



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

## Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI Provision in Loughview Training Services Limited

Report of an Inspection  
in October 2011

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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 Loughview Training Services Ltd.

### **Performance Levels**

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

<b>Performance Level</b>
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## **PART ONE: SUMMARY**

### **1. CONTEXT**

1.1 Loughview Training Services Limited (Loughview Training Services) is a training provider located on the Antrim Road in Glengormley. It was established in 1982 and is registered as a charitable organisation with liability limited by guarantee. The management committee is made up of six voluntary members along with the manager and assistant manager of Loughview Training Services. Some of the members have served since the original founding of the organisation, and include representatives from training, business and the local community. Loughview Training Services has two full-time and 15 part-time staff. Responsibility for the operational management of the organisation resides with the manager and assistant manager.

1.2 Loughview Training Services is contracted by the Department for Employment and Learning (the Department) to supply training under both the Training for Success and the ApprenticeshipsNI programmes at level 2 in business and administration, retail and warehousing, within the Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey contract areas.

1.3 At the time of the inspection, the provision was small, with just three apprentices and 13 trainees registered with Loughview Training Services. The entry qualifications of the apprentices vary significantly, from no formal qualifications to General Certificate of Education (GCE) passes at Advanced level. Of the 13 trainees, three of them had achieved at least two General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) passes at grades A\*-C and seven had achieved a range of GCSE passes at grades D-G. Three of the trainees had no qualifications on entry to their programmes. In terms of prior achievements in literacy and numeracy, one of the trainees had achieved a grade C or better in English at GCSE level and two of them had achieved grade C or better in mathematics; none of the trainees had achieved both GCSE English and mathematics at grade C or better.

1.4 Loughview Training Services report that a significant minority of the trainees recruited to the programmes have personal, motivational or behavioural challenges. A minority of the trainees had attended alternative education provision prior to entering the programme.

### **2. PROVISION**

2.1 At the time of the inspection, of the 13 trainees registered with Loughview Training Services, 8 of them were on the Skills for Work strand, 4 were Programme-Led apprentices and 1 was on the Skills for Your Life strand. Seven of the trainees were registered in warehousing, 3 in retail and 2 in business and administration. The organisation reports that there are a large number of training providers in the local area offering training in these professional and technical areas and, as a result, they face challenges in sustaining recruitment levels. The ApprenticeshipsNI provision has declined significantly from a peak of 42 apprentices in 2009/10, mostly in retail. Of the 3 apprentices on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme, 1 apprentice was undertaking training in each of the three professional areas of business and administration, retail and warehousing. During the period 2008 to 2011, Loughview Training Services also recruited trainees to the Training for Success programme in engineering, which was delivered through a sub-contracting arrangement by Larne Skills Development Limited (Larne Skills); at the time of the inspection, no trainees were registered on this strand.

2.2 Of the current trainees, 11 (85%) are undertaking an essential skills qualification in literacy, numeracy and/or information and communication technology (ICT). On the ApprenticeshipsNI programme, only one apprentice is undertaking essential skills training in literacy and numeracy.

2.3 Overall leadership and contract management is the responsibility of the manager, who is supported well by an assistant manager and the training co-ordinator. An additional twelve part-time staff members are employed by Loughview Training Services to support the delivery of the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes. Of these, six are professional and technical tutors, four are essential skills tutors, and the remaining two are administrative staff. In addition to her management and essential skills co-ordination roles, the assistant manager also delivers the induction and employability skills programmes. The organisation has strong links with Include Youth and Opportunity Youth to deliver programmes to develop the trainees' motivation, confidence and personal development skills.

### **3. THE INSPECTION**

3.1 In October 2011, the Education and Training Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) carried out an inspection of the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes in Loughview Training Services. A team of three inspectors observed a total of eight directed training sessions and interviewed seven employers. Two apprentices and five trainees were interviewed and observed in the workplace. Extended discussions were held with the manager, assistant manager, professional and technical tutors, assessors and essential skills tutors. In addition, the inspectors examined samples of the trainees' and apprentices' work, tutors' schemes of work and the trainees' and apprentices' personal training plans. The organisation's self-evaluation report and other relevant documentation were also scrutinised.

3.2 The arrangements for the inspection of care, guidance and support and the safeguarding of vulnerable groups included the opportunity for the apprentices and trainees to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Sixteen questionnaires were issued to the trainees and apprentices, all of which were returned to the Inspectorate; nine of them contained additional written comments. In addition, the inspection team also met with two small groups of trainees across the professional and technical areas. The questionnaire responses show that the apprentices' and trainees' experiences in Loughview Training Services are good. In particular, they appreciate the good levels of pastoral care and the high level of one-to-one support they receive from the staff in the classes. They recognise and value the opportunity they have to progress in their learning through the work placement provision. They also commented positively about their activities and experiences in the Include Youth sessions. The Inspectorate has reported the outcomes of the questionnaires and the discussions held with the trainees to the manager and assistant manager.

### **4. MAIN FINDINGS**

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

4.2 The main strengths are the:

- very good pastoral care and support provided for the apprentices and trainees in their professional and technical, essential skills and employability directed training sessions;
- effective range of diagnostic assessments which are used well to inform the planning of the apprentices' and trainees' learning and training programmes;

- very good quality of most of the work placements and the work-based training for the apprentices and the trainees;
- very good quality of the personal training plans and the effective use of reviews to help apprentices and trainees to achieve their training goals; and
- very good rate of retention on the ApprenticeshipsNI programmes and the very good to outstanding achievement rates on the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes.

4.3 The main areas for improvement are the:

- strategic management of the ApprenticeshipsNI provision to ensure that it meets more effectively the skills and employment requirements of the local economy and is informed adequately by the more effective use of data;
- satisfactory retention rates for the Training for Success provision; and
- inadequate quality of the specialist accommodation.

**Table of Performance Levels**

<b>Overall performance Level</b>	Good
<b>Contributory performance levels</b>	
Leadership and Management	Satisfactory
Quality of Provision for Learning	Good
Achievements and Standards	Good
<b>Area of Learning performance levels</b>	
Business and Administration, Retail and Warehousing	Good
Essential Skills	Good

## **PART TWO: OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION**

### **5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

5.1 The quality of the leadership and management of the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI provision in Loughview Training Services is satisfactory. While there are strengths in the operational planning of the provision, and in the deployment and development of the staff, there are weaknesses in the use of data to aid quality improvement and in the strategic approaches to ensure that recruitment onto the ApprenticeshipsNI programme reflects more accurately the levels of employment in the local economy.

5.2 The manager is supported well by the assistant manager and the training co-ordinator. The roles and responsibilities of the staff are clearly defined. The tutors have appropriate qualifications and industrial experience to support the apprentices and trainees in their training and work. A comprehensive staff development plan is in operation that effectively identifies and addresses the individual training needs of each tutor in order to develop and sustain their occupational and teaching skills.

5.3 The organisation has demonstrated a commitment to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. There are systematic processes in place for obtaining regular feedback from apprentices and trainees, staff and employers. The outcomes of these evaluations are used effectively to inform planning for improvement. However, the analysis of data by the management team to inform the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes lacks rigour. The data is not stored or analysed sufficiently to identify specific weaknesses in the quality of the provision, notably the reasons for the decline in the enrolments to the ApprenticeshipsNI programme. In the essential skills, the opportunities for trainees to progress and achieve beyond the level of their framework are not adequately monitored, and as a result the organisation is unable to evaluate effectively the progress of the trainees and apprentices to ensure that they are achieving to their full potential.

5.4 Loughview Training Services has developed good links with local industry, which are used to good effect to provide the trainees with appropriate work placements. As a result, the quality of the work-based training for most of the apprentices and trainees is very good. These links, however, are not developed fully to meet the training needs of the existing workforce in the local area. The significant decline in the provision for the ApprenticeshipsNI is a concern given the high levels of employment across the business and administration, retail and warehousing sectors in the local economy. There are shortfalls in the strategic management of the ApprenticeshipsNI programme, particularly in making effective use of local labour market intelligence to promote recruitment onto the programmes.

5.5 The range of professional and technical areas provided by Loughview Training Services to the Training for Success trainees is overly narrow. Links with other local training organisations to enable the trainees to undertake professional and technical programmes outside the range of programmes currently available in Loughview Training Services are significantly underdeveloped. A sub-contracting arrangement with Larne Skills, for example, to provide training in engineering has lapsed and no alternative provider has been sourced. Good arrangements, however, have been established with a number of training organisations to facilitate progression to an ApprenticeshipsNI level 3 programme, for those apprentices with the relevant supervisory work roles. Links with local post-primary schools to market and promote the work of the organisation and to enhance enrolments are underdeveloped and Loughview Training Services has no clear strategy for engagement with these schools.

5.6 The training co-ordinator manages effectively the provision across the three professional and technical areas. The planning for assessment is meticulous and the internal verification arrangements are implemented systematically and to good effect.

5.7 While the quality of the leadership and management of the essential skills provision across the Training for Success strands is mostly good, the quality assurance arrangements for the planning of the delivery of the essential skills provision on the small ApprenticeshipsNI programme is underdeveloped and requires review.

5.8 The quality of the most of the accommodation is inadequate and in need of refurbishment. The computers in the main training room have been recently upgraded but the layout of the room does not promote group learning approaches. The range of ICT resources to support teaching and learning are very limited. The communal social area is too small to accommodate those trainees currently enrolled. Access to facilities for disabled trainees is inadequate and limited to a small, poorly resourced training room on the ground floor of the premises.

## **6. QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING**

6.1 The quality of the provision for learning is good. A very good, comprehensive induction programme is provided for the Training for Success trainees. It is written in easy to understand language which is effective in ensuring that trainees have a good understanding of the key elements of their professional and technical units, and the aims and objectives of the progress reviews. The induction programme appropriately encourages the trainees to self-reflect on behaviours, attitudes and abilities and assists them in the identification of their individual support needs. While the induction materials for the ApprenticeshipsNI programme are satisfactory, the apprentices would benefit from more information about the requirements, range and scope of the essential skills qualifications part of their framework.

6.2 The initial assessment processes are very good. There is an effective range of diagnostic assessments which are used well to inform the planning for training and learning. The quality of the personal training plans is very good, particularly for trainees on the Training for Success programme. They reflect a detailed and systematic review of the trainees' progress, show effectively the individual training and development needs of the trainees and they are well informed by the outcomes of the diagnostic testing.

6.3 The quality of directed training observed was variable, ranging from very good to inadequate; 62% of the sessions observed were good or very good, 25% were satisfactory and the remaining 13% were inadequate. In the best practice, there were good questioning and active training and learning strategies used to develop the trainees' understanding of the world of work through reflection on their experiences in the workplace. There was good integration of literacy in the employability activities. The satisfactory and inadequate directed training sessions were characterised by weaknesses in planning and in the range of learning approaches, and as a result, the trainees were not challenged sufficiently in their learning. Overall, more opportunities are needed for the tutors to share best practice in training and learning approaches.

6.4 In the essential skills, the quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory. The tutors provide appropriate one-to-one support in all of the essential skills sessions and most of the trainees benefit from the individualised help. In ICT, while effective opportunities are provided for independent learning through the short, well-structured tasks, insufficient use is made of group learning strategies to ensure that all the trainees are engaged well enough in the training and learning in each session. In numeracy, there are too few opportunities for active learning and a minority of the trainees struggle to find the required level of



competence. The planning for the integration of the essential skills within the employability training is mostly good and it develops and embeds the transferability of these skills. An appropriate range of resources is provided to support the delivery of the essential skills on the Training for Success programme. However, the timetabled essential skills sessions are too long and as a result it is difficult for tutors to maintain adequate levels of engagement of a minority of trainees.

6.5 The arrangements for monitoring apprentices and trainees in their professional and technical units are applied thoroughly. The tutors monitor systematically their progress and set meaningful targets for improvement, which are recorded in their personal training plans.

6.6 The quality of training for the trainees on the Training for Success programme is mostly good; they have good opportunities to develop their underpinning knowledge in their professional and technical areas as well as opportunities to develop wider employability skills. The vocational training co-ordinator has developed a good range of bespoke training resources to support the trainees in their learning. However, there are too few opportunities for trainees to develop and apply practical occupational skills during directed training and they would benefit from more site visits to industry, along with access to appropriate visiting speakers.

6.7 All of the trainees are in work placements that meet the requirements for their professional and technical units. The quality of the work-based training for most of the apprentices and trainees is very good. Most of the work-based supervisors provide additional training opportunities for the apprentices and trainees which enhances their occupational and employability skills.

6.8 The quality of the arrangements for the care, guidance and support for the apprentices and trainees is very good. Loughview Training Services promotes an ethos of mutual respect and tolerance which was evident in the directed training sessions observed. The apprentices and the trainees receive very good pastoral support from their tutors and workplace supervisors.

6.9 Loughview Training Services has established effective links with an appropriate range of external agencies, including Opportunity Youth, Include Youth and Disability Action to support the trainees' individual needs and enhance their personal development. Many of the trainees have complex barriers to learning on entry to the programme but it is clear that they make good progress in developing their personal and social skills through the support provided.

6.10 While the arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable groups comply satisfactorily with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007, the management team need to update the safeguarding policies. This update should specify more comprehensively the ways in which the needs of the learners are met when in work placement. The managers should also present a report on all safeguarding activity, at least annually, as an agenda item to the management committee, and take further action to share, more formally, their policy on safeguarding with the management committee, all employers, and relevant parents.

6.11 The quality of careers education, information and guidance is good. Loughview Training Services have established good links with employers to provide the trainees with appropriate opportunities for work-related learning. While the provision of work placements is good, more needs to be done to widen the trainees' knowledge and understanding of the range of career pathways open to them, beyond the narrow range of occupational programmes available within Loughview Training Services. The use of industrial visits and

guest speakers from industry is underdeveloped, particularly for the new trainees who are not yet in work placement. An effective employability programme is in place for all trainees which assists them in developing their work-readiness and job search skills. The programme encourages the trainees to reflect on their learning and the skills they are acquiring and applying in the work placement.

## **7. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS**

7.1 Achievements and standards are good. The apprentices and most of the trainees are well-motivated and enjoy their training programme. In retail for example, those trainees on work placements undertake competently a range of work roles, including stock rotation, merchandising and customer service. In warehousing, they are able to effectively process stock deliveries and orders. In business administration, they undertake relevant work roles including reception work and use of appropriate business and administration software applications.

7.2 Over the past four years, the average rate of retention on the ApprenticeshipsNI programmes is very good at 88% and the rate of achievement is outstanding at 100%. Over the same period, the average retention rates are satisfactory across all three strands of the Training for Success provision, at 54%, 50% and 65% on the Skills for Your Life, Skills for Work and Programme-Led Apprenticeships respectively. Average achievement rates are very good at 89% on the Skills for Work strand, and outstanding on the Skills for Your Life and Programme-Led Apprenticeships strands, at 100%. Average progression rates to further training or employment are satisfactory at 57% on the Skills for Your Life strand, good on the Programme-Led Apprenticeship strand at 73% and outstanding on the Skills for Work strand at 100%.

7.3 In the essential skills, the achievements and standards of the trainees are mostly good. The trainees' portfolios of evidence are well-structured and organised, and most contain a variety of appropriate evidence. The achievement rates in literacy, numeracy and ICT for trainees on the Training for Success programme are outstanding at 100%. There is, however, too little evidence of independent, sustained writing in the portfolios of evidence for those trainees working towards level 2 in literacy. The speaking and listening skills of a few of the trainees are underdeveloped.

7.4 A majority of the trainees demonstrate a growing determination to make the most of their learning opportunities, and they report that they recognise and appreciate the work undertaken by Loughview Training Services in improving their life choices, employability skills and social skills. Almost all of the trainees are able to show improved levels of confidence, motivation, enthusiasm and work-readiness. Their personal development is complemented effectively by the good quality of appropriate work placements. The high quality of pastoral care across the organisation underpins effectively the trainees' personal development.

## **PART THREE: CONCLUSION AND KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT**

### **8. CONCLUSION**

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

### **9. KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT**

9.1 Loughview Training Services needs to revise its annual quality improvement plan to take account of the following key priorities and to further improve the quality of the training provision:

- to strengthen the strategic management of the ApprenticeshipsNI provision to ensure that it meets the skills and employment requirements of the local economy;
- improve the overall quality of the teaching, training and learning; and
- to improve the quality of the specialist accommodation.

**APPENDIX****Table 1: Training for Success Outcomes: Averages over the Last Four Years**

<b>Training for Success Strand</b>	<b>Numbers Registered Who Completed 4 Weeks Training</b>	<b>Retention Rate %</b>	<b>Achievement Rate %</b>	<b>Progression Rate for Those Who Achieved Full Award %</b>
Skills for Your Life/Personal Development	13	54	100	57
Skills for Work	20	50	89	100
Programme-Led Apprenticeships	20	65	100	73

**Note:** 1. All data was provided and verified by Loughview Training Services.  
 2. Achievement rates are for the full-framework.

**Table 2: ApprenticeshipsNI Outcomes at Level 2: Averages Over the Last Four Years**

<b>Apprenticeships NI Strand</b>	<b>Numbers Registered Who Completed 4 Weeks Training</b>	<b>Retention Rate %</b>	<b>Achievement Rate %</b>	<b>Progression Rate for Those Who Achieved Full Award %</b>
Level 2	85	88	100	100

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