

Childcare Training Consultancy Ltd

Focused monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 51145

Name of lead inspector: Jan Lloyd HMI

Last day of inspection: 2 December 2009

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: 8 Bourne Court
Southend Road
Wood Green
Essex
IG8 8HD

Telephone number: 020 8709 7020

FOCUSED MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Context and focus of visit

Childcare Training Consultancy Limited (CTC) is a private limited company which was originally set up in November 2000 to deliver training and consultancy services to the childcare sector. In May 2006, The Career Development Center Ltd (CDC) purchased CTC and amalgamated their operations and management team. The head office is in Essex. All staff are employed by CDC and contracted to CTC either full time or for part of their time. CTC shares all policies, systems and procedures with CDC. CTC has Train to Gain contracts with the London East Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and in the East of England. It no longer has a contract for apprenticeships. CTC also acts as a subcontractor with five colleges of further education for Train to Gain learners. The main vocational area is health, public services and care, with a small number of literacy, numeracy, customer service and management learners. Currently, there are 236 learners. Since the previous inspection, CTC has appointed a new managing director.

CTC was inspected in February 2008. Effectiveness of provision, capacity to improve, leadership and management, equality of opportunity and health, public services and care were all satisfactory. This report focuses on the six themes explored during the visit, including the mandatory themes of outcomes for learners and self-assessment and improvement planning.

Themes

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress has been made in ensuring that the self-assessment report covers all aspects of the Common Inspection Framework adequately, makes good use of data and effectively contributes to the quality improvement process?	Insufficient progress
--	-----------------------

At the previous inspection, CTC had a satisfactory capacity to improve and the self-assessment report was broadly accurate. However, the self-assessment report did not make good use of the new measures for success data or cover all aspects of the Common Inspection Framework. Following the inspection, CTC changed the format for its self-assessment report and covered all areas of the previous Common Inspection Framework but did not include all areas for development identified during the inspection. The 2008/09 self-assessment report makes excellent use of evidence from staff and customer surveys but does not include any reference to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or safeguarding, both of which had been identified for development from the inspection. The report now includes data tables but there is little analysis. There are insufficient judgements or evidence in the report to support the good grade for capacity to improve.

There was no post-inspection action plan after the previous inspection and there have been no quality improvement plans since then. The quality assurance team addressed some of the areas for improvement but did not give sufficient priority to the delay in carrying out Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. CTC is presently developing a quality improvement plan for the whole organisation.

Outcomes for learners

What progress has been made in improving outcomes for learners, particularly the timely success rates for apprentices? Reasonable progress

At the previous inspection, achievement and standards overall were satisfactory. Most Train to Gain learners made satisfactory progress towards their qualification but apprentices made slow progress. Learners acquired good workplace skills and had the opportunity to progress from National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at level 2 to NVQ at level 3. The good workplace skills and progression remains for the learners observed and interviewed. The Train to Gain overall success rates for 2008/09 made a good improvement of 11 percentage points from the previous year but remain satisfactory as the national picture has also improved. The highest improvement is with learners in health and social care and early years and playwork, where overall success rates are now above the national average. The available timely success data indicate an improvement from previous years but still remain satisfactory.

CTC no longer has a contract for apprenticeships. Overall apprenticeship success rates had been improving year on year, reaching a good level in 2007/08. However, this fell significantly in 2008/09 to less than half the previous rate as CTC's contract ran down with no new starters. The deterioration in timely success rates was not as marked but was still significantly below the national average.

Quality of provision

What progress has been made in improving the identification of literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) needs and in delivery of support? Insufficient progress

At the previous inspection, there was no diagnostic, specialist provision for assessing and supporting learners who had English language support needs. Since the inspection, there has been no progress made on ESOL assessment or support. All learners have an initial assessment for literacy and numeracy but there is no written plan to meet their needs and no reference in the assessment and progress review records.

Since the previous inspection, CTC has worked with a specialist literacy and numeracy consultant to develop a skills for life strategy and a strategy for training staff. A significant number of staff are working towards their literacy and numeracy qualifications at levels 1 and 2. They are also working towards relevant teaching

qualifications prior to working towards specific literacy and numeracy teaching qualifications. However, the number of learners working towards literacy and numeracy qualifications has reduced significantly due to an overall reduction in funding for Train to Gain, and therefore CTC is unable to fully implement the targets for support set out in the skills for life strategy.

What progress has been made in ensuring that the individual learning plans are regularly reviewed and updated with the learners, and include how learners' needs are to be met? Insufficient progress

At the previous inspection, information from the diagnostic assessments was not used effectively to plan learning and support needs. Individual learning plans recorded actions that had already taken place rather than documenting a planned learning programme. The majority of individual learning plans examined still lack detail of how initial assessment will translate into planned support. However, interviews with learners and employers show that these learners receive good support, although CTC does not record this in any of the assessment or progress review records. Similarly, the detailed skill scans which support the choice of additional units and inform the planning of the delivery of the NVQ are not used to complete the individual learning plans. CTC does not use the individual learning plan as a working document to review progress against targets. Target completion dates do not reflect the complexities of a particular NVQ or the individual needs of the learners. CTC has recognised this and has developed a new individual learning plan, which it is beginning to use with new starters.

Leadership and management

What progress has taken place to improve the monitoring and use of success rates on the apprenticeships and Train to Gain programmes? Reasonable progress

At the previous inspection, insufficient use of data for quality improvement was a key area for improvement. The collection and analysis of data have improved considerably in the past year, with CTC managers now routinely using reports to manage staff. Monthly reports include success rates attributed to individual staff, caseloads of staff, learners who have not been seen for 40 days and learners making slow progress. The current success rate and maximum potential success rate data are available for the current year. The recent improvements have made a positive difference to the way staff view the importance and use of data. They now receive more information and are better able to manage their learners' progress. A new monitoring system uses the reports submitted by assessors to track unit completion by learners but it is too early to gauge the effect of this on timely success rates. However, analysis of data does not include any comparison of performance by different groups.

What progress has been made in implementing the safeguarding policy and action plan?

Insufficient progress

At the previous inspection, CTC's arrangements for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults were inadequate and a key area for improvement. CTC had not carried out CRB checks for new training and support staff, although there was a robust action plan to improve this area. CTC is now submitting all staff for checks but there is a significant delay between commencement of employment and submission of the paperwork. Submissions in 2009 are being made between four and 11 months after commencement of employment.

Initially CTC made good progress implementing the action plan, but there has been little progress since the end of 2008. There is a named safeguarding officer. Staff training has taken place. However, the safeguarding policy is still a draft document 21 months after the inspection. It includes the key areas but lacks specific information such as definitions. The assessors' handbook includes a statement on safeguarding children and young people, but does not mention vulnerable adults.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this report in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester, M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009