

Childcare Training Consultancy Limited

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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

Description of the provider

1. Childcare Training Consultancy Ltd (CTC) provides work-based learning in health and social care and childcare learning and development (CCLD). In June 2006, CTC changed ownership and is now part of Career Development Centre Ltd. In 2007, the business of CTC was relocated to the main premises of the parent company in Woodford Green in the London local authority area of Redbridge. Since this time, some of the management team and the management structure have been changed. All of the business of CTC and 92% of the business of Career Development Centre Ltd is government funded. CTC has contracts with London East LSC for the provision of apprenticeships, Train to Gain and a locally devised, LSC-funded learner and progression programme (LAP). It also has a contract with Essex LSC for a LAP programme. There are a total of 577 learners. Forty-six are apprentices and four are advanced apprentices on CCLD programmes. The Train to Gain programmes lead to NVQs at Levels 2 and 3. They have 471 learners, of whom 296 are working towards a health and social care qualification and 175 are working towards a CCLD qualification. Fifty-six learners attend the LAP programmes.
2. All of the learners on the LAP programmes, 61% of learners on Train to Gain and 76% of learners on the apprenticeship programmes are from minority ethnic groups. According to the 2001 census, 3% of the local community in Redbridge are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion is 29% in London as a whole.
3. Off-the-job training is provided in the training centre, community venues and employers' work-places.
4. CTC was first inspected by the Adult Learning Inspectorate in 2004 and a further monitoring visit was undertaken in 2005.

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

Health, public services and care	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 have improved and are now satisfactory. The quality of provision is satisfactory overall. The provision is good at meeting the needs of learners and employers. Teaching and learning and support and guidance are satisfactory. Leadership and management and the arrangements for equality of opportunity and social inclusion are satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

6. CTC has a satisfactory capacity to improve. In January 2008, CTC compiled their second self-assessment report under the new owner. The report took into account the views of staff and learners and is broadly accurate. The development plan is a useful tool for improvement. The previous inspection report and the monitoring visit report identified significant weaknesses in the provision. Under the new owner, CTC has better management and the structure of the organisation has been improved. The new management team has addressed many of the weaknesses and the provision is now satisfactory. In particular, success rates for the apprentices have improved. Decisions have been made to move learners to more appropriate programmes. Internal verification, which was not meeting awarding body requirements, is now satisfactory.

Key strengths

- Good acquisition of workplace skills
- Particularly flexible arrangements for training
- Good staff development and support
- Good internal and external communications
- High participation rate by people from minority ethnic groups

Key areas for improvement

- Late completion of apprenticeships
- Inadequate arrangements to safeguard children and vulnerable adults
- Insufficient use of data for quality improvement

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

7. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners on all programmes acquire good workplace skills. They have improved their practice and have a greater understanding of their job role. Apprentices' work is of a good standard. They create individual, well organised portfolios of their work. They have the opportunity to progress from Level 2 to Level 3 qualifications.
8. Most learners on Train to Gain programmes are making satisfactory progress towards their qualification. Some are due to finish ahead of their planned completion date. Of the first 37 learners due to finish in February 2008, 21 have now completed and the remaining 16 are close to completing.
9. Self-assessment identified the low success rates of the apprenticeship programme before 2006/07. Success rates of apprentices have improved and are now satisfactory. In 2006/07, 53% of learners completed their framework and a further 20 learners have now completed it. The progress of learners since 2004 has been slow. Few of them complete the framework by the planned date. On the apprenticeship programmes, the monitoring of learners' punctuality and attendance at training is effective.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

10. The overall quality of provision and the teaching and learning are satisfactory. In CCLD group sessions, trainers establish a good relationship with learners, encouraging them with individual support while maintaining firm boundaries for their behaviour. Learning is satisfactorily planned and includes a variety of teaching and learning methods. Learners contribute well to classroom activities. Trainers check the learning effectively but there is insufficient recognition of learners' different needs by the use of differentiated activities in lessons. Trainers do not always take the opportunity to further develop communication skills in vocational programmes.
11. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Assessors and learners work together to identify appropriate assessment methods and record them clearly. Learners understand what will be assessed and how. Observation reports are detailed and referenced to the national occupational standards. A full range of assessment methods are used. Key skills evidence is accurately assessed and trainers give detailed feedback on the assignments. However, a few assessors give insufficient explanation of the NVQ process and how to set up portfolios. Learners undertake diagnostic assessments at the start of their programmes. Information from these is not used effectively to plan to meet individual needs. CTC identified in their self-assessment report the need for a more systematic approach to the planning of learners' support. Individual learning plans record action already taken rather than documenting how learners' needs are to be met.
12. Programmes meet the needs of learners and employers well. This was identified in the self-assessment report. CTC is particularly flexible in its arrangements for training,

including individual training and group training in the workplace, on company premises and in local community venues. Learners and employers have well defined requirements and the training programmes are designed in consultation with them. The range of assessment methods and timings are chosen to meet learners' needs. Assessors visit learners outside normal working hours, including at the weekend and in the early hours of the morning, to carry out observations of learners on different shifts. Employers appreciate the flexibility of the assessment and training opportunities provided by CTC. Learners are able to raise issues of concern in a learner-staff forum. They have requested additional computers and a later start in the day for the off-the-job training, owing to difficulties in travelling to the training centre.

13. The support and guidance given to learners are satisfactory. All learners receive an effective induction to their course. Learners complete a diagnostic test to identify any additional learning needs. Since January 2008, they have undertaken an additional test to identify the most suitable vocational level for them. Additional social needs of apprentices are identified and support activities are monitored. There is no diagnostic, specialist provision for assessing and supporting learners who have English as an additional language. Assessors provide sound pastoral support and encourage learners to consider appropriate progression choices. Assessors are particularly sensitive when personal issues affect participants' learning.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

14. Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff have access to a good range of development programmes. Staff new to the training and assessor roles are able to gain relevant qualifications. Staff have a monthly meeting with their manager on an individual basis which enables them to be well supervised and supported in their job roles. Some of them progress to internal verifier and management courses. External courses, for example, attending conferences and exhibitions, are used to develop the staff's individual areas of specialisation and keep them up-to-date with practice in their professional sector.
15. Managers at CTC place a strong emphasis on communicating with the staff. Regular company events take place for all staff to meet and share good practice. All staff are assigned to a team which meets every month. Internal verifiers meet every two weeks to share good practice. Minutes and actions agreed at the meetings are well recorded. CTC communicates well with the employers in the east of London and in Essex. The organisation distributes briefing materials to the organisations in the care and early years sector, keeping them up-to-date on issues affecting the sector, any legislative changes and information about training opportunities. Employers are well informed about the progress of their learners.
16. All of the CTC programmes have a high participation rate by people from minority ethnic groups. The LAP programmes have been particularly successfully in recruiting Asian women who are seeking to either gain a qualification or to train for employment. Learners from all ethnic backgrounds have broadly the same success in achieving their qualifications and framework. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equality and

diversity which commences with training at induction and is further developed during their NVQ training and progress reviews. The equality and diversity policy is generally satisfactory, although there is no specific harassment and bullying policy.

17. The measures to improve the quality of the provision are satisfactory. The new management team has a much better focus on quality improvement. Learners who were previously on inappropriate courses have been moved to courses which more closely match their needs. Further improvements include the closer monitoring of learners' progress and the effectiveness of internal verification.
18. In January 2008, CTC produced its second self-assessment report since the change of ownership of the organisation. Although the self-assessment process includes the views of employers, learners and staff, it does not make good use of new measures of success data. The commentary of the report was found to be broadly accurate. However, not all aspects of the common inspection framework were covered sufficiently to demonstrate a clear understanding of the improvements to the provision. The development plan covers the overall requirements of both CTC and the parent company, Career Development Centre Ltd. It is very detailed. It has sufficient actions with timescales to be a useful tool to achieve improvements.
19. Criminal Record Bureau checks have not been made for new training and support staff. CTC understands the requirement to implement a safeguarding policy and has previously made checks of training and support staff already in post. CTC identified the failure to implement and monitor a safeguarding policy. A robust action plan, with short timescales, is now in place to ensure the safety of young people and vulnerable adults. The implementation of this action plan is monitored by both the managing director and a designated manager.
20. CTC routinely reviews contract performance data to inform management decisions and to identify and measure improvements to its provision. Until January 2008, managers and staff at CTC had little knowledge of new measures of success data. Success rates have not been adequately monitored on the apprenticeship and Train to Gain programmes. The low achievement rates and the low proportion of apprentices completing on time were not adequately recognised.

What learners like:

- Working with other learners
- Relevance and depth of the off-the-job training
- 'The course has given me much more confidence'
- Very friendly, supportive staff
- Being treated like adults
- Individual support from staff
- 'The assessor gets the best out of me'
- 'The assessor helps to put things into plain English'

What learners think could improve:

- The number of computers at the training centre
- 'The number of sessions to study – we've had none since Christmas'
- Learning resources at Level 3

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by CTC 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	14	36%	48%	14%	34%
		timely	15	33%	31%	13%	22%
	05/06	overall	167	3%	N/a	1%	N/a
		timely	175	3%	N/a	1%	N/a
	06/07	overall	6	50%	64%	50%	58%
		timely	8	0%	43%	0%	37%
Apprenticeships	04/05	overall	40	40%	46%	33%	29%
		timely	39	18%	21%	15%	13%
	05/06	overall	28	32%	N/a	22%	N/a
		timely	12	13%	39%	5%	N/a
	06/07	overall	11	58%	68%	53%	63%
		timely	1	3%	48%	0%	44%

Note 'At the time of the inspection - LSC data for 2006/07 had yet to be fully validated'

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

Success rates on **work-based learning 'Train to Gain' programmes** managed by CTC 2006 to 2007

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**
Train to Gain***	2006/07	overall	33	75%
		timely	0	0
	2007/08	overall	12	75%
		timely	0	0

Note: 2007/08 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first 3 months or greater of the LSC contract year

- * 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 qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'
- *** Includes 'Train to Gain' long course NVQ provision, but not 'skills for life'