

Positive Approach Academy for Hair

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 53945

Name of lead inspector: Gwendoline Greaves HMI

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Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: 14 Oswald Road
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 7PT

Telephone number: 01724 865048

Information about the provider

1. Positive Approach Academy for Hair (PAAH) is a privately owned company, established as a government funded training organisation in 1984. The organisation contracts with Humberside Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide hairdressing training for 38 apprentices and 36 advanced apprentices, which it does from a purpose built learning centre in Scunthorpe. PAAH works with 30 employers who are located primarily in Scunthorpe and its surrounding areas. Twenty-one year 10 and 11 learners from four local schools attend the centre two days each week on a young apprenticeship programme.
2. The managing director has specific responsibility for health, safety and strategic management, whilst the course director manages a team of six trainers and assessors and is responsible for quality improvement, curriculum management, internal verification and marketing. Learners attend the centre on alternate weeks for one full day. PAAH staff complete practical assessments at the centre and on employers' premises.
3. North Lincolnshire is a rural area with a population of 159,000, of whom 2.5% are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The local authority has a rank average score of 132 in the 2007 Multiple Deprivation Index. In 2008, 41.6% of young people in the area achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A*- C including mathematics and English compared with 47.6% nationally.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2007/08
Provision for young learners: 14 to16	12 part-time learners
Employer provision: Apprenticeships	77 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 4
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	4
Equality and diversity	2
Subject areas	Grade
Service enterprises	2

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate. Learners enjoy their studies, gain increased confidence, work safely and demonstrate a high level of hairdressing skill. The number of learners who stay on the programme and successfully achieve is high.
- The teaching of practical hairdressing is good. The teaching of theory is satisfactory but tutors insufficiently check learners' understanding of a topic before moving on. PAAH staff and employers work closely together. They ensure that the good in-salon training provided by employers matches the training needs of learners. PAAH staff very effectively monitor each learner's progress. Where necessary, they provide individual tuition to help learners achieve. Arrangements to identify and support learners' literacy and numeracy needs are good. The good information, advice and guidance available to learners helps them understand the programme and make informed career choices. Accommodation at the centre is adequate but practical and theory rooms are small and can become cramped if large numbers of learners attend.
- Senior managers promote a culture of open and inclusive management. The promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity are good. Employers' and learners' views have influenced changes to the programme. Processes to protect learners from bullying and harassment are very effective. However,

PAAH are not fully compliant with all current safeguarding legislation. Some aspects of quality assurance and improvement planning are fragmented and do not fully inform self-assessment.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Young apprentice success rates are outstanding. Advanced apprentice overall and timely success rates have been consistently high for four years. Apprentice success rates are slightly above the national average.
- Learners are conscientious, enjoy their studies and make good progress in developing work-related skills including key skills. They demonstrate a high level of practical skills that are often above the requirement of the qualification. Pupils on young apprenticeships do particularly well and develop a more positive attitude to mainstream education.
- Learners' awareness of their own health and well-being is satisfactory. They work safely within the workplace. They understand what constitutes and affects a healthy life style, and most aspects of personal safety. Learners adequately support the local community, through fund raising and the provision of hairdressing services.
- The teaching of practical hairdressing is good. However, in theory sessions, tutors do not plan sufficient checks of learners' understanding. Employers provide very good salon training that very effectively matches the training plan provided by PAAH.
- One-to-one support, coaching and mentoring are good. Initial assessment is thorough and identifies any additional learning needs early in a learner's programme. Tutors provide good additional support. Learners state that individual support and small group work help them to achieve their targets in the time agreed.
- The monitoring of learners' progress is good. Learners and staff closely monitor progress and achievements. Employers are fully aware of their learners' progress and use this information well when planning in-salon training.
- PAAH has a responsive and relevant programme offer that meets individual needs. All programmes are developed to allow learners to progress at their individual pace. Learners refer positively to the one-to-one training and the advice and encouragement they receive.
- Information, advice and guidance for learners are good. Young apprentices value the information they receive and state it helps them make an informed decision for their options at school. Level 2 and 3 learners also express complete satisfaction with the information they receive about programmes.
- Although the accommodation is adequate, theory and practical training rooms are small. It is sometimes difficult to accommodate large numbers of learners effectively.

- Senior managers successfully promote a culture of staff cohesion and shared responsibility. Partnership working with employers and external agencies is good. Staff benefit from meaningful personal development. Performance management is good and supports staff in retaining and helping learners achieve.
- PAAH has very effective strategies to protect learners from bullying, harassment and unhealthy life styles. However, other aspects of safeguarding relating to legislative requirements are not adequately covered. Staff are not fully aware of PAAH's new safeguarding policy which has not yet been fully implemented.
- The development, promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity are good. Promotion of equality and diversity with learners is good and very effectively reinforced. Learners have a good awareness of the meaning and implementation of legislation. The outcomes of employer and learner questionnaires and ongoing learner comments influence changes to programmes and practice.
- Some aspects of quality assurance are fragmented and very few quality reports inform self-assessment and quality improvement plans. PAAH insufficiently collates quality assurance activities and few have sufficiently specific or measurable targets for improvement.

What does Positive Approach Academy for Hair need to do to improve further?

- Improve formal classroom teaching by planning sessions that engage all learners and include activities that frequently check learners' understanding.
- Evaluate the academy accommodation in order to analyse its impact on teaching and learning.
- Complete all outstanding safeguarding requirements, including addressing the gaps in current risk assessments and the central register, providing staff training in the newly introduced safeguarding policy, and establishing communication with the local social services safeguarding board.
- Further develop self-assessment and improvement planning through better use of success rate data, the collating of quality assurance processes and the more accurate reporting on any emerging trends, aspects of good practice and areas requiring improvement.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- how the programme has improved their confidence and practical skills and widened career opportunities
- the small class sizes, one-to-one and small group tuition
- the easy to approach staff and the good support and guidance they provide
- the good and frequent practical training received from supportive employers

- the use of on-line teaching packages to recap topics
- the use of on-line testing to allow quicker access to results

What learners would like to see improved:

- more time spent at the training centre

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- how PAAH minimise disruption to salons by their willingness to adopt flexible training arrangements
- working with a small provider with the ability to respond quickly to queries or requests
- the good and frequent contact with PAAH staff, at times to suit the employer
- the standard of training and support for their learners

What employers would like to see improved:

- less use of local expressions when telephoning the centre
- improvements to the dated accommodation at the centre
- immediate contact if a learner is having difficulties with a technical skill

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

7. Since the last inspection PAAH has made a number of improvements to the provision. It has remedied most identified weaknesses and maintained strengths. The slow progress made by advanced apprentices has been improved, with overall and timely success rates now consistently high. Staff development opportunities are much improved with staff taking qualifications that reflect their roles and responsibilities. Practical teaching is good but formal classroom teaching remains satisfactory.
8. PAAH is highly responsive and effectively adapts practice to implement change. Staff use their frequent team meetings well to discuss and resolve any learner related quality issues. However, quality improvement is over reliant on individual initiatives that are insufficiently linked to organisational self-assessment and improvement planning.
9. The self-assessment report generally matches inspection grades. However, a number of strengths are over emphasised and aspects identified by inspectors as requiring improvement are not included. The self-assessment report is overly descriptive, lacks critical analysis and does not sufficiently compare PAAH's statistical data to national trends.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

10. Apprenticeship overall and timely success rates have declined from outstanding in 2006/07, but remain above the national average at 75%. Advanced apprentices have retained the high rates of 2006/07 with current year overall and timely success remaining a high 80% and 65% respectively. Apprentice rates declined sharply in 2007/08 but remained slightly above the national average. Provider data identifies that current apprentice success rates remain above the national average with 70% overall and 51% timely success. Young apprentice success rates are outstanding with all learners successfully achieving for the last two years. There are no discernable differences between the achievement and progression of different groups of learners.
11. The number of learners who progress onto further training is particularly good. All of the young apprentices progress into further training and a very high proportion of apprentices progress onto advanced apprenticeships. Career progression is good. Most learners quickly establish themselves as valued members of salon teams.
12. Learners at all levels demonstrate a high level of practical skill. They display confidence and competence in their work at an early stage of training. Many are able to attempt complex treatments independently. The development of personal, social and employability skills is good. Pupils on young apprenticeships also develop an increased commitment to school work.

13. Professional standards of client care, adherence to health and safety requirements and attitude to study are good. Learners enjoy their work, have a good attitude to employment and their career plans are suitably aspirational.
14. Development of learners' awareness of issues relating to their own health and well-being is satisfactory. Learners state they feel safe at PAAH. Work packs aid learners' understanding of the Every Child Matters themes and tutors check their understanding during progress reviews. Outside agencies are used to give talks on such themes as substance and alcohol misuse, bullying, pregnancy and staying safe.
15. Learners make a satisfactory contribution to the local community. They provide low cost hairdressing services and raise funds for Help the Aged. PAAH is also developing links with Crosby Multi-faith Community Group and the Polish community.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

16. Practical teaching, learning and assessment are good. Tutors provide good guidance and support, ensuring that all learners have appropriate clients and tasks. Assessment opportunities are good. Tutors make frequent assessment visits to salons and respond positively to any additional visit requests. Assessment practices are thorough and robust.
17. Formal classroom theory teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers are well qualified and enthusiastic. However, tutors insufficiently plan theory session activities that take account of all learners' needs. Sections of teaching are overly long with tutors infrequently checking the level of learners' understanding.
18. Employers provide particularly good on-the-job training. They are supportive of their learners and provide dedicated training sessions within salons. Employers are fully conversant with their learner's progress and very effectively match training to enhance techniques learnt at the centre.
19. One-to-one support, coaching and mentoring are good. All learners take a diagnostic literacy and numeracy assessment at induction. A specialist tutor provides learners with very good support through specially designed work booklets and one-to-one or small group support.
20. The monitoring of learners' occupational and key skills progress is good. Learners actively monitor their own progression through colour coded systems. Tutors carefully monitor individual and group progress and bring any concerns to staff team meetings for discussion. Most learners are on or ahead of target.
21. PAAH provides highly responsive and relevant programmes. Learners refer positively to the advice and encouragement they get to work individually and progress at their own pace. Many learners take the opportunity to complete assessments earlier than specified on their learning plans.

22. The good and productive partnerships with local schools and the 14-19 consortium have extended training opportunities for young people in the area. Communications and liaison between the partners very successfully support learners. PAAH's good links with various agencies provide a range of external speakers.
23. Occupational care, guidance and support for learners are good and help learners attain their learning goals. Tutors, senior managers and employers provide learners with good, reliable and very relevant support and guidance. Learners at risk of falling behind or leaving before completing their programme are identified and supported. Retention is high. Employers make active contributions and ensure learners are well supported in salon. Any instances of harassment and bullying are thoroughly checked and acted upon.
24. Information, advice and guidance for learners are good. Pupils interested in young apprenticeship programmes value the comprehensive information they receive, as do the learners on apprenticeship programmes.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

25. Senior managers very effectively promote a culture of openness, shared responsibility and teamwork. Enthusiastic and committed staff are consulted on all aspects of the provision and make positive contributions when developing the curriculum and related policies. PAAH works in partnership with highly professional employers who give considerable time and commitment to developing their learners' skills. A very approachable senior team makes an extensive contribution to supporting tutors in the pastoral care of learners and any necessary disciplinary procedures.
26. Strategic planning is adequate and takes full account of local economic position and priorities. The good collaborative partnerships with schools and North Lincolnshire 14-19 Consortium effectively inform strategic planning. The business plan's predicted growth and related targets are realistic. Financial management is prudent and effectively monitored. Accommodation at the centre is adequate but in need of refurbishment and space becomes restricted when large groups attend.
27. Performance management is good. Senior managers make good use of learner attendance and progress reports to monitor each programme's performance. A range of good and effective interventions helps retain learners. Staff and employer communication is good. All employers are fully aware of their learners' progress. They value the personal contact by PAAH's senior staff and their very swift response to any queries. Staff are well informed through formal well structured monthly team meetings that are complimented by quick daily update meetings. All meetings are suitably learner focused. Staff development, which was a weakness at the last inspection, is now good. All staff hold or are working towards teaching qualifications and most staff are taking additional qualifications that very effectively match their job roles and responsibilities.

28. PAAH's safeguarding arrangements are inadequate. PAAH has insufficiently established policies and practices to fully protect and support their learners or meet legislative requirements. PAAH has very effective strategies to protect learners from bullying, harassment and unhealthy life styles. However, other aspects of safeguarding are not sufficiently covered. Staff have completed safeguarding awareness raising training but training on the newly introduced safeguarding policy has not been completed. Some risk assessments are incomplete, contact with the local Safeguarding Board and Social Services is not yet established and the central register is incomplete.
29. Development, promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity are good. A culture of respect and individual self-worth is very effectively promoted by all staff and replicated by learners. Good action is taken to rapidly and effectively address any issues relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination. Promotion of equality and diversity with learners is good. Learners have a good understanding of the meaning and implementation of current legislation. Learners receive comprehensive training at induction, which is reinforced well at monthly reviews. Salons have appropriate policies and employers take an active part in learner reviews when equality of opportunity is promoted. Company policies cover legislation and set procedures for monitoring outcomes against pre-set targets. Tutors raise learners' awareness using a simplified policy that very effectively describes learners' rights and responsibilities. PAAH's long term involvement with the local Asian community very effectively raises learners' cultural awareness. PAAH is working with a newly formed multicultural community group as part of a long-term strategy to attract a wider range of learners. Learners' and employers' views form an intrinsic part of curriculum planning. Good use is made of surveys to check learners' and employers' satisfaction levels with the programme. Learners are involved well in the quality assurance of some key learning processes. Although PAAH takes full account of learners' views, it does not sufficiently record them.
30. Some aspects of quality assurance are fragmented and insufficiently inform self-assessment. A systematic schedule of quality assurance reviews and audits covers all key aspects of provision. Staff have successfully used these to improve practice and address the decline in apprentice success rates. However, quality assurance reports and reviews do not always contain sufficiently specific or measurable targets for improvement. Teaching and learning records are overly focused on the activities of teachers rather than learners or learning. The resulting grades are not collated to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the organisation and observation judgements do not sufficiently inform appraisal or self-assessment.

Information about the inspection

31. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's Course Director, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
32. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the provider. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Positive Approach Academy for Hair

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; 16-18 Learner responsive: FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; 19+ responsive: FE full- and part-time courses; Employer responsive: Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners	95	21			74
Part-time learners					
Overall effectiveness	4	4			4
Capacity to improve	3				
Outcomes for learners	2	1			2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2				
How well do learners progress?	2				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
How safe do learners feel?	2				
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well-being?*</i>	3				
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	3				
Quality of provision	2	2			2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2				
Leadership and management	3	3			3
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>					
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	4				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3				

*where applicable to the type of provision

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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

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