or training. Shape staff act as representatives of local work-based providers at careers conventions to promote a well co-ordinated offer of apprenticeships to year 10 and 11 pupils. Shape is an active member of the health and social care 14-19 Diploma development groups in Middlesbrough and Redcar. They co-ordinate valuable employer placements and training for learners on young apprenticeship programmes managed by the sector skills council and for the Centre of Vocational Excellence in dental training at Hartlepool College.
19. A comprehensive staff development programme effectively meets company training requirements. Staff undertake a range of internal and external training and qualifications. Most tutors have or are working towards teaching qualifications. Of the four skills for life tutors, three are qualified or working towards the level 4 subject specialist award in literacy or numeracy and one to level 5. Shape respond well to new initiatives in work-based learning, for example, inviting relevant guest speakers to their quarterly staff development days. However, arrangements to support the individual development needs of tutors identified during appraisal or teaching and learning observations are ineffective.
20. Communication is satisfactory. Focus groups for skills for life, marketing, learner's voice, equality of opportunity and continuous improvement meet regularly, have good staff representation and where appropriate include learners. Team meetings have a strong focus on learners but minutes contain little evidence of targeted actions.
21. Strategic direction, financial planning and use of management information are all satisfactory. Shape's approach to *Every Child Matters*, management of skills for life, internal verification and health and safety are also satisfactory. Accommodation at the main site in Middlesbrough is satisfactory with good workshop accommodation for practical activities. The centres in Redcar and North Ormesby have limited resources and computer access.
22. The promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Shape effectively promote equality and diversity in the curriculum and monitor it effectively in the workplace. The main Middlesbrough site is fully accessible under the Disability Discrimination Act requirements but access at the Redcar site is restricted. All required equality and diversity policies are in place. Shape has some effective strategies to recruit

learners from areas of deprivation and from schools with relatively high numbers of learners from minority ethnic groups. Shape actively seeks and responds to learner opinions, for example in developing new marketing materials. E2E learners successfully bid for funding to support enrichment activities. Shape has met local LSC targets for males in social care and the percentage of learners from minority ethnic groups exceeds that in the local community. However, no analysis takes place of the retention or success rates of different groups of learners, for example by gender, disability or ethnicity.

23. Shape has been slow to recognise and improve under-performance. A number of significant weaknesses in the previous inspection and self-assessments have not been resolved. For example, the insufficient setting of targets to achieve specific improvements has only been partially resolved. Shape has not successfully addressed the poor planning of learning for E2E. Management have been slow to address the significant issues for learners on care Train to Gain programmes. Staff are not set clear, challenging targets to improve their performance. Shape has recently introduced a systematic process for monitoring retention, progression and success rates but it is too early to judge the impact.
24. The observation of teaching and learning is insufficiently thorough. Some observation reports do not reflect the grade given and contain little, if any, guidance on how the tutor could improve. Shape's grade profile of teaching and learning does not match inspection findings and many grades are too high. A number of staff involved in observation have not received appropriate training.

What learners like:

- ‘Shape doesn’t give up on you’
- All treated fairly and equally
- Good support from friendly staff
- Good negotiation for assessment
- ‘Staff are always in contact with me’
- Good work placements
- The transport to and from home
- Learning and training at same time

What learners think could improve:

- More time in Shape
- No individual work in class – slows us down

Sector subject areas

Health, Public Services and Care

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

25. Shape has 185 learners in health, public services and care of whom 47 are advanced apprentices and 67 are apprentices. Of these 57, are on early years programmes, 44 are on dental nursing programmes and 13 are on social care programmes. In addition, 71 learners are enrolled on Train to Gain of whom 65 are in social care. Currently 15 learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 35 are male. Most apprentices are employed in one of a range of early years, dental or social care settings. Most Train to Gain learners are employed in residential or nursing homes for the elderly and six work as dental nurses.

Strengths

- Good success rates in early years
- Good progress for learners on early years and dental programmes
- Very effective training and support for early years and dental learners

Areas for improvement

- Unsatisfactory success rates for care apprentices
- Slow progress for many care learners
- Slow response to declining success rates in care

Achievement and standards

26. Success rates for early years apprentices are good and improving from 61% in 2005-06 to 67% in 2006-07. In the first quarter of 2007-08 success rates are over 80%.
27. Learners on both early years and dental nursing programmes make good progress towards their framework achievement. They are clear about the requirements for success and many learners are ahead of their planned schedule for completion. Assessment is timely and responsive to the demands of learners. Key skills and portfolios are integrated with the development of workplace skills. Employers are actively involved in identifying assessment opportunities and development needs. Use of a recently introduced monitoring system to further motivate and support learners' progress is very effective.
28. Success rates for dental nurses are now satisfactory and improving. Changes in the requirements of the dental nursing apprenticeship to include key skills coincided with a significant fall in success rates from 100% to 54%. A number of apprentices have extended completion dates and additional training sessions are available for learners. Initial assessment now clearly identifies additional support needs.
29. Success rates for the small number of care apprentices are unsatisfactory. The success rate for advanced apprentices has remained unchanged and unsatisfactory at 33% in 2005-06 and 2006-07. Apprentices' success rates improved from 17% in 2005-06 to 30% in 2006-07 but remain unsatisfactory. Most care learners make very slow progress. Success rates

on Shape's previous Employer Training Pilot contract were good, but only 13 learners on the new Train to Gain programme are making satisfactory progress. Too many learners have spent several months on the programme without an assessment. Dates on most individual learning plans are unrealistic and have been extended a number of times.

Quality of provision

30. The quality of provision is satisfactory overall with many good aspects for learners on early years and dental nursing programmes.
31. The quality of teaching and learning in early years and dental nursing is good. Curriculum planning is very effective in early years, with detailed delivery packages for each unit. Good use is made of a wide range of learning activities to develop understanding, for example, the use of board games in early years. Learners demonstrate good research skills, develop good practical skills and they can clearly link theory to practice. Many employers are involved in the training of learners. Assessments are well planned and based on observed work that allows accreditation for a number of units. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for care learners, but too many Train to Gain learners do not have the opportunity to attend.
32. Early years and dental learners receive particularly effective support from assessors. Frequent and timely visits to the workplace to deliver training and to support learners' additional learning and personal needs are very effective. Assessors provide extra support through text messages, telephone and email contact and when learners attend the centre. They accommodate learners shift patterns and give support in their homes. Some learners benefit well from additional support to help them to progress more quickly through their programme, for example a learner needed to complete her programme ahead of the scheduled time to gain a university place.
33. Reviews are satisfactory and usually involve employers, learners and assessors. Employers in early years and dental nursing are well informed about their learners' progress through verbal and written feedback. They are fully aware of the learner's targets and are involved in the planning of observations and training. Formal reviews of progress every 12 weeks are supplemented, for early years and dental nursing learners, by more frequent visits for assessment or support.
34. Initial assessment is thorough and provides an accurate picture of learners needs. The results of literacy and numeracy assessments are clearly identified on learning plans, as are any support needs. Identified learning styles are used to plan learners' assessments and acknowledge their strengths and support needs.
35. Good communication within the staff team ensures that learners receive the best possible advice and guidance with referrals to specialist agencies as required.
36. Resources to support learners are satisfactory and include books, journals and CDs. Assessors have a range of materials on laptop computers for learners to access in the workplace. The centre is well resourced with computers, but little additional information technology is used, for example no interactive whiteboards are available.
37. The range of programmes to meet the needs of learners and employers is satisfactory. Shape have good links to other training providers for programmes they do not offer

themselves, for example advanced apprenticeships in early years. Shape offers a range of short courses and qualifications to enhance the learning experience and support the requirements of the health and care industry, for example manual handling, first aid and paediatric first aid.

Leadership and management

38. The response to declining success rates in care has been slow. Shape recognised the unsatisfactory success rates in the apprenticeship programme and the slow progress across all care programmes, particularly Train to Gain, some months ago. A serious shortage of good assessors and an inadequate training and assessment strategy was identified. However, the management response has been slow. A new manager has now been in place for nearly four months and although some signs of improvement are apparent it is too early to judge the effectiveness of measures. Assessors and managers are not aware of the full extent of the slow progress of many learners.
39. The management of early years and dental nursing programmes is good with a clear commitment to quality improvement. Internal verification is satisfactory and gives assessors useful feedback.
40. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity. It is reinforced at reviews through a range of questions linked to the workplace and personal experience. The monitoring of health and safety is satisfactory.
41. Employer engagement is effective. Links with most employers in relation to learners' progress and assessment are good, especially in early years and dental programmes.

Preparation for Life and Work

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

42. Shape has 58 E2E learners of whom 24 are male. None are from a minority ethnic background. The E2E provision operates from three sites, two in Middlesbrough and one in Redcar. Currently four full-time and three part-time learning facilitators deliver the provision and are supported by an administrator, a recruitment and marketing adviser, and an operations manager. Learners attend for 16 hours a week for the first six weeks and then for 30 hours per week. Learners work towards a number of qualifications including health and safety certificates and first aid. Additionally learners work towards units from the Open College Progression Award which integrate communication, application of number and improve own learning key skills at level 1. A workshop on the main Middlesbrough site offers tasters in basic plastering, painting and decorating, joinery, brickwork and block paving skills.

Strengths

- Improving progression rates
- Good vocational opportunities accessed by most learners
- Particularly effective individual support for learners

Areas for improvement

- Ineffective planning for learning
- Some poor accommodation and resources

Achievement and standards

43. Progression rates are improving from a low 37% in 2004-05, 49% in 2005-06 and 49.5% in 2006-07. For the first quarter of 2007-08, they are now 64.3%. The quality of destinations has also improved, with more learners progressing to further education or training and fewer to employment without training. The number of learners achieving key objectives increased from 24% in 2005-06 to 47% in 2006-07.
44. Learners improve their confidence and communication skills well and value this. They achieve a good standard of practical work in the construction workshops and show a good ability to meet some of the challenges of working life. Achievement of additional qualifications is satisfactory. Success rates are good on short courses in first aid and health and safety at 90% and 85% respectively but less satisfactory for key skills application of number and communication level 1 at 47% and 28%.
45. Attendance at observed lessons was poor at 59.5% compared with 83% in the self-assessment report.

Quality of provision

46. Over 90% of E2E learners at Shape access good vocational opportunities. Links with a range of employers are good and more employers have been recruited recently. Staff pay close attention to supporting learners in the workplace and health and safety is a priority.

Learners also make good use of on-site facilities to develop practical construction and generic work skills. Significant numbers of E2E learners progress to apprenticeships with Shape or other local providers.

47. Individual support for learners is particularly effective and starts with thorough initial advice and guidance aimed at breaking down barriers to learning. Shape provides support with attendance by a pick-up and drop off service for learners for the first two weeks on programme. This continues in cases of particular individual need. For example a learner concerned about bullying on his journey to Shape continued to receive travel assistance to enable him to continue on the programme without fear of harassment. Shape also has many effective links with a wide range of support agencies. For example, young mothers have been encouraged to revive their careers through links with the teenage pregnancy unit. Learners participate in a range of challenging activities to encourage them to take personal responsibility and support themselves. Notably, learners have completed and submitted a successful application to the New Opportunities Fund to replace their ageing minibus. A successful peer mentoring activity in London provided opportunities to support young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Individual mentoring is very effective for learners. Staff have a good rapport with learners and regularly provide positive feedback to them.
48. Provision for learners' aftercare and 'moving on' is satisfactory, including telephone calls and a drop-in facility at the training centre. The monitoring and recording of learners' progress is satisfactory. Learners' E2E passports are thoroughly completed. Most key objectives are suitably detailed and challenging. Learner reviews are satisfactory with appropriate target-setting. The induction process is satisfactory and induction projects help to ensure learner involvement and reinforce key messages. The range of accredited courses available is satisfactory but too few learners are able to achieve accreditation for practical skills developed in the construction workshop.
49. The planning of learning is ineffective. Lesson planning is weak with poor links to schemes of work and the three strands of the E2E curriculum. Learning outcomes are poorly developed and not well linked to learning activities. Too many sessions are poorly planned, for example one session spends a full day on the same topic with the same members of staff. Lesson plans do not give any indication of individual support needs. Group or individual profiles are not used in planning and too little differentiation takes place in lessons. Staff do not effectively link initial assessment to the planning of individuals' learning. Recent changes have been made to the curriculum to provide greater flexibility to better meet individual learner's needs, but to date these have been only partially effective.

Leadership and management

50. Management of the E2E programme is satisfactory with good communications between the team. Targets for positive outcomes are set for the programme and progression against these targets is good for the current year. Staff use data effectively, comparing national and local benchmarks to inform target-setting.
51. Staff work well with partner organisations to provide impartial advice and guidance to best support learners' career aspirations. Promotion of equality and diversity is

satisfactory through the curriculum and by reinforcement in the review process. Staff are appropriately qualified. All staff hold or are working towards teaching qualifications.

52. Some accommodation and resources are poor for E2E learners and staff. Some of the rooms away from the main site are drab and uninviting. These centres do not possess adequate resources to support learning such as whiteboards or computers. Little use is made of learning technologies. Too much use is made of handouts and work sheets. Many of the printed learning materials are of poor quality, are too complicated and have not been adapted to meet the needs of individual learners.

Annex

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by the provider **2004 to 2007**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	12	33	48	25	34
		timely	13	23	31	23	22
	05-06	overall	14	57	53	36	44
		timely	15	13	34	7	28
	06-07	overall	26	54	64	50	56
		timely	30	23	41	23	35
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	31	52	51	52	34
		timely	31	23	29	23	22
	05-06	overall	29	59	58	52	52
		timely	27	52	38	48	34
	06-07	overall	45	58	65	58	60
		timely	49	47	45	47	42

* 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'

Outcomes on **Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes** managed by the provider **2004 to 2007**

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
04-05	132	7.5%	37%
05-06	127	24%	49%
06-07	85	47%	49.4%

* 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