

JACE Training and Assessment Centre

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 52794

Name of lead inspector: Joy Montgomery HMI

Last day of inspection: 14 May 2010

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

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Information about the provider

1. JACE Training and Assessment Centre (JACE) is a privately owned independent learning provider. It was established in 1981 and is part of the Jancett Group of day nurseries. The head office is based in Wallington, Surrey, and there are eight training centres spread throughout London, Surrey, Sussex and Kent.
2. JACE holds contracts with the Young People's Learning Agency and the Skills Funding Agency to deliver Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes; apprenticeship programmes in children's care learning and development and playwork; Train to Gain programmes in early years and Skills for Life. All early years provision was inspected along with the E2E programme. The Skills for Life provision was not inspected.
3. JACE works in partnership with local authorities throughout the area. Childcare qualifications are offered to 14 to 16 year olds in four local schools and an alternative education programme is available to young people not attending school. JACE has been involved in the development and delivery of the higher Diploma in society health and development in Wandsworth. JACE offers a range of commercial programmes including a number of one-day short courses and specialised accredited training including food safety and first aid programmes. Qualifications in Early Years Foundation Stage level 3, assessor awards and preparation for teaching in the lifelong learning sector are also offered.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Provision for young learners: Entry to Employment	70 learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	136 learners 419 apprentices

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	1
Equality and diversity	2
Subject Areas	
Child development and well being	2
Preparation for life and work	2

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of JACE's provision is good. It has satisfactory capacity to improve and good systems are in place to improve the quality of the provision. A significant number of learners on the E2E programme progress onto an apprenticeship in childcare. Outcomes for apprenticeships are satisfactory overall. Learners develop good skills in working with children and babies while in their work placements. Many go on to gain employment and progress to higher level qualifications. Teaching and learning are good. Learners enjoy the small interactive workshops and make good use of well-designed training materials. The programmes and workshops are flexible to meet learners' and employers' needs. JACE's effective partnerships ensure learners have a wide range of opportunities to learn and develop up-to-date knowledge and skills. The care, guidance and support for learners are good. Leadership is excellent. Managers set high standards and are aware of the need to make better use of management information. Arrangements to safeguard learners are outstanding and learners say they feel safe and are treated fairly.

Main findings

- A very high proportion of learners completing the entry to employment programme progress onto apprenticeships in childcare. Learners from different minority ethnic groups achieve the same high progression rates as White British learners.
- Success rates for advanced apprentices are improving and are now above national averages. Success rates for apprentices are satisfactory and remain just below national averages. The majority of learners take longer than expected to achieve their qualifications, particularly on Train to Gain programmes
- Learners enjoy their learning in the training centres and workplaces. They improve their personal and social skills as well as developing a good understanding of how to support children's welfare learning and development.
- Teaching, training and learning are good. Tutors are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and sessions are well planned. Learners are well motivated and enjoy participating in a variety of activities in small groups.
- Many assessors and learners make good use of action plans to identify what work needs to be done. However, the formal reviews of learners' progress do not clearly identify how far through the programme they are and what still needs to be completed in order to achieve in a timely manner.
- High quality child care settings provide good work placements that meet learners' needs. There is a wide range of good resources and particularly well designed learning materials. These are used flexibly and appropriately to meet the needs and interest of learners. However induction handbooks are not suitable for foundation level learners.
- Partnership working is very good. JACE works effectively with several local schools delivering training and providing alternative education for a number of young people. Staff are members of several work-based learning alliances and also technical experts on the sector skills body for early years.
- Learners receive very good personal support from staff at JACE. This enables those with complex personal lives to remain on their programmes and achieve their potential.
- Leadership is excellent. The proprietor sets a clear direction for the business which is shared very effectively with senior managers. Communication is very good and staff at all levels have a very good understanding of the overall strategy as well as the operational management.
- Learners feel safe and arrangements for safeguarding are outstanding. Staff are appropriately trained and have a good awareness of safeguarding. Risk assessments have been completed to a high standard. Safeguarding issues which have arisen have been managed very effectively.
- JACE makes extensive use of a wide variety of management information, but this is not always sufficiently focused to manage the provision effectively. This

includes the use of non-validated performance data and the lack of analysis of performance differences between groups of learners.

What does JACE need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the high progression rates from E2E into childcare and ensure new occupational areas achieve the same high rates.
- Improve timely success rates by ensuring learners have appropriate expected end dates.
- Ensure learners' reviews provide a comprehensive reflection of their progress and provide learners with clear achievable targets to complete in a timely manner.
- Redesign the induction programmes to meet the needs of all learners.
- Review the systems used for monitoring and managing learners' progress and implement one that meets the needs of the organisation.
- Provide a better focus on management information to ensure essential information is included and analysed appropriately to identify trends and compare performance of different groups.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- being able to submit work by email and get new assessment plans
- working and learning things about children while getting a qualification
- the independence in study and individual support
- being able to get a work placement through JACE
- the small, quiet setting, not like a college
- the really helpful assessors who make it easy and clear
- the teachers who are understanding, helpful and friendly
- the workshops and training sessions that are enjoyable and interesting
- meeting with other learners at the training centres.

What learners would like to see improved:

- more time to do the work and better support from employers with time to study
- the visits by assessors need to be more frequent and work needs to be marked more quickly
- the access to computers at some of the training centres
- the locations and timings of the training sessions
- clearer action plans.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the excellent communication from some very professional assessors
- the high level of support from assessors
- the fact that learners achieve their qualifications and gain good skills
- the flexible programmes that meet the needs of the nurseries.

What employers would like to see improved:

- more information on learners' timetables and assessor appointments
- the rate of progress, which is slow with a big push at the end
- regular training sessions for level 3 learners
- more frequent visits from assessors.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

5. JACE has satisfactory capacity to improve. The overall success rates for advanced apprentices have improved in the last three years. However, the overall success rates for apprentices have remained relatively constant and are currently below the just national average. The number of learners who complete their qualification within the agreed timescale is significantly below the national averages.
6. Arrangements for quality improvement are good with detailed action plans which are used effectively to implement change. Communications within the organisation are excellent and JACE consults well with staff on the operation of the business. The high standards of care and support have been maintained since the previous inspection while the business has expanded significantly. JACE has opened two more training centres and increased the number of learners. Jancett's expansion of after-school clubs and development of outdoor classrooms provides learners with a wider range of experiences.
7. The self-assessment process is inclusive and staff have a clear understanding of quality improvement initiatives. The report is insufficiently self critical and does not include sufficient judgements to support the self-awarded grades. The self-assessment report is satisfactory but fails to identify some of the key areas of concern identified by inspectors. The quality improvement plan is good and with the supporting action plans provides a clear strategy for future progress. These plans are monitored well and evaluation of progress is good.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

8. Progression rates for E2E learners are particularly good and well above national averages. Two thirds of learners move on to childcare apprenticeships or other learning. Success rates for childcare apprenticeships overall show a slight improvement from 60% in 2007/08 to 66% in 2008/09. However, overall and timely rates remain below national averages of 71% and 55% for the sector in 2008/09. A small number of Train to Gain learners completed in 2008/09 and timely success rates for the current year are improving but remain low and below national averages for level 2 and Skills for Life. There are no significant variations between different groups of learners in progression from E2E programmes or success on apprenticeship programmes. On average, the small number of male childcare learners are more successful than female childcare learners.
9. Learners enjoy their learning greatly and attendance at workshops is good. They work cooperatively and produce a good standard of work in workshops and lessons. Learners make good progress in communication and social skills. In the workplaces, learners develop a good rapport with children in their care

and demonstrate increasing skills in planning the early years curriculum. The standards of learners' work is at least satisfactory and in many cases good.

10. E2E learners improve their economic and social well-being significantly through work experience and the ambition which they develop to create a rewarding working life for themselves. Progression from apprenticeships to advanced apprenticeships, employment and higher qualifications is good. As learners develop their skills they take on additional responsibilities such as first aider and supervising after-school clubs.
11. Learners feel safe in the workplaces and training centres. They develop a good understanding of health and safety issues and understand their role in protecting children from abuse. E2E learners learn how to ensure their personal safety through personal and social development workshops including e-safety, sex education and drug and alcohol awareness. They understand the role of healthy eating and the role of exercise in improving mood as well as fitness.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

12. Teaching, training and learning are good. Childcare workshops are well-planned, interesting and interactive, ensuring learners participate and learn. Tutors are very knowledgeable and enliven the sessions by drawing on their own experiences. Tutors provide appropriate support to learners with identified additional learning needs. Teaching in personal and social development for E2E learners is particularly effective. The range of resources is good and most learning materials are particularly well designed. The organisation is aware of the need to redesign the induction packs for E2E learners.
13. Initial assessment is satisfactory. It provides useful detail on learners' achievements and aspirations, but results of literacy and numeracy assessments do not sufficiently influence planning for individuals in E2E lessons. Additional time and support are provided to apprentices but this sometimes lacks focus. Assessment practices are satisfactory. Internal verification is well planned and provides assessors with detailed feedback on how to work effectively with learners.
14. Most learners make good use of action plans, agreed with their assessor, to know what work they need to complete. However, these do not always contain clear targets to motivate and direct learners. Formal reviews of learners' progress are not used effectively to ensure timely completion. There is often a difference between learners' understanding of their progress and the assessors' reports showing the percentage completed against target.
15. Programmes are particularly effective in meeting the needs of learners and employers. Programmes vary according to individual needs, and both childcare workshops and E2E programmes are flexible in frequency and duration. Learners are able to experience a wide range of childcare settings. JACE provides a programme for pupils at local schools and a few are now

apprentices. A programme for learners moving from nursery settings to after-school clubs is valued by employers.

16. JACE makes good use of a wide range of partnerships. It has very effective working relationships with its own nurseries and productive partnerships with many other employers and childcare settings. These valuable partnerships provide good quality work placements for learners that often lead to employment. Links with local authorities are good and JACE provides successful programmes for 14- to 16-year-olds in local schools. The proprietor and deputy are members of the technical expert group of the Children's Workforce Development Council and are also members of various work-based learning alliances. JACE is proactive in reviewing and piloting new standards such as the health and social care Diploma, functional skills and foundation learning.
17. Care, guidance and support are good overall. Staff are skilled at managing challenging behaviour and creating an atmosphere in which many learners feel safe to discuss problems. Learners feel they can easily contact their assessor and are comfortable discussing personal issues with them. Staff refer learners with specialist support needs to local organisations when appropriate. JACE and Jancett staff are good role models demonstrating how learners can progress through levels 2 and 3 to working as tutors and assessors or in senior positions in childcare and playwork settings.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

18. Leadership in JACE is excellent. The proprietor sets a very clear direction which is shared effectively with all staff. Staff have a very good understanding of the broad aims of the organisation as well as the day to day operation which is well managed. Business growth is researched well to meet local needs and the needs of the profession. Communication is excellent at all levels and is facilitated by laptops, mobile phones and a well-structured intranet in addition to a well-managed meeting structure. Clear organisational targets are set and met. Senior staff are very visible and approachable and new ideas from all sources are treated respectfully.
19. Arrangements to ensure learners are safe are outstanding. Safeguarding policies are comprehensive and updated annually. All staff have enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks every three years and records are held on a central register. The designated safeguarding officer and deputy are appropriately trained. Roles and responsibilities are clear and all staff have a good awareness and understanding of safeguarding matters. Safe working practices and health and safety are promoted well to learners during induction, training sessions and reviews. Risk assessments are very thorough and JACE has a very effective system to ensure that any issues are resolved and assessments are completed in a timely fashion. JACE provides additional information, training and opportunities for learners to be safe and knowledgeable about healthy living. They involve parents and carers when appropriate. JACE has dealt with safeguarding issues which have arisen in an exemplary fashion.

20. Promotion of equality and diversity is good. JACE provides a good introduction to equality and diversity at induction and provides supplementary materials to enhance awareness during the programmes. Marketing materials contain appropriate images to promote inclusion and the number of male learners has increased significantly in one area. JACE identified a cultural imbalance between staff and learners and have now redressed this. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Reviews are used to check on their well-being and that they do not have any problems with bullying or harassment, but there is insufficient reinforcement of other equality and diversity matters. Procedures for dealing with bullying and harassment are robust and learners know what to do if the occasion arises. Where complaints have been made, JACE has dealt with them appropriately and in a timely way. JACE does not routinely monitor performance by different groups of learners.
21. Arrangements to engage with learners, employers and other users are good. JACE has made good progress in expanding the provision since the previous inspection. Although JACE is very receptive to the needs of learners and employers and responds well to requests made, attempts to collect views systematically via questionnaires have been unsuccessful. There are no systems to measure levels of satisfaction and monitor them over time.
22. Quality assurance arrangements are good and are monitored effectively through a detailed quality calendar. However, success rates have not improved overall and there are still some inconsistencies in the quality of provision, such as the quality of setting targets for learners and the standard of feedback at reviews. Data and management information is used well to manage participation levels and the achievement of the contracts. However, it is not analysed sufficiently to identify trends over time or compare success rates for different groups.
23. The management of resources is good and offers good value for money. Staff are well qualified occupationally and good continuing professional development opportunities ensure their knowledge is current and benefits learners. JACE has well-equipped training rooms and ensures that staff have the resources they need to communicate effectively. Resources are managed in a sustainable way which includes recycling wherever possible and the purchase of environmentally friendly vehicles.

Subject areas

Child development and well being

Grade 2

Context

24. JACE provides Train to Gain programmes, advanced apprenticeships and apprenticeships in children's care learning and development and playwork. All learners have access to a range of childcare placements or employment in private day nurseries, childminders and after-school clubs. Assessors visit learners in the workplace regularly to provide training, assessments and to review progress. Learners attend workshops at JACE training centres.

Key findings

- Overall success rates are satisfactory. There is an improving trend for success rates on advanced apprenticeship programmes which are now above the national average. Success rates for apprentices in 2008/09 are 4% below the national average. Train to Gain timely success rates are improving but remain just below national averages.
- Development of learners' work place skills is good. Learners gain relevant knowledge and understanding from workshops. Assessors and workplaces ensure learners apply this knowledge and develop their skills with children in their settings.
- Teaching and learning are good. The learners enjoy attending workshops and the lessons are well planned. Tutors are very knowledgeable and willingly share their expertise and experiences with well motivated learners.
- Reviews of learners' progress are not always effective. Learners are not always set clear targets to ensure they know what they have to do and when they have to complete. Too many learners take longer than expected to complete their programme.
- The provision is particularly effective in meeting the needs of a wide range of learners with differing needs. Several learners have progressed from the E2E programme. Learners are supported to progress to further qualifications offering them improved employment prospects. JACE provides childcare professionals with good career development opportunities.
- The range of partnerships is very beneficial to learners and employers. A few learners join an apprenticeship after doing a childcare course with JACE at school. Communications and involvement of employers are generally good. Effective partnerships are formed with the local boroughs and other providers.
- Support for learners is good, particularly for those with additional needs. The support enables many learners with complex personal lives to remain on their programme and achieve their potential.
- Leadership and management are good. Staff are involved in the decision making processes and are given strong guidance and direction.

- The current system for monitoring learners' progress is not helpful in providing the organisation with sufficient information to identify learners who are progressing too slowly or those who have not been assessed for some time.

What does JACE need to do to improve further?

- Revise the learners' progress reviews to ensure learners are more aware of their programme targets and progress in order to achieve their qualifications in a timely manner.
- Review management systems used to monitor learners and find one which more effectively meets the needs of the organisation.

Entry to Employment

Grade 2

Context

25. Seventy learners attend full or part-time foundation programmes at entry and level 1 based at seven training centres in the south east of England. Some 10% are men, 30% are from minority ethnic groups and one learner has a declared disability. Programmes include functional skills, vocational skills and personal and social development.

Key findings

- Progression rates are particularly good and well above national averages. Two thirds of learners move on to childcare apprenticeships or other learning. Learners from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds achieve the same high rates of progression as White learners. Key skills achievements in 2008/9 were good in the London area but poor in the South East. However, achievements currently show an improving trend.
- Learners enjoy their learning greatly and make good progress in communication and social skills. They work cooperatively and produce a good standard of work in lessons. Their confidence grows and they learn to manage their own behaviour better.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan lively, stimulating lessons with a variety of activities which involve learners fully. Learning materials are well designed. Practical activities engage learners' interest and attention strongly. However, reviews of progress do not generally contain clear and achievable targets to motivate and direct learners.
- Induction is satisfactory, with a strong emphasis on safeguarding and equality and diversity. However, the induction handbook is designed for learners at level 2 and above and contains too much detail for foundation level learners. Induction groups are sometimes too small to allow good discussion to take place.
- JACE provides satisfactory opportunities for learners to improve their literacy and numeracy skills by integrating literacy work in childcare and personal and social education workshops and through discrete workshops. Learners diagnosed with dyslexia are referred to specialist help at local colleges. However, teachers do not all have appropriate strategies to develop learners' literacy skills at entry level.
- The programme meets the needs and interests of learners well. Learners have very good access to high quality specialist childcare work placements. Groups are small and provide the personal attention that learners need. Programmes are flexible in frequency and duration to meet individual learners' needs.
- JACE makes very good use of a wide range of partnerships to benefit learners. Its natural links with its own nurseries are complemented by productive partnerships with many other childcare providers. A strong relationship with

Connexions assists with recruiting and placing learners. The company has been heavily involved in the national pilot of foundation learning.

- Learners receive excellent personal support from all staff and managers.
- JACE places a very high priority on learners' understanding and practice of approved safeguarding and health and safety measures, including e-safety, which form a central part of all learners' programmes. The promotion of equality and diversity in childcare and personal and social development workshops is strong.
- Data on outcomes for learners are not sufficiently analysed to inform quality improvement.

What does JACE need to do to improve further?

- Improve monthly reviews of learners' progress to ensure they contain achievable targets and accurately reflect the progress learners have made.
- Redesign the induction programme for use at foundation level and for learners choosing customer service or business administration as well as those opting for childcare.
- Increase staff awareness and use of literacy teaching with learners at entry level.
- Improve the analysis of outcome data to identify trends and areas for improvement.

Information about the inspection

26. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's proprietor, 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 funding bodies, the previous inspection report and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
27. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. 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)

JACE Training and Assessment Centre

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					
Full-time learners	625		70		555
Part-time learners					
Overall effectiveness	2		2		2
Capacity to improve	3				
Outcomes for learners	3		2		3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3				
How well do learners progress?	3				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
How safe do learners feel?	2				
Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	2				
How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	n/a				
Quality of provision	2		2		2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2				
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	2		2		2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1				
How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	n/a				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	1				
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?	2				

*where applicable to the type of provision

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