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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of an Inspection

Jobskills Provision North Down Training

Inspected: October 2007

CONTENTS

Section	Page
PART ONE	
SUMMARY	
1. CONTEXT	1
2. PROVISION	1
3. THE INSPECTION	2
4. MAIN FINDINGS	2
PART TWO	
OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION	
5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	4
6. STANDARDS AND OUTCOMES	5
7. QUALITY OF TRAINING AND LEARNING	6
PART THREE	
KEY PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT	
APPENDIX	

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

Grading System

The Education and Training Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) is piloting a new 6-point grading scale to replace the original 4-point scale as set out below. Where grades are recorded in this report, the grade is given on both the old and the revised scales.

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

PART ONE

SUMMARY

1. CONTEXT

1.1 North Down Training Limited (NDT) is a charitable organisation, limited by guarantee. It was established in 1982 as North Down Community Workshop Limited, to provide youth training for people who were unemployed or entering the labour market for the first time, and became known as NDT in 1998.

1.2 North Down Training Limited provides training for the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) through the Jobskills Access, Traineeship and Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programmes. The organisation has been awarded a contract through the Training for Success programmes for the Ards, North Down and Castlereagh Borough Council areas.

1.3 North Down Training Limited is managed by a team comprising a manager and two senior tutors who have clearly defined areas of responsibility. A voluntary Board of Directors is in place, who act in an advisory and supportive capacity. There are four full-time, and 4 part-time tutors, employed who are responsible for the provision of pre-entry guidance and support, the management of directed training in the professional and technical area, key and essential skills, and work-based learning. The pastoral support and monitoring of the trainees' overall progress in directed training and in the workplace is also an integral part of the role of the tutors.

1.4 Traditionally NDT has targeted and worked with young people with a range of additional educational needs, including trainees with learning disabilities and those with personal, social and emotional difficulties. Most of the trainees are referred directly to NDT by the DEL's Careers Service or from Social Services. Of the last cohort of Jobskills trainees recruited, 56% had a learning disability and a further 16% were designated as having personal, social or emotional barriers to learning. The trainees require intensive personal support and guidance from their tutors.

1.5 The trainees on the Jobskills programmes complete the framework appropriate to their level of training and professional and technical area, including a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), key or essential skills and a technical certificate as required. At the time of the inspection, only three of the total 83 trainees held at least four General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualifications at grades A* to C on entry to their programme. Almost all of the Jobskills trainees recruited leave post-primary education with no qualifications.

2. PROVISION

2.1 The total number of trainees enrolled on Jobskills and Training for Success programmes (89) has increased by approximately one half (56%) since the last inspection in 2004, when 58 trainees were on the programmes.

2.2 Under the Jobskills programme NDT offers a range of NVQs at levels 1 to 3 in the programme areas of administration and retail and distribution, and levels 1 and 2 in hospitality and catering and horticulture. The organisation also sub-contracts training at level 1 in hairdressing and motor vehicle from a local college of further education. During the week of the inspection, there were 63 registered Jobskills trainees, 35 (56%) on the Access A1 programme, 10 (16%) on the Access A3 programme, 17 (27%) on the Traineeship programme and one on the MA programme. Of the 45 trainees on the Access programme nine are in administration, one is in hairdressing, three are in horticulture, nine are in hospitality and catering and 23 (51%) are in retail and distribution. Of the 17 trainees on the Traineeship programme, six are in administration, three are in hospitality and catering, one is in horticulture and seven are in retail and distribution. There is one MA trainee in retail.

2.3 In September 2007, NDT recruited 28 trainees onto the Training for Success programmes. During the week of the inspection, 22 (78%) were registered on the Job Ready Skills for Work strand, three (11%) on the Job Ready Pre-Apprenticeship strand and three (11%) Level 2 Apprentices.

3. THE INSPECTION

3.1 The inspection focused on the leadership and management within NDT across the Jobskills and Training for Success programmes, the essential skills provision, and the provision for trainee support.

3.2 During the inspection a team of two inspectors from the Inspectorate and an associate assessor spent two days in the organisation. Discussions were held with the manager, the two senior tutors, employers and trainees. A total of 20 trainees were interviewed during their directed training sessions and a further seven trainees were visited in their workplaces. The inspectors sampled essential skills portfolios, self evaluation materials, statistical information and other relevant documentation.

3.3 A representative sample of trainees completed a pastoral care questionnaire during the inspection, which provided them with the opportunity to comment on the quality of their learning experiences and the pastoral care arrangements in NDT. The Manager also completed a questionnaire relating to the provision of pastoral care within the organisation.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

4.1 In the areas inspected, the organisation has strengths in important areas of its educational and pastoral provision with a small number of minor areas for improvement.

No follow up inspection is required.

4.2 The main strengths are the:

- good leadership and management which are underpinned by a distinctive ethos of strong pastoral support;
- commitment of management to continuous improvement;

- positive development of the confidence, self-esteem and appropriate attitudes to work of the trainees;
- good quality of the learner support to underpin the training provided by the professional and technical and essential skills tutors;
- good quality communication and team work across the organisation;
- good links with employers and an appropriate range of external support agencies;
- good quality of the workplace training;
- excellent success and progression rates on the Access programme at 86% and 89% respectively, for those who complete their programme; and
- excellent success rate at 100% on the Traineeship programme, for those trainees who complete their programme.

4.3 The main areas for improvement are the:

- planning to meet the individual needs of all trainees in the transition from Jobskills programmes to Training for Success;
- planning for the integration, development and assessment of essential skills in directed and workplace training; and
- development of individual training plans to include specific, short term targets for professional and technical, essential skills and workplace training.

Table of Grades

Overall Grade	3
Contributory grades:	
Leadership and Management	2
Standards and Outcomes	3
Quality of Training and Learning	3

Key for Grades

- Grade 1 - Outstanding characterised by excellence
- Grade 2 - Consistently good
- Grade 3 - Many good features but some areas for improvement which the organisation has the capacity to address
- Grade 4 - Overall sound/satisfactory but with some areas for improvement which need to be addressed
- Grade 5 - Significant weaknesses which outweigh strengths
- Grade 6 - Poor

PART TWO

OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 The quality of the management and leadership in NDT is very good. The manager provides sound strategic leadership and management of NVQ programmes to meet the needs of the trainees. Day to day management of the organisation is shared between two senior tutors who have clear management responsibilities for training provision and essential skills.

5.2 There are good communication channels throughout the organisation and relationships at all levels are very good. The staff team meet informally each day and discuss a range of issues including the welfare of the trainees.

5.3 The training programmes are well managed and co-ordinated. Management observe training and learning sessions on a regular basis. Formal feedback is given to tutors through a structured appraisal system.

5.4 Within NDT, there is a strong commitment to continuous professional development and appropriate opportunities exist for staff to undertake development programmes, including events hosted by the Learning and Skills Development Agency and awarding bodies. Three members of staff have recently undertaken training in counselling skills.

5.5 The management of accommodation and resources is generally good. However, overall timetabling needs to be reviewed to facilitate the requirements of trainees on both the Jobskills and Training for Success programmes to ensure that all trainees have access to regular directed training sessions.

5.6 North Down Training has established good links with a number of external agencies including, DEL's Careers Service, Social Services, and a range of support groups and specialist services. These external organisations provide appropriate support for trainees as required.

5.7 The leadership and management across the organisation are committed to the pastoral care of all the trainees and they work hard to develop and maintain a strong ethos of care and support for all trainees but particularly for their more vulnerable learners. The organisation has policies and procedures in place in relation to the protection of young people and vulnerable adults, which includes a robust code of conduct and guidance to staff on their contact with trainees.

5.8 The overall quality of the self-evaluation report and the development plan is excellent. The findings of the self-evaluation report are a good match to the findings of the inspection. The organisation has put in place an appropriate and effective development plan as a result of their self evaluation processes.

6. STANDARDS AND OUTCOMES

6.1 Almost all of the trainees enter their training programme with significant barriers to learning. The majority of learners have learning disabilities. A significant minority of learners have low levels of self-esteem, and confidence and poor records of prior achievement. Most of the trainees have not achieved in school and have low entry qualifications.

6.2 Across the professional and technical programmes inspected, all trainees are given strong pastoral support and, as a result most are highly motivated and enthusiastic about their training programme. While most trainees achieve good standards in attendance and timekeeping the organisation works hard to improve the standards of the minority of trainees with poor attendance and timekeeping.

6.3 Almost all of the trainees are placed in good quality work placements and most achieve good standards in the workplace, commensurate with their stage and level of training. They are well supported by their employers and tutors in the workplace and almost all can carry out a narrow range of tasks to the standards required by their employers.

6.4 The standards of the literacy and numeracy skills for most trainees range from satisfactory to poor, and are mostly poor. Most of the trainees demonstrate weaknesses in spelling and grammar in their written work and a more consistent approach to identification and correction of errors by tutors is required across the range of professional and technical programmes. A majority of trainees would benefit from opportunities to reinforce their essential skills development in the workplace, to consolidate the work done in directed training.

6.5 Almost all of the trainees have satisfactory standards of oral communication and are able to discuss their work and to identify appropriate links between the work they complete in their directed training and the work carried out in the workplace.

6.6 Almost all of the trainees on the Access programme engage well in their training and are able to work effectively as members of teams in the workplace.

6.7 Over the last three years, of the 83 Access trainees who started the programme, 21 completed the programme and 18 gained the full award. Taking into account the 35 trainees still on their programme, this represents a poor retention rate of 51% and a good success rate of 86% for those who complete their programme. Of those trainees who left early, 19% went into employment and 13% left for health related reasons. A further 66% withdrew due to significant behavioural or motivational difficulties including alcohol and drug abuse and youth offending.

6.8 Over the last three years, of the 50 level two trainees who started the programme, 23 successfully completed their training. Taking into account the 14 trainees still on the programme, this represents a satisfactory retention rate of 74% and an excellent success rate of 100%.

6.9 Over the last three years, of the two trainees who started the level 3 programme, one completed successfully the training and achieved the full award. Taking into account the trainee still on the programme, this represents an excellent retention rate of 100% and an excellent success rate of 100%.

6.10 Over the last three years, progression to further education, training or relevant employment for those who successfully complete their training programmes is excellent at 89% for trainees completing the Access programme, and 100% for the trainee completing the MA programme. Progression for those trainees successfully completing their Traineeship is modest at 70%.

7. QUALITY OF TRAINING AND LEARNING

7.1 The analysis of the trainee questionnaires completed prior to the inspection indicates that almost all of the trainees enjoy being at NDT. They highlight in particular, the support they receive from all of their tutors.

7.2 North Down Training provides a caring and highly supportive environment for all the trainees, many of whom have significant personal, emotional and social difficulties. Across the organisation, very good relationships exist between tutors and trainees and between trainees and their employers.

7.3 Induction is generally well organised and almost all trainees develop an understanding of the administrative requirements, as well as the content and assessment requirements of their programme.

7.4 All trainees have the opportunity to avail of additional short enrichment programmes in basic food hygiene, health and safety and employment rights and responsibilities.

7.5 A minority of trainees registered on the Jobskills programme have not had sufficient access to directed training during the recruitment phase for Training for Success, to support them in their learning for their professional and technical programme and essential skills.

7.6 The essential skills sessions are almost always well planned. However there is a need to develop more effective integration of essential skills with the occupational area and in the workplace.

7.7 The quality of the work placements is good for almost all trainees. The staff have good relationships with the employers and have detailed knowledge of the learning and developmental opportunities available for trainees. However, employers need to be made more fully aware of all the component parts of the trainees' targeted qualifications, including the essential skills and need to be more fully involved in the setting of short term training targets.

7.8 The trainees are monitored regularly. The tutors work very hard in the interest of supporting the development of all learners. However, there is a need to develop further the quality of individual training plans to ensure that trainees receive regular positive feedback on achievements across all parts of their training programme.

7.9 The tutors in NDT are appropriately qualified and experienced and are all committed to the personal and social development of the trainees. Continuous professional development is supported fully by management who provide ongoing opportunities for staff to gain more skills and qualifications.

7.10 The quality of the accommodation for almost all of the directed training is generally good.

PART THREE

KEY PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

North Down Training needs to revise its annual development plan to take account of the following key issues, which have been identified during the course of the inspection:

- planning to meet the individual needs of all trainees in the transition from Jobskills programmes to Training for Success;
- planning for the integration, development and assessment of essential skills in professional and technical and workplace training; and
- development of individual training plans to include specific, short term targets for professional and technical, essential skills and workplace training.

Jobskills Access Table

Year	Completed 4 weeks	Retention Rate	Success Rate	Progressed to Traineeship	Progressed to relevant employment
2004/2005	23	48%	80%	75%	0%
2005/2006	34	53%	100%	71%	29%
2006/2007	52	52%	75%	0%	75%
Total/ Average	83	51%	86%	61%	28%

2004/2005 – 1 trainee still on programme

2005/2006 – 11 trainees still on programme

2006/2007 – 23 trainees still on programme

Jobskills Traineeship Table

Year	Completed 4 weeks	Retention Rate	Success Rate	Progressed to Modern Apprenticeship	Progressed to relevant employment
2004/2005	13	77%	100%		
2005/2006	19	74%	100%		
2006/2007	18	72%	100%		
Total/Average	50	74%	100%	1%	69%

2005/2006 – 2 trainees still on programme

2006/2007 – 12 trainees still on programme

Jobskills Modern Apprenticeship Table

Year	Completed 4 weeks	Retention Rate	Success Rate	Progressed to relevant employment
2004/2005	0	-	-	-
2005/2006	1	100%	100%	100%
2006/2007	1*	-	-	-
Total/Average	2	100%	100%	100%

2006/2007 – 1 trainee still on programme

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