

Headmasters Partnership Ltd

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318263

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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:

- Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Description of the provider

1. Headmasters Partnership Limited (Headmasters), established in 1982, is a private hairdressing company providing apprenticeship training in hairdressing for its employees. Provision is funded by the London South LSC. Headmasters offers hairdressing training throughout South West London, Middlesex and Surrey in its 30 salons. In addition there are Headmasters salons in Bath and Manchester. The provider has franchise arrangements with a further 13 salons. Headmasters also offers privately funded training and consultancy and sponsors approximately ten overseas learners. The company has a training academy in Ham, Surrey.
2. Headmasters has seven partners who set the company's strategic aims. The director of education reports directly to the senior partner. A team comprising the director of education, two full-time and one part-time internal verifier, six assessors and seven trainers, is responsible for the apprentice programme. Overall, Headmasters employs 604 staff.
3. Currently 80 16-18 year old learners and five adult learners are on the apprenticeship programme. Learners attend the Headmasters Academy for their off-the-job training for one day a week and have a minimum of five hours' training in the workplace.
4. Many learners are recruited from Surrey. The profile of learners with a minority ethnic background reflects the local population at 5 %. Some 10% of learners are male. None of the current learners have declared themselves as having a disability. Eleven of the current learners have literacy support needs and 43 have numeracy support needs.

Summary of grades awarded

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

Sector subject area

Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Satisfactory: Grade 3
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievement and standards, and the quality of the hairdressing provision are satisfactory. The organisation's leadership and management and quality improvement are satisfactory. Arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. The organisation's response to *Every Child Matters* and its contribution to education and social inclusion are satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

6. The provider's capacity to improve is satisfactory. In a period of rapid expansion and organisational restructuring, strengths have been maintained and improved. Learners gain a range of skills in good workplace and training environments. Facilities have been extended and further improvements are planned. The weakness in quality assurance at the previous inspection has been resolved. A thorough quality assurance system is now in place and used by all staff. Key learning processes are monitored, though this is insufficiently thorough in some aspects.
7. The steps taken to improve since the previous inspection are satisfactory overall. Development plans are sound. Much work has been undertaken to respond to the judgements made in the previous inspection, though slow progress was made until recently. The provider recognises that further development of tutors and assessors is required, and well advanced plans are in place for their further training. The insufficient use of the management information system continues to inhibit the pace of improvement in success rates, but progress is being made in developing and embedding a new management information system. Headmasters has implemented a range of well considered strategies to improve success rates, and despite slow progress since the previous inspection, there is a continued and steadily upward trend over three years.
8. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The views of staff and learners are taken into account, though analysis is not systematically undertaken year on year. The recent self-assessment report is honest and largely accurate in its judgements. Its identification of key strengths and areas for improvement is broadly in line with the findings of the inspection team.

Key strengths

- Good learners' commercial skills
- Good on-the-job training
- Good quality work environments
- Good range of enrichment activities
- Clear strategic direction
- Effective partnership working

Key areas for improvement

- Unsatisfactory success rates

- Insufficient workplace assessment
- Ineffective reviews
- Poor use of management information
- Insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

9. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Success rates for apprentices at Headmasters remain unsatisfactory, though they are steadily improving over the last three years. At 50% they remain 13% below the national average for the year 2006/07. Timely success rates have also risen over the last 3 years and have exceeded the national average by 4% in 2006/07 but they remain unsatisfactory. Headmasters identified in its self-assessment report that progress towards unit completion is slow. Some learners have been on the programme for up to 14 months and have still not completed the shampooing assessment although they are targeted to complete it in within the first four weeks. Development plans include actions to improve more timely achievement in key skills. Performance in 2007/08 to date indicates that the upward trend is continuing.
10. Learners have good commercial practical skills. Those who have been on the programme for a short period of time carry out foil colouring techniques to a good standard. Learners produced a good range of styles for a recent hairdressing competition. Attendance and punctuality are monitored closely and are good.
11. Learners provide good customer service. They are carefully coached to treat people with respect and learn to converse with a diverse range of clients. They improve their personal skills and gain confidence. Headmasters gives good attention to detail in a programme of additional training for all apprentices in customer care.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

12. The quality of provision is satisfactory, as identified at the previous inspection. On-the-job training is good. Learners receive good training in good quality, well resourced salons that operate to a high commercial standard. All training salons are of a consistently high specification. Learners have access to structured, regular training sessions in the salons. On-the-job sessions give learners an opportunity to work on a commercially credible and diverse range of clients. Good imagery is displayed that reflects the hairdressing and fashion industry. Learners use a wide range of professional products, which include extensive retail treatment ranges.
13. The training academy for off-the-job training provides a good commercial salon environment enabling learners to develop their technical hairdressing skills. Learners use industry standard equipment and tools in their off-the-job training.
14. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The ratio of tutors to learners is good with an average of one tutor to five learners. Learners enjoy the practical and theory training at the academy. Training sessions are planned around the availability of clients in the practical salon, where good individual coaching is given. Learners prepare an assessment plan at the beginning of the learning session, though these do not always reflect long- and short-term targets or the information in individual learning plans. In theory sessions, aims and objectives are not always shared with learners. A good range of different activities such as group work and role-play is included in these sessions. Tutors do not always check sufficiently with learners that session aims and objectives have been met.

15. On-the-job assessment opportunities are insufficient. All assessment is carried out at the Headmasters academy. Learners have access to a good range of clients during off-the-job training. However, salons do not have work-based assessors, and no arrangements exist for peripatetic assessment to take place. Assessment of learners completing relevant activities on the job is not always carried out. Some learners' progress is delayed because of insufficient assessment at work. None of Headmasters' salons have staff qualified to assess learners' work. This is identified in the self-assessment report and well advanced plans are in place to rectify it.
16. Workplace progress reviews are unsatisfactory. Reviews do not take place in the workplace and do not include the on-the-job tutor or employer in discussions. Targets do not take sufficient account of practical training in the workplace. Instead, they focus on what has been completed in the assessment portfolio. Employers have no systematic information on specific assessment targets for learners. Co-ordination between on- and off-the-job training is insufficient. For example, discussions do not focus on the application of learners' understanding of workplace health and safety.
17. Arrangements to ensure provision meets learners' needs are good overall. A good range of enrichment activities is available to learners. Learners can attend a wide range of additional training courses to enhance their skills including manufacturers' courses such as colouring. All learners attend customer service training, reception training and in-house courses. As learners approach the end of their training programme, they attend the training academy at weekends to work in a highly commercial working environment. On completion of their programme learners have access to additional training opportunities that further develop their hairdressing skills including attendance at a salon in central London to develop finishing skills. Learners are encouraged to enter competitions and are supported enthusiastically by trainers and salon staff. Learners attend national hairdressing exhibitions. Headmasters holds a number of motivational events, and provides high profile award ceremonies.
18. Information, advice and guidance for learners are satisfactory. Induction is satisfactory. Learners have good recall of information covered at induction though policy documents are not simplified for learners' files. Learners receive good advice and opportunities on advancing in the company or in changing their job role. Insufficient analysis is completed on reasons for leaving the programme early.
19. Arrangements for the support of learners with additional literacy and/or numeracy needs are satisfactory. Initial assessment is satisfactory, but information gained is not always used to plan learning sessions. Individual support is offered in the academy during key skills training, individually with trainers, and in dedicated sessions in the new facilities in the Surbiton headquarters.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

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20. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Strategic direction in the organisation's five year development plan is clear. An organisational restructure has been well managed and disruption to learners has been minimal. Staff are fully aware of the targets for expansion and the benefits this offers for learners who have guaranteed employment. Significant investment in new facilities and refurbishment has enhanced Headmasters many salons and the training ability of the organisation. Senior partners and managers are highly involved in training. Strategies for assessing and minimising risk are effective. Informal communication is good. Monthly newsletters are produced with general information about company successes and forthcoming events.
21. Partnership working is effective. Headmasters works closely with high profile companies across the United Kingdom and internationally. These links are used well to motivate learners and enrich and extend training opportunities. Partnership activities with the fashion industry and the media raise the profile of work-based learning and learners' aspirations. Good partnerships with employers, local schools and careers services identified in the previous inspection have been further strengthened and increase participation.
22. The collection and use of management information is poor, as identified in the self-assessment report. Management information systems do not provide comprehensive data reports with sufficient detail and regularity to aid operational planning. Learners' progress is not monitored sufficiently closely and no analysis takes place of unit achievement of individual or groups of learners.
23. Quality improvement is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, a comprehensive system for quality assurance has been introduced which includes procedures and supporting documents for all key learner processes, and a plan for their review. However, implementation has been slow and monitoring of some aspects of the programme is insufficiently thorough. For example, audits of progress reviews and individual learning plans are conducted but the quality of reviews is not consistent. Feedback is sought from staff and learners following training sessions, and actions to improve provision are prompt.
24. Resources are satisfactory. New training suites, added to the Surbiton headquarters, are of a particularly high standard. Additional computer facilities are available for individual learning support. Staff are appropriately experienced and have good practical skills. Staff development is satisfactory overall. The organisation has clear objectives for its staff training programme and the range and standard of professional training is good. Although formal appraisals for staff are not held on a regular basis, individual and motivational meetings with a line manager are held every four weeks. Few staff hold a teaching qualification and some educators are not qualified above level 2, though well advanced plans are in place for them to undergo training. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of equal opportunities, but have not received recent training to update their knowledge of legislation.
25. Internal verification is satisfactory. Standardisation meetings are held every six weeks and a forward plan exists for sampling assessments. Assessment takes place within the academy and opportunities to assess in the salon are missed. However, a strategy is in place to ensure that workplace assessment can be provided for learners from June 2008 onwards.

26. Arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory overall. Managers have a good understanding of equality of opportunity and set high standards of respect and behaviour. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet with current government requirements. Its response to *Every Child Matters* is satisfactory overall. Headmasters focuses well on the importance of including all staff and learners in training opportunities. Learners have a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience on recruitment and Headmasters prepares them well to work confidently with diverse clients.
27. Learners are encouraged to be creative, to express their individuality and be confident in their salons and in competitions. Apprentices complete management training units and a wide range of additional practical training opportunities. At present, Headmasters is funding training for ten overseas apprentices. Learners' success is celebrated with enthusiasm and events and the monthly newsletter are effective in maintaining high motivation and morale.
28. Promotion of equality of opportunity is insufficient. Learners have good recall of the policy and procedures explained in induction, but little further exploration of the wider aspects of equality and diversity occurs in learning sessions. Progress reviews do not effectively reinforce or extend learners' understanding of equality of opportunity.

What learners like:

- 'Learning is fun'
- Friendly and approachable people
- Good training
- Good career opportunities in the company
- 'Everything gets done properly – the way it is run and the way you are spoken to'
- 'I love the academy. It's brilliant'
- The way things are fully explained
- Good product knowledge training
- Good opportunity to gain qualifications
- 'The educators are patient and don't get annoyed with me. They really listen'

What learners think could improve:

- Number of theory sessions – not enough to match the practical work
- Individual time in the academy and for those who are struggling
- Opportunity to have units signed off in the salon
- Stock levels of some colours in the academy

Annex

Learners' achievements

Headmasters Partnership Ltd

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by the provider 2004/05 to 2006/07

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/c college NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider/college framework rate**	National framework rate**
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	53	34%	50%	17%	42%
		timely	55	20%	33%	7%	28%
	05-06	overall	87	44%	55%	39%	53%
		timely	81	21%	38%	20%	34%
	06-07	overall	56	50%	61%	50%	63%
		timely	59	47%	47%	47%	44%

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