

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce

Reinspection report

Reinspection date

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Reinspection number

322481

Contents

Background information	3
Reinspection judgements	3
Scope of the reinspection.....	3
Description of the provider.....	3
Summary of grades awarded at previous inspection	5
Summary of grades awarded at reinspection	5
Key strengths	5
Key areas for improvement.....	6
Main findings	6
Achievement and standards	6
Leadership and management	8
What learners like	10
What learners think could improve.....	10

Background information

Reinspection 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 reinspection 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 reinspection

In deciding the scope of the reinspection, inspectors consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorate's reinspection monitoring visits, and data and learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection. Inspectors also 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.

This reinspection reports on specialist provision in:

- Construction, planning and the built environment

Description of the provider

1. Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce (DNCC) is a company limited by guarantee with the registered office situated in Chesterfield. This organisation has been in operation in its present format and structure for 22 months. The training division has its main site in Chesterfield but has other sites in Glossop, Bolsover, Shirebrook and Swadlincote. Chamber Training is one of four operating divisions of DNCC.
2. The responsibility for Chamber Training rests with the Director of Business Services. The Training division has contracts with Derbyshire LSC to deliver work-based learning for young people and Entry to Employment (E2E). Apprenticeship training is offered in engineering, administration, accountancy, information and communication technology (ICT), customer service, construction, oral health care and the E2E programme. At the time of the reinspection, 303 learners were on training programmes with DNCC.
3. At the previous inspection, all overall grades were satisfactory and the judgements on the three sector subject areas inspected ranged from good for business, administration and law, satisfactory for preparation for life and work and inadequate for construction, planning and the built environment. The reinspection covered the construction planning and built environment and, at the time of the inspection, there were 64 learners following apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship programmes. All construction apprentices are employed and work for a range of commercial and domestic contractors in the area. Construction learners attend off-the-job training sessions at local further education colleges, who act as subcontractors. Assessment and internal verification are carried out by college staff.
4. According to the 2004 indices of deprivation, Derbyshire has 44 of the most deprived areas in England. The proportion of minority ethnic groups is low across the county at 1.4% compared with the national average of 7.6%. The current unemployment rate is 2.4% compared with the national average of 5.7%. The current statistics show 43% of school pupils achieve five or more GCSEs grade A to C compared with the national average of 45%.

Summary of grades awarded at previous inspection

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 areas

Construction, planning and the built environment	Inadequate: Grade 4
Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Business administration and law	Good: Grade 2

Summary of grades awarded at reinspection

Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Sector subject areas

Construction, planning and the built environment	Good: Grade 2
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Key strengths

- Good and improving success rates
- Learners developing good workplace skills
- Highly effective support for learners
- Very effective management of subcontractors

Key areas for improvement

- Some weak target-setting at progress reviews
- Insufficient sharing of assessment planning information

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

5. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates for learners are good for the advanced apprenticeships and improving for the apprenticeship programme. This was identified in the provider self-assessment report. In 2006/07, success rates for apprentices were 55% and below the national average; success rates for advanced apprentices in 2006/07 were 85% and above the national average. In 2007/08, overall success rates for apprentices improved to 63% and are at the national average; success rates for advanced apprentices have risen to 90% and are 31% above the national average. Timely success rates have improved for both apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships and are above the national average. Pass rates for key skills are good. In 2007/08, most learners have gained all key skills. DNCC monitors performance of all learner groups closely.
6. Learners are developing good workplace skills. Employers provide good opportunities for learners to develop and progress their skills across a range of domestic and commercial work. Learners carry out tasks under the direction and supervision of skilled staff in their workplace. The standard of their work is high and recognised by employers. Tasks allocated to learners are appropriate to their level and they are engaged in practical skills appropriate to their ability. Some learners have good opportunities to work independently. Learners develop a good sense of achievement and confidence when being able to complete specific tasks for the first time. Learners take pride in tasks they have completed and feel valued by their employers.

Quality of provision**Good: Grade 2**

7. Quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners demonstrate a particularly good understanding of their materials, components, working processes and their application in the workplace. There is very effective co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. Monitoring officers have good relationships with employers and work to ensure learners are appropriately engaged in as wide a range of tasks as possible. Off-the-job training is carried out in the colleges, which have a good range of resources to provide both theory and practical training.
8. Assessment is satisfactory and includes a range of evidence sources. There is satisfactory use of creditable photographic evidence signed off by work-based recorders. Mentors from an outside agency provide valuable additional support in the workplace to ensure assessment opportunities are taken and to give additional help with key skills if required. Learners welcome the extra assistance and the help it gives in keeping on track with progress towards their qualification. Internal verification is satisfactory. There is insufficient sharing of assessment planning information between DNCC staff, employers and subcontract colleges. DNCC staff do not always receive information from assessors about assessment plans indicating how and when learners will be assessed, particularly in the workplace. DNCC provides employers with a breakdown of the skills learners need to develop in the workplace; however, this information is sometimes overly complex and difficult for employers to understand. Learner needs to meet the programme criteria and the provision of workplace tasks that prepare opportunities for assessment are not always understood.

9. The range of provision is good and meets both employers and learners needs well. Employers take an active part in progress review and support their learners. Where an employer cannot fulfil the full range of work to meet learner needs, DNCC will work with the employer to facilitate a short term transfer of learners to another employer enabling the learner to gain experience and assessment opportunities. Targets are set at each review by monitoring officers, however, these are not adequately followed up at the next review to maintain learner progress. Target-setting in progress reviews is weak. Learners are set short, medium and long-term targets but these are not sufficiently specific and learners are unsure of what they need to do.
10. Guidance and support for learners are good. Highly effective support and career guidance is given to learners by both monitoring officers and employers. This was identified in the self-assessment report. An effective process for selecting learners and ensuring they are placed on the right programme is in place. All learners have a detailed induction at DNCC before going onto a construction site. Learners also have a workplace induction with employers focusing on health and safety. DNCC staff provide learners with easy contact details to enable issues to be quickly resolved and help keep learners on programme. In addition to the contractual learner progress reviews, staff carry out interim reviews and learners have access to DNCC staff when they attend off-the-job training. This has positively impacted on learner attendance and retention. Learners particularly value the support they receive from DNCC staff and the external mentoring service.
11. The development of learners' understanding of health and safety issues is satisfactory. It is introduced at induction and reinforced in off-site training and the workplace. However, there are insufficient opportunities to develop learner understanding through more in-depth questioning approaches as part of the learner progress review.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

12. Leadership and management of the subject area are good. At the previous inspection management of subcontractors was judged to be poor. Very effective management of subcontractors is now in place and has driven forward progress for learners. Regular communication with subcontractors through monthly progress review meetings, quarterly contract review meetings and weekly drop-in visits from monitoring officers ensure learner progress is closely monitored. The subcontractors welcome the input given by DNCC and good practice is shared very effectively. Management information is provided by the subcontractors on a regular basis and this is used by DNCC to closely monitor progress. Where there are progress issues, DNCC has enlisted the help of an external support agency to provide a mentoring service in the workplace. This has proved to be

very effective and has been highly valued by both employers and learners. Staff and mentors have all had update training on the technical aspects of the subject area and this has proved particularly useful in identifying assessment opportunities.

13. Since the previous inspection, a quality improvement plan specifically for the subject area has provided a clear focus for development. An improvement log has been devised which has clear targets and outcomes, and this proved to be a key tool in improving the quality of provision. The self-assessment report mirrors most strengths and areas for improvement identified by inspectors and most proposed grades were confirmed.
14. Equality of opportunity is good. Systems to review equal opportunity are in place and are used to set targets to improve performance. DNCC places equality of opportunity as a priority when working with all learners. All policies are reviewed annually and updated accordingly in line with changes to legislation. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. DNCC has a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place and staff are fully aware of its contents. A high percentage of training staff have received awareness training in a range of equality and diversity issues and a programme for all remaining and new staff has been added to the continuing professional development cycle.
15. DNCC celebrates learner success and particularly uses successes of under-represented groups to promote participation. A female plumbing apprentice won the apprentice plumber of the year award and has attended many school and careers events to promote construction as a career for females. Other females within the subject area have helped to promote construction trades and skills as a career. Equal opportunities issues are raised in the progress reviews and learners have a good recall and understanding of equal opportunity issues.

What learners like:

- 'Chamber makes sure you're enjoying it'
- 'Every job is different'
- The encouragement to progress given by DNCC
- 'Get good help'
- 'Nothing's too much trouble'
- Gaining the ability to solve problems
- 'Something new every day'

What learners think could improve:

- Would like additional tutorials at college