

SYTG

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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:

- Employability training

Description of the provider

1. SYTG Ltd (SYTG) was formed in June 1990 and is located in premises near Sheffield city centre. Its business is exclusively to provide government-funded training in preparation for life and work. The company has two directors and four staff members, including three trainers and an administrator. SYTG holds a contract with the South Yorkshire LSC to deliver an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme. Currently 46 learners are enrolled on the E2E programme. It also holds contracts with Sheffield local authority to offer two other programmes. One is a ten week preparation for life course for 16-19 year olds with learning difficulties. This programme was not running at the time of inspection and was therefore not inspected. The other is a programme for 14-16 years old learners who are disengaged from school. This includes a group of recent immigrants who need help to learn English. Currently 17 learners aged between 14 and 16 are enrolled. The company offers a range of qualifications including food hygiene, citizenship, health and safety and national tests in literacy and numeracy.
2. The unemployment rate for Sheffield is 4.2% compared with 3.4% for England as a whole. The GCSE achievement rate is 49% compared with 58% for England. Most areas of Sheffield close to SYTG fall within the top 10% of most deprived wards in England.

Summary of grades awarded

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

Sector subject area

Employability training	Inadequate: Grade 4
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Inadequate: Grade 4

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate. Achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management are all inadequate. Employability training, which is part of the sector subject area preparation for life and work, is also inadequate. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Inadequate: Grade 4

4. SYTG has demonstrated an insufficient capacity to improve. It has failed to address key weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report, notably the weakness in quality assurance. Quality improvement remains weak. Although the progression rate for E2E has improved slightly since 2005-06, achievement overall is low. The grades awarded at this inspection were lower than at the previous inspection when SYTG was graded as satisfactory.
5. Self-assessment is inadequate as a tool to drive improvement. The self-assessment process is inclusive, but the latest report has too many inaccuracies and has not led to an effective plan for improvement. It fails to identify some key areas for improvement and awards higher grades for all aspects than were found at inspection. It correctly identified quality assurance as a weakness, but little action has been taken to improve this.

Key strengths

- Good development of work skills
- Good work placements
- Flexible and inclusive response to local community needs

Key areas for improvement

- Low achievement of positive outcomes and key objectives
- Poor management of individual learning
- Much inadequate teaching and learning
- Weak quality improvement procedures
- Too little promotion of equality of opportunity through teaching and learning
- Insufficient development planning

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Inadequate: Grade 4

6. Development of learners' skills in the workplace is good. Learners on work placement develop good job related skills and are able to progress to more demanding tasks. For example, a learner with a history of behavioural difficulties and offending is now given the responsibility, by his employer, of delivering the day's takings to the bank. Another learner with poor oral communication skills is now able to greet and serve customers at a department store. On their placements, learners develop confidence, self-esteem, and general employability skills such as good time keeping and teamwork.
7. Achievement of positive outcomes and key objectives is low. Too few learners progress to employment, further education, or training or achieve their key objectives. The progression rate has risen slightly since 2005-06 but remains low. In 2006-07, the rate was 46%, below the national average of 51%. In the first four months of the current contract year, the progression rate is 48%. No reliable data is available on the achievement of key objectives. Very few learners gain additional qualifications in literacy, numeracy or other preparation for employment qualifications. In 2006-07, only two learners entered a national literacy test and only one learner was successful. Learners' overall progress is slow and the development of literacy and numeracy skills is inadequate. Attendance is generally satisfactory although a few learners have too many days of unauthorised absence. The self-assessment report identified learners' achievement as a strength.

Quality of provision

Inadequate: Grade 4

8. The management of individual learning on the E2E programme is poor. Learners' programmes are insufficiently individualised and do not contain a wide enough range of motivating learning activities. Learners do not have a weekly timetable or a plan of how or when their identified learning targets are to be undertaken. Attendance in training modules is unplanned and some learners repeat modules previously undertaken. Records of which learners have attended modules and how well they develop knowledge and skills are insufficient. Tutors make too little use of targets to plan individual training programmes or measure progress. Targets set at reviews are often not challenging or specific enough. Tutors and learners do not use the E2E activity logs to plan or record learning. Progress of learners on work placement is not recorded and employers are not involved in reviews. Insufficient attention is paid to additional learning needs. Although SYTG has identified support and personal and social needs for most learners, plans for how their skills are to be developed are unclear. The learning programmes for 14-16 year old learners are well-planned and satisfactory arrangements for monitoring attendance and progress are in place.
9. Too much inadequate teaching and learning takes place. The planning and delivery of teaching is poor with insufficient individualisation of teaching and learning activities. Support for literacy and numeracy needs is inadequate with an insufficient range of learning activities, methods and resources used to help learners develop their skills. Learners work independently on work packs in literacy, numeracy, English as a second or other language (ESOL) or preparation for employment sessions in a workshop style

delivery. Some learners choose not to take part in learning and spend their time chatting to others, sending text messages from their mobile telephones or surfing the internet. The behaviour, attitude and language of some learners in sessions are poor. The completion of work packs is monitored at reviews but inadequately assessed during workshop sessions. Learners' written work is insufficiently marked and assessed by tutors.

10. Work placements are good. The range of placements meets the needs and interests of the diverse group of learners. They include department stores, charity shops, garages, warehouses and other retail outlets. Learners are well matched to placement opportunities and where possible are able to sample several occupational areas. Placement providers offer a good range of job tasks that benefit learners. They support and encourage learners and give them a second chance when they make mistakes. Communication between SYTG and workplace providers is good with weekly telephone calls or visits to the placement. SYTG staff respond quickly to address issues or concerns in the workplace. Work placements are identified as a strength in the self-assessment report
11. Support for learners' personal and social needs is satisfactory. Tutors are sensitive to the personal difficulties learners face and demonstrate genuine interest and care for them. They build non-threatening relationships with the learners and advocate as necessary on their behalf. However, poor behaviour and attitudes to learning are insufficiently challenged by tutors to ensure learners make good progress. Too little promotion of equality of opportunity takes place in training sessions. Partner organisations provide specialist support and advice for learners on issues such as sexual health and substance misuse. Information, advice and career guidance are satisfactory and well supported through good liaison with Connexions.

Leadership and management

Inadequate: Grade 4

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

12. SYTG provides a flexible and inclusive response to community needs. The company has a good understanding of local and national priorities and a strong commitment to meeting the needs of vulnerable young people. These include 14-16 year olds not on school rolls, recent immigrants with significant English language learning needs, young people with learning difficulties, and many with social and health problems. The company is quick to respond to new initiatives and has a flexible approach to its provision. SYTG's inclusive approach is making an effective contribution towards reducing the number of young people in the local community who are not in employment, education or training.
13. The day-to-day operational management of the company is satisfactory, and is supported by regular formal and informal meetings. SYTG has suitable health and safety procedures for the centre and for work placements. Appropriate checks have been carried out to safeguard young and vulnerable learners. Staff maintain good links with external partners, including employers. The company reviews staff performance regularly and is supporting staff to gain nationally recognised training qualifications. The ground floor premises provide suitable training accommodation, equipped with computers and whiteboards. However, the absence of a ramp prevents wheelchair access.
14. SYTG's planning for the development of its training is insufficiently focused. The company has a business plan and a range of development plans, including one for skills for life and another for information technology. These do not clearly identify the company's overall strategic direction or priorities for improvement, and are not used effectively to address the weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report or to monitor progress. SYTG's planning to ensure that the equal opportunities policy is implemented or that an appropriate response is made to disability discrimination legislation is unclear. The skills for life policy and plan is being developed with the support of a consultant but this has not yet been implemented.
15. Internal and external verification arrangements for accredited programmes are satisfactory. SYTG's self-assessment process is inclusive and the report is well-linked to the *Common Inspection Framework*. However, it does not adequately identify areas for improvement and is not clearly linked to development planning.
16. Quality improvement procedures are weak. SYTG does not have a system to improve quality. No documented policies or procedures are in place for evaluating or improving teaching and learning. Teaching observations carried out by external observers were not used by the company to plan improvement. SYTG does not seek structured feedback from learners on the quality of provision. Staff have tried unsuccessfully to gather learners' views through written questionnaires but do not use other strategies such as group discussion or learner forums. Although the local authority carried out a learner survey of the 14-16 provision, SYTG did not use the outcomes. The previous inspection report of 2003 identified the unsystematic quality assurance arrangements as a weakness, and the self-assessment report of March 2007 also recognised that this remains an area for improvement. However, this has not led to specific action for improvement.

17. SYTG makes a very positive contribution towards social inclusion, providing good support for a wide range of vulnerable learners. However, it does not do enough to raise learners' awareness of equal opportunities values. For example, trainers do not always use positive strategies to challenge stereotypical attitudes among learners and promote mutual respect. Few learning materials and activities help learners understand the significance of equal opportunities in the workplace, and opportunities are missed to reflect the cultural diversity of the learners.

What learners like:

- ‘Work experience’
- ‘I’ve got friends here’
- Friendly staff
- ‘It’s better than school’
- ‘My English is getting better and I hope to get a good job’

What learners think could improve:

- Having more interesting things to do
- Chances of getting a job
- Spending less time at the centre
- Providing a social area for breaks
- The number of computers

Annex

Learners' achievements

Outcomes on **Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes** managed by the provider **2005 to 2008**

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
2005-06	69	***	41
2006-07	79	***	46
2007-08 (4 months)	23	***	48

* 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

*** No reliable data was available for this report