



*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 Second Follow-up Inspection

Following an Inspection of the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI provision in Swann Training Services

December 2014

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF SWANN TRAINING SERVICES

Swann Training Services was originally inspected in November 2011. The first follow-up inspection of the organisation took place in January 2013. This inspection identified improvements in the provision, including the good use of industry visits and guest speakers, the significant improvement in the quality of the provision in hospitality and catering, and improved retention rates on the Skills for Your Life and Programme-Led Apprenticeship strands of Training for Success.

The first follow up inspection also identified the need for further improvement in the following key areas:

- the need to strengthen further the leadership and management of the provision, particularly the capacity of staff at all levels to undertake more effectively the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- the further development of the use of management information to identify and address underperformance, particularly the inadequate retention rates on the Skills for Work strand of Training for Success;
- the urgent need for management to review the imminent changes in the staffing complement to sustain appropriately the essential skills provision;
- more engagement with employers in the design of individual training plans and in the setting, monitoring and recording of training targets; and
- the need for management to monitor the current curriculum offer to ensure that it meets fully the needs of local industry and the career aspirations of the young people in the area.

In the interval since the first follow-up inspection, the following actions which affect the work of organisation have taken place:

- a significant reduction (50%) in the numbers of trainees registered on the Training for Success programme, with only 62 registered at the time of the second follow-up inspection;
- all of the management team have attained a recognised management qualification;
- the realignment of management roles, including the redeployment of the support and development team co-ordinator, who is now responsible for the management and delivery of the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI provision;
- members of staff and management have visited other supplier organisations to identify best practice in training programmes;
- the use of peer observation and micro teaching workshops to identify and develop best practice in teaching, training and learning;
- the recent formation of a Students' Council to enhance the trainee voice in the delivery of the provision; and

- a continued turnover in staff which has resulted in the redeployment of an essential skills co-ordinator and the appointment of a new tutor in retail.

The improvement plan produced by the organisation in response to the follow-up inspection findings was of a good quality. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an interim follow-up visit in September 2013.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the first follow-up inspection:

- the development of a cohesive support and development team, who through their strong links with parents and carers, external agencies and employers provide effective care, guidance and support to the trainees;
- the quality of the personal training plans that now capture more effectively the prior qualifications of the trainees; and
- the higher percentage (67%) of the trainees who have work placements in order to further develop their occupational and employability skills across the Training for Success provision.

The areas which require further development are:

- the need to ensure that the planned actions to improve further the quality and effectiveness of management information, to track and monitor the progress of trainees and apprentices, are implemented;
- to strengthen the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes, particularly in the identification of strategies to improve outcomes on the Training for Success programme that have not improved sufficiently since the first follow-up inspection;
- to develop more collaborative curriculum planning strategies between the support and development team, and the vocational and essential skills tutors;
- to improve the quality of teaching, training and learning, in around one- half of the observed directed training sessions;
- to ensure that employers are more closely involved in setting appropriate targets for the trainees in their professional and technical units; and
- to extend the provision under Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI to ensure it meets fully the needs of the local economy and the career aspirations of the young people in the area.

Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education and training provided by Swann Training Services remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh the areas for improvement. The organisation has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement remain to be addressed if the needs of all of the trainees and apprentices are to be met effectively. The ETI will monitor and report on the progress of Swann Training Services in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

Professional and Technical Area: Essential Skills

The first follow-up inspection in January 2013 identified improvements in the provision, including the higher priority given by management to the essential skills, more effective communication between the essential skills tutors, the professional and technical tutors and the designated support tutors to inform the monitoring of attendance, and the appropriate introduction of the essential skill of information and communication technology (ICT).

The first follow-up inspection also identified the need for further improvement in the following key areas:

- the urgent need for management to review the imminent changes in the staffing complement to ensure the effective co-ordination and delivery of the provision;
- the underdevelopment of the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes, particularly in relation to the improvements needed in the inadequate numbers of trainees and apprentices achieving the full frameworks;
- to implement an appropriate range of training and learning strategies to engage, motivate, challenge and support the trainees and apprentices, particularly those whose attendance is erratic, and those with low prior achievement profiles on entry; and
- further strengthening of the focus in the essential skills classes on raising self-esteem, aspirations, confidence and achievement of those trainees who have furthest to travel in these areas.

In the interval since the first follow-up inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the organisation have taken place:

- the review by management of the staffing complement of the essential skills provision, leading to the appointment of another new co-ordinator and the redeployment of two staff as essential skills tutors;
- the formation of an essential skills department to co-ordinate the delivery of the provision;
- the investment in appropriate continuing professional development for the essential skills co-ordinator and the essential skills staff to improve the quality and impact of the teaching, training and learning;
- the implementation of a more extensive programme of tutor observations including peer observations, micro-teaching and feedback opportunities; and
- the more regular channels of communication, both formal and informal, to inform and improve practice.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the first follow-up inspection:

- the more effective, structured and consistent approach to the co-ordination of the essential skills;

- the improved levels of engagement of the essential skills staff in appropriate continuing professional development to improve teaching, training and learning practices, and the good levels of commitment by them to the tutor observation process; and
- the improving understanding and development of better standards of planning and delivery within the essential skills team.

The areas which require further improvement are the:

- further support for the embedding of the role of the new co-ordinator;
- further development of the work of the essential skills team to ensure effective planning for the provision which links appropriately to the trainees' and apprentices' prior learning and professional and technical work; and
- further development of the self-evaluation process, including better use of the outcomes of the tutor observation processes to plan for ongoing improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and to continue to raise standards.

Conclusion

In the essential skills, the quality of education and training provided by Swann Training Services remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh the areas for improvement. The organisation has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement remain to be addressed if the needs of all of the trainees and apprentices are to be met effectively. The ETI will monitor and report on the progress of Swann Training Services in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

Professional and Technical Area: Retail

The first follow-up inspection in January 2013 identified improvements in the provision, including the increased use of visits to local retail outlets to enhance the quality of the trainees' learning experiences, the development of an appropriate curriculum for the Skills for Your Life trainees and the good quality of the feedback on progress and achievements provided for the trainees through timely reviews.

The first follow-up inspection also identified the need for further improvement in the following key areas:

- the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes, including a more rigorous review of the effectiveness of the actions taken to bring about continuous improvement;
- the range of training resources available to support the trainees' development of practical occupational skills, and to enhance their learning and assessment through appropriate online resources;
- the better use of the trainees' personal training plans to reflect more accurately their prior educational experiences and achievements and barriers to learning; and
- the retention and achievement rates of the Training for Success programme, which were just satisfactory for the period 2011/12.

In the interval since the first follow-up inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the organisation have taken place:

- the further development of the use of guest speakers from industry to enhance the quality of the trainees' learning experiences;
- the appointment of a new retail tutor;
- a significant decrease in the level of enrolments on the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes;
- the investment in additional training resources, including information and learning technology (ILT) resources to support the development of the trainees' practical occupational skills; and
- the implementation of more extensive tutor observations and peer assessments.

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

- the sustained increase in the use of visits to appropriate local retail outlets and events, which are used to good effect to develop the occupational skills of the trainees;
- the introduction of relevant curriculum projects to support the development of trainees' retail knowledge and their employability skills;
- the better use of the trainees' personal training plans to reflect prior educational experiences and achievements and barriers to learning; and

- the increased work placement rate, which is currently 82%.

The areas which require further development are:

- the need to undertake more effectively the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes in retail, to support the necessary further improvements in the quality of provision, particularly the quality of teaching, training and learning;
- the retention rates of the Training for Success programmes, particularly the Skills for Work level 1 provision, which are just satisfactory for the period 2013/14;
- the quality of the work placements for a minority of the trainees, which do not provide them a sufficiently broad range of training experiences in retail; and
- increased engagement with employers to better inform them about the programme.

Conclusion

In retail, the quality of training provided by Swann Training Services remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The organisation has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement remain to be addressed if the needs of all trainees and apprentices are to be met effectively. The ETI will monitor and report on the progress of Swann Training Services in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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