

LITE (Stockport) Ltd

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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:

- Agriculture, horticulture and animal care

Description of the provider

1. LITE (Stockport) Ltd (LITE) contracts with Greater Manchester LSC to provide training in animal care and veterinary nursing. LITE has veterinary nursing approved centre status and was awarded Beacon Status in March 2004. LITE works very closely with LITE Ltd St Helens and both organisations have the same management, policies and procedures.
2. Currently three full-time and four part-time staff are employed. The manager is also responsible for LITE Ltd St Helens. Off-the-job training is provided mainly at the centre in Stockport, where access by public transport is convenient. Veterinary nursing learners attend the centre on one day each week and animal care apprentices attend one day every two weeks. Training and assessment for horse care apprentices, and advanced apprentices in animal care, take place in the workplace.
3. Some 35 apprentices, 11 advanced apprentices and two Entry to Employment (E2E) learners are enrolled. Currently 23 are on veterinary nursing programmes, 21 are on animal care programmes, one learner is on a horse care programme and three are on customer care programmes. Most learners come from Greater Manchester and Cheshire. Three learners are on young apprenticeship programmes.
4. Stockport has a population of 290,000, of whom 4.3% are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The area is relatively prosperous and the unemployment rate is low, but pockets of high deprivation exist. In September 2001, the proportion of school leavers in Stockport achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or above was 54%, compared with the national average of 47.9%.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: Grade 1
Achievement and standards	Outstanding: Grade 1

Quality of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
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Leadership and management	Outstanding: Grade 1
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Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
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Sector subject area

Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	Outstanding: Grade 1
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision is outstanding. Success rates of apprentices and the examination success of veterinary nursing apprentices are outstanding and improving. Learners develop good workplace skills and demonstrate a good understanding of the knowledge and practice of animal care and nursing. Tutors are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Off-the-job training for veterinary nurses is outstanding with excellent teaching and learning resources. Many learners achieve additional qualifications which enhance their employability. Partnerships with employers, which benefit and support learners, are outstanding. Team work is outstanding. Staff support learners, employers and each other well. Training is well managed. Quality improvement is effective and focuses on the continuous improvement of the organisation for the benefit of learners. LITE is socially inclusive and provides outstanding support for learners.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding: Grade 1

6. LITE has successfully made progress to resolve the key areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Success rates have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Learners' workplace skills are good and the outstanding quality of provision has been maintained. Management of training is very good and team work is excellent. Staff work effectively to support each other, learners and employers and bring about improvement to the learners' experience. Staff appraisals now contain clear targets for staff. However, strategies to improve learners' awareness of equality and diversity are not yet successful.
7. The self-assessment report is an accurate reflection of the provision. The self-assessment process is inclusive and accurately identified all strengths and most areas for improvement. A detailed action plan effectively identifies actions to be taken. The action plan is regularly monitored and updated.

Key strengths

- Outstanding success rates
- Good development of workplace skills

- Outstanding off-the-job training for veterinary nurses
- Excellent teaching and learning resources
- Outstanding learning partnerships with employers
- Very good use of additional qualifications to enhance employability
- Outstanding individual and personal support for learners
- Very good leadership and management
- Outstanding teamwork
- Effective quality assurance arrangements
- Very effective social inclusion

Key areas for improvement

- Better structuring and monitoring of the induction of new staff
- Better use of reviews to link on- and off-the-job training and to reinforce learners' understanding of diversity and equality

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Outstanding: Grade 1

8. Success rates for apprentices are outstanding. Framework achievements have improved and in 2006/07, 85% of apprentices and 71% of advanced apprentices achieved their qualifications. This has improved from 63% and 43% respectively since 2004/05. LITE has successfully implemented the recently introduced veterinary nursing apprenticeship. In 2006 and 2007 veterinary nursing apprentices achieved 100% pass rate in the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons examinations. Most learners are women but male learners are equally as successful. Pass rates in literacy, numeracy and language and in additional qualifications are also high. The quality of learners work in portfolios is good and many learners progress quickly. Timely success rates are high.
9. Learners are involved in a wide range of activities at work. LITE has accurately judged that learners develop good practical skills and demonstrate a good understanding of the knowledge and practice of animal care and nursing. The standard of work demonstrated by learners is usually of industry standard. Progression for learners is good. Many progress from apprenticeships to advanced apprenticeships or to more advanced roles including head nurse or workplace supervisors.

Quality of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

10. The quality of the provision is outstanding. Off-the-job training in veterinary nursing is outstanding. Tutors plan sessions very effectively, using well prepared training materials and an appropriate range of teaching and learning activities. Schemes of work and session plans are detailed, up-to-date and available on the intranet, for other staff and learners. Tutors use an electronic voting system well to review previous learning and effectively check learners understanding. The teaching of literacy, numeracy and language is well integrated with the off-the-job training. Tutors have designed very useful and well presented literacy, numeracy and language workbooks for each specific area of learning and linked these to the Nation Vocational Qualification (NVQ) standards. Off-the-job teaching resources are excellent. Tutors make very good use of electronic whiteboards and other resources such as anaesthesia circuits to enhance learning and understanding. Very good assessment paperwork assists learners and work-based assessors to collect workplace evidence. A detailed proforma for witness testimony clearly describes the evidence learners should demonstrate to achieve a successful outcome. Staff are developing web-based learning resources and learners are able to access sessions remotely via the internet.
11. Personal learner support is outstanding. LITE staff carefully identify learners' needs through a range of processes including initial interview, selection and throughout induction. Initial induction takes place after a one or two week trial period in the workplace, where learners work under supervision and their occupational skills are evaluated. Induction is individual and memorable to learners. They receive outstanding individual support in the workplace and during off-the-job training sessions. Some employers provide individual learner mentors. Learners can telephone assessors for

support outside the normal working day. Full screening and support arrangements are in place for learners with dyslexia. Staff provide learners who have literacy and numeracy needs or dyslexia with laptops with voice recognition software or specialist spell check programmes. Learners use handheld game consoles with appropriate software to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Monitoring officers and assessors discuss learners support needs and effectively monitor the success of the support they provide at team meetings. Assessors carefully plan learning programmes to meet individual learners' needs. Staff effectively adjust the frequency of workplace visits according to learners' needs. Additional reviews and counselling are available for learners experiencing problems and some learners attend individual and personalised off-the-job training sessions. Counselling qualifications are held by two members of staff. Information, advice and guidance for learners on progression and career opportunities are good.

12. LITE offers a good range of additional qualifications and learning opportunities to learners. Animal care learners can obtain the animal nursing assistant qualification alongside the animal care NVQ. This enables them to progress onto the veterinary nursing course. All learners can access additional first aid at work and dietary adviser qualifications. Customer service NVQs are delivered very successfully in an animal care context. This provides improved career opportunities either in animal care or other sectors.
13. LITE staff have developed outstanding learning partnerships with employers. Employers have a very good understanding of NVQ systems and procedures. Close links have been made between LITE staff and workplace supervisors and assessors. Employers and learners receive copies of the learning plan and in most placements use the plans well to co-ordinate on- and off-the-job training. The veterinary practices have experienced work-based trainers and assessors who provide very good support, training and assessment. Learners have monthly reviews with workplace supervisors that focus on progress, planning and evaluation of training. Full progress reviews by the monitoring officer take place at least every 12 weeks to monitor progress and identify and plan learning and assessment opportunities. However, reviews are not always fully effective. Reviewers do not always use learning plans effectively to link on- and off-the-job training. Target dates agreed are not recorded in the portfolio matrix. Some questioning is superficial and does not effectively reinforce learners understanding of equality and diversity.

Leadership and management

Outstanding: Grade 1

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

14. Leadership and management are outstanding. The manager provides strong strategic direction and management for training. The mission statement is clear and supported by all staff. LITE is responsive to the needs of its local community and the animal care industry. LITE is a Beacon provider and effectively shares good practice with other organisations. Training is well managed. Accommodation is good. LITE continually invests in and improves its learning resources. Management information is clear, accessible and timely. Development planning is effective.

15. Teamwork is outstanding, as noted in the self-assessment report. Communication is good and benefits learners. Staff are empowered and trusted to do their jobs well. Service areas provide them with excellent support, and they respond effectively to new challenges. Staff are well qualified and appraisal is very effective in raising standards of performance. Staff development processes are good. Two staff have recently been appointed and are well supported by other team members. However, the induction process is not sufficiently structured or monitored. The induction of new staff consists largely of observing and working with a very experienced tutor and an experienced assessor. New staff have not received appropriate tutor or trainer training and this is not yet planned.
16. Quality improvement processes are well established, effective and based on inclusive self-assessment. Staff are clearly focused on the continuous improvement of the organisation and its services for the benefit of learners. The annual programme of quality improvement activities is planned using the company devised 'Q' monitor schedule. Managers use team meetings effectively to inform and update staff, monitor company and learner performance and review quality assurance activities. Close attention is given to the views of learners and staff. Clear evidence exists of improvements to the learners' experience. Good practice is identified and shared. However, opportunities are missed for sharing excellent practice with LITE Ltd St. Helens. The self-assessment report is accurate. Internal verification is thorough. Regular and effective update meetings for work-based assessors take place.
17. LITE has taken effective action to promote social inclusion. Over 40% of learners come from disadvantaged areas and 20% of learners have disabilities, learning difficulties or health problems. Appropriate adjustments are made to training and learners are well supported by LITE and employers. Much work has been undertaken to promote LITE's programmes to community groups and young men. However, this activity is not clearly focused and has been unsuccessful. Staff and learners attend workshops to raise their awareness and understanding of equality and diversity. LITE has developed innovative posters, using breeds of dogs or horses to reinforce equality and diversity. Staff have received equality and diversity training. Animal care learners attend a one day equality and diversity. Tutors integrate equality and diversity effectively into the veterinary nursing scheme. LITE analyses and monitors learner performance by gender, ethnicity and disability. However, the awareness of relevant issues by some learners is still superficial. The provider has not yet improved the reinforcement of equality and diversity to learners during progress reviews. LITE correctly identified this as an area for improvement in the self-assessment report. All staff have been appropriately vetted. The partner school checks all workplaces. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.

What learners like:

- Quality of the teaching
- Inspirational teaching
- Enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff
- Interactive whiteboard and tests
- Quality of the handouts and learning materials
- Small groups
- High levels of support they receive

What learners think could improve:

- No improvements identified

Annex

Learners' achievements

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

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	2004/05	overall	2	100	48	0	34
		timely	2	0	31	0	22
	2005/06	overall	4	100	53	75	44
		timely	3	67	34	33	27
	2006/07	overall	7	86	64	71	58
		timely	10	20	43	20	37
Apprenticeships	2004/05	overall	30	80	51	67	39
		timely	30	60	29	50	22
	2005/06	overall	34	74	58	74	52
		timely	33	45	38	45	34
	2006/07	overall	32	94	65	88	61
		timely	30	70	47	63	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'

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	1	0	0
2006/07	6	2	1
2007/08 (7 months)	2	1	1

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

* 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