



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Training for Success and
ApprenticeshipsNI Provision in
Springvale Learning Ltd

Report of an Inspection
in November 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning, on Leadership and management, and on the overall quality of professional and technical areas:

Current performance level
Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the organisation:

Overall effectiveness outcome	Previous performance level
The organisation has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor the organisation's progress in addressing any area(s) for improvement through its annual scrutiny inspection.	Outstanding and very good
The organisation demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor the organisation's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement through its annual scrutiny inspection.	Good
The organisation needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement, which includes the need to produce an improvement plan, which will be the basis for a formal follow-up inspection.	Satisfactory
The organisation needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, which includes the need to produce an improvement plan, which will be the basis for a formal follow-up inspection.	Inadequate and unsatisfactory

Key Performance Indicators and Definitions	
Retention	The percentage of enrolments at week 4 of year one who completed their occupational training framework, measured over the full duration of their course.
Achievement	The percentage of trainees/apprentices who completed their occupational training framework and who fully achieved their framework qualification.
Progression	The percentage of successful completers who progressed to further/higher education/training or employment.

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1. Inspection method and evidence base

Eight Education and Training (ETI) inspectors and one associate assessor observed 146 trainees and apprentices in 38 directed training sessions; visited 51 trainees and apprentices in their workplace; and interviewed 37 in focus group meetings. Discussions were held with the chief executive, the head of development, the quality and compliance manager, the ApprenticeshipsNI programme manager, the Training for Success programme manager, and most of the tutors. Samples of the trainees' and apprentices' work, their personal training plans, tutors' schemes of work and lesson plans were examined; in addition the organisation's self-evaluation report and other relevant documentation were scrutinised.

As part of the evaluation of Springvale Learning's arrangements for care, guidance and support and for safeguarding young people, the trainees and apprentices completed an online questionnaire prior to the inspection. Of the 544 questionnaires issued, 136 (25%) were returned, 20 included written comments. The returns show that almost all of the trainees and apprentices who responded reported a positive experience in the organisation, felt safe, secure and well supported and knew who to speak to if they had any concerns.

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the achievements and standards;
- the effectiveness of the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- the quality of Provision for training and learning; and
- the quality of the Leadership and management of the organisation.

3. Context

Springvale Learning was established in 1992 to provide training and employment opportunities for unemployed people. The organisation is a registered charity, and is governed by a voluntary board of directors. It is led by the chief executive along with a senior leadership team, comprising of the head of development and the head of finance.

Springvale Learning is contracted by the Department for the Economy (Department) to provide the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programmes¹.

A significant minority (38%) of the trainees have a recognised disability and/or have additional learning support needs. A further 40% have a range of other significant barriers to learning. Only a minority of the trainees (2%) enter their programme with four or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C or equivalent, including English and mathematics.

A majority (60%) of the second year trainees were in a suitable work-experience placement at the time of the inspection.

¹ Programme registration data provided by the organisation at the time of the inspection is included in the Appendix of this report.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement
Achievements and standards	Requires significant improvement
Provision for learning	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Requires significant improvement

Overall quality of the programmes inspected		
Programme	Proportion of registrations	Performance level
Training for Success	32%	Requires significant improvement
ApprenticeshipsNI	68%	Requires significant improvement

Overall quality of the professional and technical areas inspected ² and the provision for the essential skills	
Construction	Requires significant improvement
Engineering	Requires significant improvement
Health and social care	Requires urgent improvement
Hospitality and catering	Important areas for improvement
Information technology (IT)	Important areas for improvement
Retail and customer service	Good
Essential skills	Requires significant improvement

Strengths

- The good levels of engagement, motivation and enthusiasm of most of the trainees and apprentices and the good or better standards of occupational skills demonstrated by most apprentices in the workplace.
- The well-established and effective links and partnerships with employers across most of the professional and technical areas, and the high proportion of trainees in a work-experience placement in construction and engineering.
- The good or better quality of the learning, teaching and training sessions observed in most of the professional and technical areas and in the majority of the essential skills sessions observed.

Areas for improvement

- Address urgently the leadership and management arrangements at all levels to improve the curriculum planning, co-ordination and quality of the provision across most of the professional and technical areas and the essential skills.
- Improve the quality of both the pre-entry advice and guidance, and the careers education information and guidance provision to ensure trainees and apprentices are placed on the most appropriate programme, and that they are supported more effectively to progress to higher levels of education, training and employment.

² A representative sample of professional and technical areas, agreed with the organisation, was selected for inspection.

- Develop and embed further the self-evaluation and quality improvement processes to include the more effective use of data to identify the key areas for development and to set measurable targets for improvement.
- Address the important or significant areas for improvement in the professional and technical areas of construction, engineering, health and social care, hospitality and catering, information technology and the essential skills.
- Address urgently the overall average retention (46%) and progression rates (41%) on the Training for Success programme which require significant improvement, and improve the overall retention rate (60%) on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme which is an important area for improvement.

5. Achievements and standards

- Achievement and standards in Springvale Learning require significant improvement. Across the professional and technical areas, the trainees and apprentices do not develop sufficiently high standards of work; they range from good to requiring urgent improvement.
- It is a particular concern in health and social care that the development of the apprentices' occupational skills, knowledge and achievements are significantly delayed. There is very limited evidence of timely training, assessment and feedback, and, consequently, this provision requires urgent improvement to ensure the apprentices progress at an appropriate pace in their learning, development and achievement.
- In construction, the trainees' standards of work require significant improvement; they are not developing their occupational skills and knowledge at an appropriate pace and to the required standard. Similarly, a significant minority of the trainees in engineering are not progressing well enough. They do not achieve at the most appropriate level, building upon their prior achievement; irrespective of entry qualifications, all of the trainees inappropriately target a level one technical certificate with limited enhancements.
- In the professional and technical areas of engineering, hospitality and catering, information technology, retail and customer care, the apprentices demonstrate good or better standards of work in the workplace. They are developing well their practical occupational and transferable skills in a timely manner and are able to work independently and in teams. For example, in engineering the apprentices are able to carry out chassis repairs to haulage trailers and in catering they create complex dishes using fish and game.
- Most of the trainees and apprentices develop an appropriate range of effective talking and listening skills across the duration of their programme to support and strengthen their employability. They achieve the essential skills in literacy and numeracy at the level of their framework but too few of the trainees achieve their essential skills at level 2. Progression rates in essential skills are low and progression to Level 2 is not significant. There is a need to review the overall planning and policy for the essential skills and ensure that the planning provides adequate progression opportunities, within and across the essential skills levels, and beyond, to GCSE English and mathematics, where appropriate.

- Progress in learning and training for the trainees and apprentices across the organisation is too variable and for most trainees it is too slow. In engineering, health and social care and plumbing the trainees and apprentices have experienced significant gaps in the provision of directed training, resulting in a high risk of a number of them leaving their programme early. The actions taken to address the interruptions in the provision need to be systematically reviewed to ensure that the pace of progress in learning and assessment is improved quickly and that the trainees and apprentices successfully achieve their programme within an appropriate and realistic timeframe.
- For the apprentices who remain on their programme in IT, retail and customer service, most are progressing well in their learning and training and achieving in a timely manner. There are good levels of engagement, motivation and enthusiasm amongst most of the trainees and apprentices.
- Over the last three years, the average retention rate (46%) on the Training for Success programme is too low and requires significant improvement; the progression rates to higher level training programmes, apprenticeship training and relevant employment require urgent improvement.
- Over the same period, the average retention rate on the ApprenticeshipsNI programme at 60% is an important area for improvement. Across most of the apprenticeship programmes too few of the apprentices progress successfully from level 2 to 3 apprenticeships.

6. Provision for learning

- The quality of the provision for learning is variable and overall it has important areas for improvement. In the professional and technical areas of hospitality and catering, IT and retail and customer care it is good. In construction and engineering and in the essential skills there are important areas for improvement in the quality of the provision; health and social care requires urgent improvement.
- In hospitality and catering, IT, retail and customer care the curriculum provision is broad, relevant and mostly matched well to the job roles of the apprentices. In the professional and technical areas of construction, engineering and health and social care the curriculum provision is too narrow and does not adequately meet the needs of the learners; in engineering, for example, there is an inconsistent match between the apprentices' work-based training and their directed training.
- There are important areas for improvement in the quality of pre-entry guidance, and in careers, education, information and guidance. Too many of the trainees and apprentices are registered on a programme at levels below their existing qualifications and are not progressing sufficiently in their learning. The initial assessment is not robust enough to identify and to support the apprentices with barriers to their learning, who learn exclusively in the work place. Appropriate action needs to be implemented to ensure that: trainees and apprentices are placed on the most appropriate level of their chosen course; the pace of delivery is matched to their individual needs; and they are supported more effectively to progress to higher levels of education, training and employment. In addition, there is a need for more robust and consistent planning for learning for all of the trainees and the apprentices in order to address more effectively their often diverse range of needs and barriers to learning.

- There are good working relationships and high levels of mutual respect between staff and the trainees and apprentices. The organisation provides a good range of extra-curricular opportunities for the trainees who are not in a work-experience placement which include sports, creative and expressive, and personal and social development activities. Through these, the learners have the opportunity to develop further their personal, social and emotional skills and confidence.
- The transition programme introduced for trainees with special educational needs is well conceived; it supports the integration and inclusion of young people with special educational needs into the mainstream Training for Success programme. The trainees' needs are met effectively by a dedicated team who liaise with parents, special schools and outside agencies.
- The quality of the learning, teaching and training sessions observed in most of the professional and technical areas and in the essential skills sessions is mostly good or better. There is a good range of learning strategies used across the provision, including effective use of technology enhanced learning to motivate the trainees and the apprentices. The quality of the learning resources is mostly good and there are examples of high quality online resources in retail and customer care. The peripatetic tutors are supported well to deliver in the workplace, for example, they are provided with good quality resources including laptops, mobile internet and online learning material; this enables flexibility in training and teaching and effectively supports learning. In the less effective practice the planning needs to be better matched to the individual needs of the trainees and the apprentices, and the pace of assessment is too slow.
- While the quality of training for apprentices in the workplace is mostly good, there are opportunities missed for further collaboration, including, for example, the need to introduce a programme of master classes for the apprentices to support and enhance peer learning experiences. The majority (60%) of the trainees are in a relevant work-experience placement which is a particular strength in construction and engineering where most of the trainees are placed. For example, there are good opportunities in construction for those furthest from the work place to engage in supported and relevant work-experience placements with a local charity organisation.
- Overall, across the provision, the tracking and monitoring of the trainees' and apprentices' progress is ineffective and there is a need for a more cohesive approach to be developed. The quality of the personal training plans across the professional and technical areas is variable; there is a particular need for more comprehensive reviews to ensure that each trainee and apprentice is consistently provided with the most appropriate learning pathway that is matched well to their ability.

7. Leadership and management

- The quality of the leadership and management requires significant improvement. An urgent review of the roles and responsibilities within the management structure is necessary to ensure staff have manageable workloads and can effect improvement in the planning and the quality of the provision. As a consequence of significant change in the leadership and management team, it is timely and appropriate that there are plans in place to review the strategic vision of the organisation.

- Curriculum co-ordination across the provision needs to be reviewed and improved to provide a more consistent approach to curriculum development and planning. Currently there is a lack of effective curricular leadership to bring about the required improvement in the different areas of provision. The planning for the implementation of the revised essential skills provision is weak, and requires urgent review. The delivery model for the essential skills also needs to be reviewed and revised to support the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, in a timely and systematic manner across the full duration of the trainees' and apprentices' professional and technical programmes.
- While there are regular case conference meetings with the programme managers to monitor the progress of the trainees and apprentices, they need to be more focused on effecting improvement in the quality of the provision. The meetings need to be better informed and underpinned by the use of robust and accurate data in order to identify more clearly the areas for improvement and the effectiveness of the intervention strategies employed.
- The quality of the accommodation and learning environment is mostly of a high standard. The organisation has invested significantly in providing very good quality information and learning technology equipment in the classrooms and in social areas to support the delivery of learning, teaching and training.
- The organisation has developed appropriate links and partnerships with a range of external agencies and there is good employer engagement across most of the professional and technical areas. In engineering and health and social care, however, the communication and engagement with employers is ineffective; there are infrequent monitoring and assessment visits to the work place and consequently there are insufficient opportunities for the employers to become fully involved in the learning and training of the apprentices.
- The self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes have important areas for improvement. Whilst the organisation has processes in place they are not effective enough in identifying weaknesses or informing sustained improvement. These need now to be developed and embedded further to include the more effective use of data to identify the key areas for improvement and to set measurable targets for improvement. The judgements of the overall provision are overly positive, and do not reflect well enough outcomes for the learners.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, Springvale Learning has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding young people and adults at risk. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department, but further development is required to ensure accurate records of safeguarding training are maintained and that all training is specific to the safeguarding roles in the organisation are in line with best practice.

8. Overall effectiveness

Springvale Learning needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, which includes the need to produce an improvement plan, which will be the basis for a formal follow-up inspection within 12 months.

APPENDIX

Table 1 - Current registrations by programme

Programme	Numbers of registrations	% of total registrations
ApprenticeshipsNI	369	68%
Training for Success (2013) Skills for Your Life	11	2%
Training for Success (2013) Skills for Work (strand 1)	153	28%
Training for Success (2013) Skills for Work (strand 2)	11	2%

Table 2 - Current registrations by professional and technical area

Professional and technical area	Number of trainees	% of total TFS registrations
Catering	6	4%
Computer Technology	25	14%
Digital Media	18	10%
Electrical Engineering	31	18%
General Construction	23	13%
Hairdressing	40	23%
Joinery	11	6%
Plumbing	21	12%
Totals	175	
Professional and technical area	Number of apprentices	% of total AppNI registrations
Business Administration	12	3%
Childcare	6	2%
Customer Service	32	8%
Electrical Engineering & Fabrication	42	11%
Hospitality & Catering	128	35%
Health & Social Care	22	6%
ICT & Telecommunications	73	20%
Joinery	2	1%
Management	12	3%
Plumbing	12	3%
Retail	22	6%
Team Leading	6	2%
Totals	369	

Table 3 - Qualifications of current trainees/apprentices on entry to their programme

Programme	Training for Success (%)	ApprenticeshipsNI (%)
(%) of learners with 4 or more GCSEs or equivalent at Grades A*-C including English and mathematics	2%	38%
(%) of learners with 4 or more GCSEs or equivalent at Grades A*-C	5%	40%
(%) of learners with GCSE English or equivalent at Grades A*-C	19%	50%
(%) of learners with GCSE mathematics or equivalent at Grades A*-C	10%	47%
(%) of learners with 4 or more GCSEs or equivalent at Grades A*-G	21%	43%
(%) of learners with no prior level 1 or level 2 qualifications	78%	31%

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