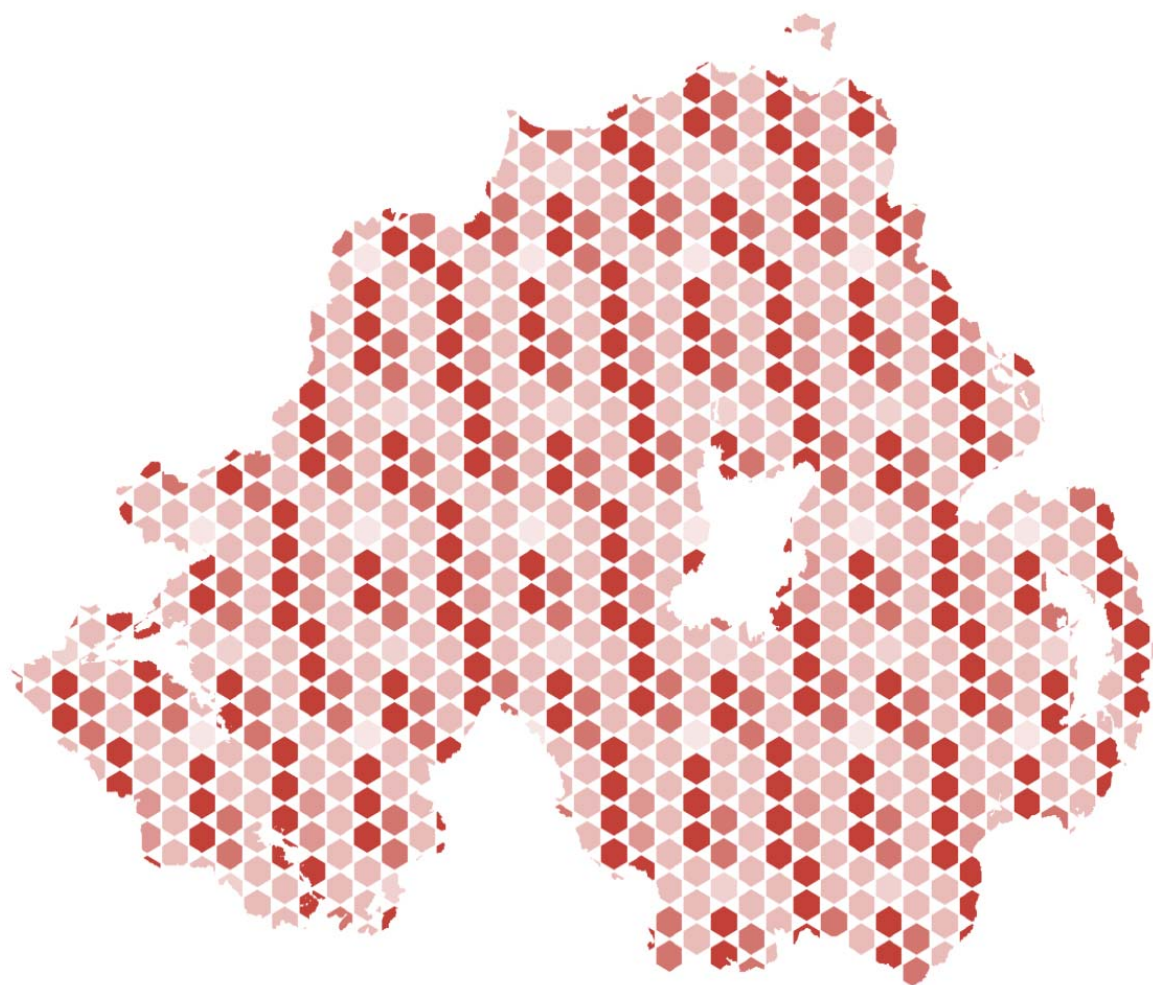


TRAINING INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Dairy Farm Training and
People 1st Limited

Report of an Inspection
In February 2010

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A number of quantitative terms are used in the report. In percentages, the terms correspond as follows:

More than 90%	-	almost/nearly all
75%-90%	-	most
50%-74%	-	a majority
30%-49%	-	a significant minority
10%-29%	-	a minority
Less than 10%	-	very few/a small minority

All the statistics in this report have been supplied and verified by Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited.

Grading System

The Education and Training Inspectorate use the following performance levels (grades) in reports:

Performance Level	Grade	Descriptor
Outstanding	1	Outstanding characterised by excellence
Very Good	2	Consistently good; major strengths
Good	3	Important strengths in most of the provision. Areas for improvement which organisation has the capacity to address
Satisfactory	4	Overall sound/satisfactory but with areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed
Inadequate	5	A few strengths; significant areas for improvement which require prompt action
Unsatisfactory	6	Poor; major shortcomings which require urgent action

PART ONE: SUMMARY

1. CONTEXT

1.1 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited (DFPF Ltd) is one of the largest work-based learning providers in Northern Ireland, providing training for over 600 apprentices and working with over 300 employers. They have four offices throughout Northern Ireland: two are located in Belfast, and the others are in Banbridge and Lisburn. The organisation employs over 95 staff.

1.2 Since September 2007, DFPF Ltd has been contracted by the Department for Employment and Learning (the Department) to supply training under the ApprenticeshipsNI programme, at both levels 2 and 3 on the National Qualifications Framework, in children's care, learning and development, contact centre operations, customer service, and health and social care. Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited is also contracted for retailing, and warehousing and distribution at level 2 and management at level 3. The organisation also delivers the Training for Success programme. Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited provides training in the Belfast, Lisburn, North Down, Newtownabbey, Castlereagh, Derry, Enniskillen, Larne, Newry, Limavady, Magherafelt, Coleraine, Ballymoney, Ballymena and Carrickfergus areas.

1.3 At the time of the inspection, over one-third (37%) of the apprentices had achieved at least four General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSE) passes at grades A*-C or equivalent on entry to their programme; 18% had achieved grades D-G or equivalent, but 22% had achieved no qualifications. Just under 10% of the apprentices are graduates.

2. PROVISION

2.1 Over the past three years, DFPF Ltd has more than doubled enrolments in training programmes. There has been a significant increase in the numbers on ApprenticeshipsNI programmes, particularly evident since the introduction of the all-age apprenticeships in September 2008. Based on data provided by the Department, a total of 487 trainees and apprentices were in training with DFPF Ltd on 31 December 2007, which by December 2009, had increased to 1,067, of whom 880 (82%) were registered on ApprenticeshipsNI programmes.

2.2 In the essential skills, 343 of the apprentices are undertaking essential skills training in communication, and 388 of them are undertaking application of number; the remainder are exempt as a result of prior achievements.

2.3 Most of the apprentices are existing employees who work in a variety of settings, from small and medium-sized enterprises to large national companies, across many industries and sectors. The apprentices' job-roles include: receptionists; care assistants; sales assistants; supervisors; assistant managers; managers; and security guards. They also include a wide variety of work roles in the health and social care, childcare, retail and distribution industries.

2.4 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited have a partnership agreement with Bailie Connor Training to provide training in construction. Since September 2009, they have had a similar agreement with Crystal Professional Development to provide 40% of its training in customer service. Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited also partners with The Link Works, to support its provision in children's care, learning and development.

2.5 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited have four company directors who, with the exception of the managing director, hold a number of management roles including training office managers, overall programme co-ordinators and internal verifiers. The Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI provision is managed at an operational level by office managers and co-ordinators.

2.6 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited operates a model of work-based training for apprentices in which training and assessment are provided by occupational tutors and assessors who are mostly part-time associates or self-employed consultants. With the exception of the five full-time essential skills staff, the remaining essential skills tutors are also part-time associates. Essential skills training is provided mostly in the workplace and is supported through the provision of essential skills clinics. The Training for Success programmes are provided in each of the four DFPF Ltd training offices.

2.7 At the time of the inspection, DFPF Ltd was providing training for 647 apprentices, aged between 16 and 64 years. Of these, 148 (23%) were following apprenticeships or programme-led apprenticeships in children's care, learning and development, 21 (3%) in construction, 67 (10%) in customer service, 185 (29%) in health and social care, 180 (28%) in management and 21(3%) in warehousing and distribution. The majority of the apprentices in children's care, learning and development were on level 3 programmes. There are a number of other apprentices (4%) in administration, contact centre operations, horse care, retail and, sport and recreation. Approximately half of the apprentices are based in Belfast and the majority (70%) are female.

2.8 In addition, DFPF Ltd was providing training for 84 trainees registered on Training for Success programmes; 34 (40%) were on Skills for Your Life, 48 (57%) on Skills for Work and two on pre-apprenticeships.

3. THE INSPECTION

3.1 In February 2010, the Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out an inspection of the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes in DFPF Ltd. A team of eight inspectors, supported by five associate assessors, observed a total of 34 directed training sessions and a small number of workplace assessments. In addition, 184 apprentices were interviewed in on-the-job training. Extended discussions were held with the company directors, office managers, co-ordinators, tutors, assessors and essential skills tutors, and with senior managers from Crystal Professional Development. In addition, 41 employers were interviewed by the inspection team. The inspection team also examined samples of the apprentices' work, portfolios of evidence and personal training plans. The organisation's self-evaluation report and other relevant documentation were also scrutinised.

3.2 The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and the safeguarding of vulnerable adults included the opportunity for the trainees and apprentices to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings by the inspection team with groups of them across professional and technical programmes. Four hundred and twenty questionnaires were issued to the apprentices, 270 (68%) of which were returned to the Inspectorate; 23 of these contained additional written comments. The returns show that the apprentices' levels of satisfaction about their experiences in DFPF Ltd are very good. In particular, they appreciate the good support they receive from staff. The Inspectorate has reported to the managing director the outcomes of the questionnaires and the discussions held with the trainees and apprentices.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

4.1 In most of the areas inspected the quality of training provided by DFPP Ltd is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in leadership and management, achievements and standards, and the provision for learning which need to be addressed if the needs of all the apprentices and trainees are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over a 12-18 month period.

4.2 The main strengths are:

- the good quality of the ApprenticeshipsNI provision in construction and management;
- the good quality of the Training for Success provision;
- the good quality of the training and learning in the majority of the directed training sessions observed; and
- the good support provided by the staff to the trainees and apprentices.

4.3 The main areas for improvement are:

- the leadership and management of all of the ApprenticeshipsNI provision, including the staffing complement and lack of appropriate resources;
- the insufficient arrangements for the collation, analysis and use of reliable data to support self-evaluation and effective improvement planning; and
- the inadequate provision in customer service and health and social care.

Table of Performance Levels (Grades)

Overall performance level (grade)	Satisfactory (4)
Contributory performance levels (grades)	
Leadership and Management	Satisfactory (4)
Achievements and Standards	Satisfactory (4)
Quality of Provision for Learning	Satisfactory (4)
Area of Learning	
Children's Care Learning and Development	Satisfactory (4)
Construction	Good (3)
Customer Service	Inadequate (5)
Health and Social Care	Inadequate (5)
Management	Good (3)
Warehousing and Distribution	Satisfactory (4)
Essential Skills	Good (3)
Training for Success	Good (3)

PART TWO: OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 The quality of the leadership and management of DFPF Ltd is satisfactory. While the co-ordinators of most of the ApprenticeshipsNI programmes maintain good relationships with local employers, and the management of the Training for Success programme is effective, there are weaknesses, in the strategic management, of the ApprenticeshipsNI provision. As a consequence, there is considerable variation in the quality of provision across the range of ApprenticeshipsNI programmes: it is good in construction and management, but inadequate in health and social care and customer service.

5.2 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited's ApprenticeshipsNI provision has been marketed well across a range of small and medium sized employers, who provide good work placements. Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited for example, provides an extensive and flexible provision of ApprenticeshipsNI training in management to a wide range of companies in the logistics, construction and service sectors.

5.3 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited's management information system does not provide managers of the appropriate training programmes with the timely and accurate data they need to effectively plan and monitor the provision. It is a concern that at the time of the inspection, DFPF Ltd had difficulty presenting accurate and consistent information regarding the numbers of apprentices and trainees registered. As a result, the registration information was not aligned accurately with the numbers on class lists and those in work placements. The registration figures provided for customer service apprentices, for example, did not match those provided by Crystal Professional Development.

5.4 The training accommodation provided for the trainees and apprentices in the DFPF Ltd offices is mostly of a good standard and is well maintained. In addition, most of the employers' training rooms and facilities observed during the inspection are also of good quality.

5.5 Currently, insufficient resources are provided by DFPF Ltd, across most of the ApprenticeshipsNI provision, to ensure that the apprentices have appropriate opportunities to extend their occupational and work-based competences. Most of the ApprenticeshipsNI programmes are not resourced with sufficient numbers of specialist training staff to design, develop, monitor and provide good quality, cohesive training programmes. In the majority of the companies visited, for example, there are an insufficient number of work-based mentors to support their on-the-job training.

5.6 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited does not provide an effective virtual learning environment to support the apprentices and trainees. As a result, they are unable to access appropriate on-line learning resources to support and consolidate their training and learning.

5.7 There is insufficient planning, at both strategic and operational level, to integrate the various training and learning components of most of the ApprenticeshipsNI frameworks. The majority of the apprentices are not supported well in their learning or in the enhancement of their occupational and essential skills. Most employers report that their knowledge and understanding is not used to plan more effectively the training programmes of their own apprentices.

5.8 The planning for the ApprenticeshipsNI programme in children's care, learning and development by staff from The Link Works is good. In contrast, the planning for the same programme by DFPP Ltd has weaknesses, particularly in the integration and coherence of the different components of the programme-led apprenticeship, and the level 3 ApprenticeshipsNI programme.

5.9 The roles and responsibilities of staff within the organisation are clearly defined. Almost all of the staff across the DFPP Ltd offices are appropriately qualified and have relevant occupational experience. A small number of tutors do not hold appropriate qualifications above level 3; they should be supported to achieve the relevant qualifications as soon as possible. Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited appointed monitoring officers last year, who maintain regular contact with apprentices in the workplace.

5.10 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited has invested in the essential skills provision by recruiting additional full-time essential skills staff. At the time of the inspection, the essential skills co-ordinator had completed a comprehensive operational review of the essential skills provision. The review recognised appropriately the need for change within the various delivery models currently in operation, to ensure equitable and timely access for all apprentices and trainees to essential skills provision. It is noteworthy that DFPP Ltd has introduced essential skills clinics which provide additional support for the apprentices.

5.11 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited has inadequate arrangements to monitor the quality of the training provided by Crystal Professional Development. Although a service-level agreement is in place, this has failed to identify and address clear weaknesses in the quality of the provision, particularly in the recruitment of trainees, assessment planning, and work-based monitoring.

5.12 The quality assurance and quality improvement planning processes are not sufficiently well developed or robust enough to ensure that good quality training and learning is achieved and maintained across all of the ApprenticeshipsNI programmes. The self-evaluation process does not focus sufficiently on the standards achieved by the apprentices or the need for coherence in their training programmes; it does not highlight sufficiently, for example, the weaknesses in the staffing levels and the lack of investment in appropriate resources. There is a disparity between the performance levels (grades) allocated by DFPP Ltd through their self-evaluation process, to the occupational areas, and those awarded by the Inspectorate.

6. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

6.1 The occupational standards achieved by the trainees in the Skills for Work and Skills for Your Life programmes are good. The trainees have good opportunities to achieve additional awards and they gain confidence through involvement in external projects, including the Colin Youth Development project and the Drug Awareness project. In contrast, the standard of a significant minority of the trainees' spoken communication skills is poor and they are not challenged sufficiently to improve.

6.2 Most of the apprentices are well-motivated and enthusiastic about their occupational training. The majority of them are returning to formal training after a prolonged period out of education, and most have good spoken communication skills.

6.3 The occupational standards achieved by the apprentices in construction and management are good and in children's care, learning and development, and warehousing and distribution, they are satisfactory. It is inadequate, however, that in health and social care and customer service, which account for approximately 40% of DFPP Ltd's current ApprenticeshipsNI occupancy levels, the existing skills and standards of work of the

apprentices have not been enhanced sufficiently by the training provided. The majority of the apprentices have too few opportunities to enhance their knowledge, understanding or occupational competences, and the directed training sessions are used mostly to affirm the apprentices' prior knowledge or gather evidence for their occupational portfolios. As a result, the apprentices are not up-skilled to standards above the minimum required. In addition, almost all of the apprentices have few opportunities to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills through appropriate on-line research, use of specialist software or office applications.

6.4 In management, the apprentices develop enhanced skills such as team-working, effective communication and managing time and resources; the majority of the employers report that the apprentices' skills have improved since registering on the training programme.

6.5 In children's care, learning and development the majority of apprentices do not demonstrate a sufficiently sound underpinning knowledge of child development. Some of the course documentation used by the tutors is out-of-date and, in a minority of cases, is not relevant. The assessment methods used in the portfolios are limited and do not develop the apprentices' writing skills fully. The majority of the employers report that there is insufficient feedback on the apprentices' progress in their learning.

6.6 In health and social care the quality of the work contained in their occupational portfolios is too variable, and most of the apprentices are not encouraged sufficiently to reflect on or evaluate their own practice.

6.7 Most employers are not involved effectively in the training review process and have insufficient opportunity to comment on the progress the apprentices are making in the development of their occupational and essential skills.

6.8 The standards of the trainees' and apprentices' literacy and numeracy skills are variable, ranging from very good to poor. A small number of apprentices are working successfully at a level above that required by the framework.

6.9 The standard of the trainees' and apprentices' written work is variable and there is only limited evidence in their portfolios of effective marking for improvement. A significant minority of the apprentices have weaknesses in their spelling and grammar, which are not addressed adequately within their occupational portfolios.

6.10 For the period 2007/08 to 2009/10 the overall retention rate on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme is satisfactory at 74% and the success rate is excellent at 100%. Over the same period, the overall retention rate on the Training for Success programme is satisfactory at 73% and the success rate is excellent at 100%.

7. QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

7.1 The relationships between the tutors and the trainees and apprentices are good. The staff are committed to their welfare and personal development and most of them report that the support provided by the staff is good.

7.2 Although almost all of the apprentices found their induction to be useful, a majority of them do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of the structure of their training programme including, where appropriate, the requirement for essential skills.

7.3 The quality of the majority of the training sessions observed was good or better. Where the training was good it was characterised by effective planning and appropriate pace and challenge. In contrast, almost one-third of the sessions observed were satisfactory and a small number (6%) were inadequate. In the inadequate sessions, the tutors did not have a full enough understanding of the subject content and the pace of the work did not take sufficient account of the apprentices' differing abilities or learning styles.

7.4 In children's care, learning and development, insufficient use is made of guest speakers and occupational specialists to develop the apprentices' knowledge and understanding to the required level, particularly at level 3. In this occupational area, insufficient emphasis is placed on ensuring that apprentices develop a full understanding of contemporary educational practice in the early years' sector. Similarly, in the programme-led apprenticeship in construction, there is insufficient use of guest speakers or visits to construction sites to provide the apprentices with the essential first hand experiences of the construction industry.

7.5 Most of the training for the apprentices in customer service, management, and warehousing and distribution is undertaken within the workplace. Almost all of the employers report that they welcome the flexibility provided by this approach.

7.6 The arrangements to provide apprentices with good quality careers education, information, advice and guidance are underdeveloped and the majority of the apprentices do not understand sufficiently the career progression pathways available to them.

7.7 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited has developed effective links with a range of appropriate voluntary organisations, including Opportunity Youth, Include Youth, Disability Action, Cedar Foundation, Contact Youth, Barnardos and the Colin Youth Development project. The apprentices and trainees report that they receive very good support from these organisations, and from the staff in DFPF Ltd. and their training partners. Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited have supported their staff well with a range of appropriate courses regarding the personal support and welfare of the trainees and apprentices, including suicide awareness training; this is valued by the staff.

7.8 A significant proportion of the construction trainees and programme-led apprentices enter their training with a range of social and educational barriers to learning. A minority of them have previously been excluded from school or other training organisations. Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited and Bailie Connor provide these trainees and apprentices with good, sensitive support, providing strong encouragement for them to gain occupational competences and nationally recognised qualifications.

7.9 In the construction programme-led apprenticeship, the staff work hard, within the constraints of serious sectoral-wide economic decline, to provide the apprentices with work placements. Only a small number of apprentices have been able to gain a placement and this is an issue which requires attention.

7.10 A significant minority of the apprentices are highly motivated and enthusiastic about their essential skills training; this is particularly evident within the occupational area of management. However in health and social care, the lack of specialist staff has delayed the start of the essential skills training. The apprentices report that these delays are de-motivating and affecting their confidence levels.

7.11 Dairy Farm Training and People 1st Limited promotes effectively the safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults. The arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults comply satisfactorily with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007.

PART THREE: AREA OF LEARNING REPORTS

8. AREA OF LEARNING REPORTS

8.1 AREA OF LEARNING: CHILDREN'S CARE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

CONCLUSION

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by DFPP Ltd is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in leadership and management, achievements and standards, and the provision for learning which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over a 12-18 month period.

The main strengths are the:

- positive attitude and motivation of most of the apprentices;
- good quality of the planning for The Link Works' provision;
- good working relationships between the staff and the apprentices; and
- introduction of an effective attendance strategy.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- more effective planning of the ApprenticeshipsNI programme, including the programme-led apprenticeship;
- integration of occupational training and the essential skills; and
- overall quality of the directed training.

8.2 AREA OF LEARNING: CONSTRUCTION

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by DFPP Ltd is good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its training and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

The main strengths are the:

- good occupational standards developed by the trainees in bricklaying;
- good opportunities for the trainees on the programme-led apprenticeship to undertake relevant industry standard qualifications in addition to the full framework;

- supportive, enthusiastic and committed tutors who have good occupational competences; and
- good quality of the directed training sessions observed.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- limited opportunities for the apprentices to develop their written work;
- lack of site visits and guest speakers from industry; and
- inadequate provision of appropriate work placements.

8.3 AREA OF LEARNING: CUSTOMER SERVICE

CONCLUSION

In almost all of the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by DFPF Ltd is inadequate; the areas for improvement outweigh the strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified significant areas for improvement in leadership and management, achievements and standards, and the provision for learning which need to be addressed urgently if the organisation is to meet effectively the needs of all the learners. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over a 12-18 month period.

The main strengths are the:

- planning and organisation of work-based assessments; and
- motivation and commitment of most of the apprentices to acquire nationally accredited qualifications to meet their career goals and aspirations.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- inadequate range of good quality learning and assessment resources, to meet the needs of the apprentices more effectively;
- inadequate monitoring of the apprentices in the workplace, particularly in the setting and review of targets in their occupational and essential skills work; and
- inadequate provision of Crystal Professional Development, and the need for DFPF Ltd to develop more effective strategies to monitor the quality of the overall provision.

8.4 AREA OF LEARNING: ESSENTIAL SKILLS

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by DFPF Ltd is good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its training and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress on areas for improvement.

The main strengths are the:

- commitment of the essential skills co-ordinator and the essential skills tutors;
- comprehensive review of the essential skills provision, by the co-ordinator, as part of the quality improvement process;
- investment in new full-time members of essential skills staff; and
- effective engagement of essential skills learners in the workplace, particularly in the area of management.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- further development of the delivery of the essential skills provision, to develop good contextualised learning;
- strengthening of links between the occupational co-ordinators and the essential skills co-ordinator; and
- effective use of data to improve planning for the essential skills provision.

8.5 AREA OF LEARNING: HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

CONCLUSION

In almost all of the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by DFPF Ltd is inadequate; the areas for improvement outweigh strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified significant areas for improvement in leadership and management, achievements and standards, and the provision for learning which need to be addressed urgently if the organisation is to meet effectively the needs of all its learners. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over a 12-18 month period.

The main strengths are the:

- quality of the majority of the work placements; and
- enthusiasm and motivation of most of the apprentices.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- inadequate planning to develop a cohesive programme which ensures the development and enhancement of the apprentices' occupational and essential skills;
- inadequate number of appropriately qualified staff and lack of suitable resources including books, journals and online resources; and
- inadequate involvement of employers in the development of personal training plans and the monitoring and review of the apprentices' achievements and progress in the workplace.

8.6 AREA OF LEARNING: MANAGEMENT

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by DFPF Ltd is good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its training and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

The main strengths are the:

- extensive and flexible provision of work-based training that meets well the needs of small to medium-sized companies and their employees;
- effective leadership of the programme co-ordinator in developing the provision to meet the needs of most of the apprentices;
- good support provided by the tutors and the assessors to most of the apprentices;
- good progress made by most of the apprentices in their occupational units; and
- high levels of achievement of the ApprenticeshipsNI framework.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- development of a broader range of good quality learning and assessment resources to meet the needs of the apprentices more effectively;
- need to significantly enhance the role of the work-based mentors and the deployment of tutors to manage and support the extensive provision; and
- use of a wider range of assessment strategies to ensure that the apprentices take more responsibility for managing their portfolios.

8.7 AREA OF LEARNING: WAREHOUSING AND DISTRIBUTION

CONCLUSION

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by DFPF Ltd is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in leadership and management, achievements and standards, and the provision for learning which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over a 12-18 month period.

The main strengths are the:

- good oral communication skills demonstrated by almost all the apprentices;
- good accommodation provided by employers for directed training sessions; and
- good support by staff for the apprentices.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- insufficient opportunities for apprentices to develop their information communication technology skills, and the lack of on-line resources to support the apprentices in their learning;
- inadequate integration of the essential skills into the overall programme; and
- limited involvement of employers in the development of training plans and setting training targets for each apprentice.

8.8 AREA OF LEARNING: TRAINING FOR SUCCESS

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of training provided by DFPP Ltd is good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its training and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

The main strengths are the:

- effective leadership, and good support provided for the trainees;
- good standards of the trainees' work and the progress made by them in their occupational and essential skills work; and
- good opportunities provided for the trainees to attain additional qualifications beyond the requirements of their training frameworks.

The main areas for improvement are the:

- further development and implementation of strategies to improve the trainees' attendance, and to raise further their aspirations; and
- improved planning to ensure effective integration and contextualisation of the essential skills within the occupational programmes.

PART FOUR: CONCLUSION AND KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 In most of the areas inspected the quality of training provided by DFPP Ltd is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in leadership and management, achievements and standards, and the provision for learning which need to be addressed if the needs of all the apprentices and trainees are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over a 12-18 month period.

10. KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

- The design, organisation and resourcing by the senior management of the ApprenticeshipsNI programmes which raise the standards of the apprentices' work-based skills, and to improve the quality of the inadequate provision.
- Improved procedures for the collation, analysis and use of data to support improvement planning.

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