



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

**Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

ApprenticeshipsNI and Training for Success

in

Dairy Farm Training and People 1st

November 2011

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF THE DAIRY FARM AND PEOPLE 1st APPRENTICESHIPSNI AND TRAINING FOR SUCCESS PROVISION

The inspection report in February 2010 highlighted strengths including 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.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- 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.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the organisation has taken place:

- the high priority given by the senior management team to the restructuring of the organisation;
- the implementation of a new management information system to provide up-to-date, accurate reports for analysis;
- a review of the company's self-evaluation processes, including the arrangements for providing reliable data to support self-evaluation judgements and the quality improvement planning;
- the development of a new training facility in the Lisburn City Centre;
- the appointment of a quality assurance manager for training delivery, a careers guidance counsellor, additional tutors and additional administration staff;
- the scheduling of a staff development programme to support managers, tutors and administration staff in their continuous professional development;
- the restructuring of the customer service provision, including the termination of the partnership with Crystal Professional Development;
- the strong links which have been established with Caterpillar Training for the provision of health and social care;
- an investment in classroom and information and learning technology (ILT) resources to support the delivery of training; and
- the implementation of a virtual learning environment to support the trainees and apprentices.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out two interim follow-up visits in October 2010 and May 2011, and a follow-up inspection in November 2011.

The action plan produced by the organisation in response to the inspection findings was of a satisfactory quality and was adjusted appropriately in light of feedback given by the Inspectorate during the monitoring visits.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the improved quality of the health and social care, and children's care, learning and development provision, which is now very good;
- the improved access to timely and accurate management information to support the self-evaluation process and decision-making by senior managers;
- the very good self-evaluation process including the use of reliable data;
- the improved links and communication between tutors in the professional and technical areas, and those in the essential skills, which ensure a more connected approach to the training and learning;
- the very good quality of the training accommodation in the Lisburn facility;
- the improved access for the apprentices and trainees to an appropriate range of resources, including ILT; and
- the more effective use of the organisation's virtual learning environment to enhance the quality of the apprentices' and trainees' learning experiences.

The areas which require further development are:

- the further engagement of the employers in the review and monitoring of the occupational and essential skills training targets; and
- the further development of the Qualifications and Credit Framework technical qualifications within the apprenticeship frameworks.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of the training provided by Dairy Farm Training and People 1st is now very good. The organisation is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the trainees and apprentices and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL AREA FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION REPORTS

1. Children's Care, Learning and Development

The inspection report in February 2010 highlighted the good working relationships between the staff and the apprentices and trainees, the good pastoral provision for the apprentices and trainees, the introduction of an effective attendance strategy, and the positive attitude and motivation of most of the trainees.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

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

In the interval since the evaluation, the following action which affects the work of the organisation has taken place:

- the appointment of a child care coordinator to lead and manage the children's care, learning and development provision;
- the purchase of good quality resources for each of the training centres;
- the introduction of a programme of guest speakers from local schools and day-care centres;
- the continuous professional development of the professional and technical tutors to gain a teaching qualification;
- the increased opportunities for the integration of the occupational training and the essential skills;
- the development of stronger links with the employers, including the introduction of a workplace mentor for each trainee and apprentice; and
- the development of an employers' handbook as a reference guide for the trainees and apprentices.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two interim follow-up visits in October 2010 and May 2011, and a follow-up inspection in November 2011.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the development of clear roles and responsibilities for both the professional and technical and essential skills tutors;
- the development of a cohesive and consistent approach to the planning and delivery of the programme;

- the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the training and the progress of the trainees and apprentices;
- the good quality practical resources which are used well by the tutors to enhance training and learning;
- the improved links and communication with other professional and technical areas, and the area of essential skills to enhance the training and learning;
- the very good approaches used to encourage the Programme-Led apprentices to take more responsibility for their own learning and employability skills;
- the very good links between the organisation and the employers who provide high quality placements for the trainees; and
- the very good use of specialist guest speakers to motivate the trainees and apprentices and develop their understanding of the childcare sector.

The area which requires further improvement is:

- further development of the qualifications in children's care, learning and development which underpin the apprenticeship framework.

CONCLUSION

In children's care, learning and development, the quality of the training provided by Dairy Farm Training and People 1st is now very good. The organisation is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the trainees and apprentices and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

2. Customer Services

The inspection report in February 2010 highlighted the good planning and organisation of work-based assessments and the motivation and commitment of most of the apprentices to acquire nationally accredited qualifications to meet their career goals and aspirations.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the inadequate range of good quality learning and assessment resources to meet the needs of the apprentices more effectively;
- the inadequate monitoring of the apprentices in the workplace, particularly in the setting and review of targets in their occupational and essential skills; and
- the inadequate provision of Crystal Professional Development, and the need for Dairy Farm Training and People 1st to develop more effective strategies to monitor the quality of the overall provision.

In the interval since the evaluation, the following action which affects the work of the organisation has taken place:

- the termination of the partnership with Crystal Professional Development, resulting in a significant decrease in the number of apprentices registered in customer services;
- a wide-ranging review of the customer service provision, which has resulted in the improved standardisation of the programme across the organisation;
- a significant investment in good quality training and learning resources to improve the apprentices' knowledge and understanding;
- the appointment of senior staff, including a teaching and learning quality manager and a quality assurance vocational qualifications manager;
- the introduction of staff training for vocational and essential skills mentors and coaches aimed at developing an appropriate range of learning and assessment strategies; and
- the introduction of a reporting system for the regular monitoring and review of the apprentices' progress.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two interim follow-up visits in October 2010 and May 2011, and a follow-up visit in November 2011.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the very good processes for quality assurance and continuous improvement planning, which are underpinned by an effective use of reliable data;
- the supportive, enthusiastic and committed tutors and support staff;
- the good links between the organisation and the employers, who provide good opportunities for the apprentices to enhance their skills in the workplace;

- the improved access to an appropriate range of good quality learning and assessment resources that meet more effectively the needs of the apprentices; and
- the good development of the customer services section of the virtual learning environment, which provides good opportunities for the apprentices to learn independently.

The areas which require further improvement are:

- the development of more demanding and realistic learning activities to further stimulate and challenge the apprentices in their learning;
- the further setting, sharing and review of short-term training targets with the employers, against which apprentices' progress is regularly monitored; and
- the further marketing and promotion of the customer services provision.

CONCLUSION

In customer services, the quality of training provided by Dairy Farm Training and People 1st is now good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its educational provision. The follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the areas for improvement still to be addressed but equally the Dairy Farm Training and People 1st has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

3. Health and Social Care

The inspection report in February 2010 highlighted strengths in the provision, including the good quality of the majority of the work placements and the enthusiasm and motivation of most of the apprentices.

The inspection also identified important areas for improvement to be addressed in the organisation's provision. These included:

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

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the organisation has taken place:

- the implementation of a partnership between Dairy Farm Training and People 1st and Caterpillar Training, a specialist provider of health and social care training;
- a systematic review of the systems and processes to quality assure and improve the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the apprenticeship programme;
- the implementation of a staff development programme to support tutors in their continuous professional development; and
- a significant investment in new materials and information and learning technology (ILT) resources to support the delivery of training, and the development of a virtual learning environment to support the apprentices in their learning.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two interim follow-up visits in October 2010 and May 2011, and a follow-up inspection in November 2011.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- more robust pre-entry advice and guidance procedures, which have resulted in the apprentices and employers having a clear view of the demands and requirements of the apprenticeship programme;
- the improved planning of directed training and assessment to support the apprentices in their learning;
- the development of closer working relationships between the essential skills and professional and technical tutors to promote the integration and contextualisation of the essential skills within the apprenticeship programme;

- the improved standards of the apprentices' professional and technical knowledge, including a clear understanding of the principles which underpin good practice in care;
- the improved quality assurance processes and procedures, including more rigorous and robust monitoring of directed and workplace training, and a stronger emphasis on feedback from apprentices and employers on the quality of the provision;
- increased opportunities for managers, professional and technical and essential skills tutors to engage in appropriate training to support their continuous professional development;
- the improved access for the apprentices to an appropriate range of resources;
- the improved engagement of the employers and apprentices in the setting of short-term training and progress targets;
- the use of relevant guest speakers to support and extend training and learning;
- the improved retention rates in health and social care, from unsatisfactory at 48% during the 2009/2010 period, to very good at 82% in the 2010/2011 period for level 2 apprentices, and from satisfactory at 61% to outstanding at 94% for level 3 apprentices over the same period; and
- the opportunity for a minority of the apprentices to achieve the essential skills at a level above that required in their apprenticeship framework.

The area which requires further action is:

- further development of the qualifications in health and social care which underpin the current apprenticeship framework.

CONCLUSION

In health and social care, the quality of training provided by Dairy Farm Training and People 1st is now very good. The organisation is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the apprentices and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

4. Warehousing and Distribution

The inspection report in February 2010 highlighted the good oral communication skills demonstrated by almost all the apprentices, the good accommodation provided by employers for directed training sessions, and the good support by staff for the apprentices.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- 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.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the organisation has taken place:

- more regular meetings between the Dairy Farm Training and People 1st managers and the employers to plan and design the delivery of the apprenticeship training programme;
- the inclusion of an additional information and communication technology qualification into the apprenticeship programme;
- the good links with the Skills for Logistics Sector Skills Council, to promote career opportunities in warehousing and distribution to the apprentices;
- the development of a well-designed virtual learning environment site, for the apprentices to promote their independent learning; and
- the integration of the essential skills and the professional and technical training.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the good planning and design of the warehousing and distribution apprenticeship programme, which meets well the needs of most of the apprentices and the employers;
- the addition of an information and communication technology qualification into the training programme, beyond the apprenticeship framework requirements;
- the induction of the apprentices into the use of the virtual learning environment by the Dairy Farm Training and People 1st information technology systems administrator; and
- the innovative approach to the careers education, information, advice and guidance provided to the apprentices.

The areas which require further action include:

- further improvements in the quality of the directed training; and
- further involvement of employers in the development of the apprentices' training plans.

CONCLUSION

In warehousing and distribution, the quality of training provided by Dairy Farm Training and People 1st is now good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its educational provision. The follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the areas for improvement still to be addressed but equally Dairy Farm Training and People 1st has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

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