

# The Training & Recruitment Partnership Limited

Independent learning provider

**Inspection dates**

1–4 November 2016

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 |             | <b>Good</b>                 |
|--|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b> | Apprenticeships <b>Good</b> |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b> | Traineeships <b>Good</b>    |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b> |                             |
| Outcomes for learners                        | <b>Good</b> |                             |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection |             | Requires improvement        |

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- A very high proportion of apprentices and trainees achieve their qualifications at all levels and in all subjects, including management, business, health and social care, and fenestration.
- A high proportion of trainees move on to employment, apprenticeships or further training as a result of their traineeship programme.
- Leaders have improved significantly their management of most subcontractors to achieve rapid improvement in the quality of provision.
- Most teaching, learning and assessment enables learners to make good progress.
- The large majority of apprentices move on to further training, higher level qualifications, promotions or greater responsibility within existing job roles.
- Leaders and managers have very high expectations of their staff and learners which have led to significant improvements to the progress most learners make and the proportion who achieve their qualifications.
- A very large proportion of learners who take functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics pass them at their first attempt.
- Apprentices develop confidence, value their learning and make effective contributions to the businesses for which they work.
- A small minority of apprentices do not make sufficient progress from their starting points as a result of the training they receive.
- Managers' observations of teaching and learning do not focus sufficiently on the impact of the teacher or assessors' actions on the learners.
- Learners do not yet have a fully developed understanding of British values, the diversity of the communities in which they work and internet safety, particularly that linked to radicalisation and extremism.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- The Training and Recruitment Partnership (TRP) is an independent learning provider based in Mitcham, Surrey, offering apprenticeships and traineeships nationally. The vast majority of the provision is based in London and on the London/Essex/Kent borders. Just under one tenth of the apprenticeship provision is based in Leeds. About four fifths of the apprenticeship provision is subcontracted and all of the traineeship provision is subcontracted.
- The apprenticeship provision covers health and social care, engineering, construction, retail, education, business and preparation for life and work. Subcontractors have their own facilities for off-the-job training and for functional skills teaching.

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by providing staff training and sharing the provider's own good practice in its direct delivery to ensure that teachers:
  - understand what is expected of them when correcting trainees' and apprentices' written work and that they provide helpful guidance so that trainees and apprentices improve their use of English
  - make consistently effective use of their knowledge of trainees' and apprentices' starting points, career goals and aspirations to support them to achieve these
  - provide consistently high-quality feedback to trainees and apprentices so that they understand what they have done well and how to make further improvements.
- Train staff so that they have the confidence to promote all aspects of diversity, British values and internet safety with learners.
- Ensure that actions arising from managers' observations of teaching and learning are specific about the improvements required and that managers ensure that these are completed within challenging timescales to enable those teachers who need to improve to do so rapidly.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The managing director has successfully established a culture of high expectations. Leaders and managers have been effective in implementing changes to key aspects of the company's operation to increase the pace of improvements. They have eradicated most of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. For example, the proportion of apprentices who complete on time has improved significantly and is now high.
- Leaders' comprehensive and rigorous performance management of subcontractors has improved the quality of the provision that they deliver. Managers monitor all aspects of subcontractors' teaching and training frequently and thoroughly. In most cases, when they identify underperformance, managers act swiftly and effectively to improve weak practice. Consequently, the quality of training that apprentices and trainees receive at subcontractors is now good. When the pace of improvement in a subcontractor is not fast enough, leaders and managers mentor senior staff at subcontractors effectively to increase their capacity to bring about improvements, for example by the successful introduction of management information systems.
- Leaders and managers use data well to identify performance issues in their directly delivered provision and in subcontractors to bring about improvements. Reliable and detailed data about apprentices' progress has enabled managers to make changes to the delivery of provision so that more apprentices make good progress and achieve their qualifications. For example, apprentices now study for their functional skills qualifications at the beginning of their apprenticeships, contributing to their good progress towards completing their framework.
- Managers have revised and implemented successfully arrangements to monitor and improve the quality of teaching, training, learning and assessment. Managers, including those at subcontractors, evaluate the quality of teaching and training sessions frequently. In most cases, they identify accurately assessors' and tutors' effective practices and the improvements that they need to make. Managers audit effectively the quality of all apprentices' progress reviews.
- In a minority of cases, observers of teaching and training sessions focus too much on compliance with processes and pay little attention to apprentices' or trainees' learning and skill development. In their evaluation of progress reviews, when managers identify weak practice in subcontractors, a minority do not make changes fast enough to ensure that apprentices and trainees benefit from good or better practice.
- Managers' self-assessment of their provision is thorough, comprehensive and accurate. Their quality improvement plan is detailed and ambitious; for example, to close the gap between the proportions of apprentices who achieve within their planned time and those who take considerably longer. Leaders and managers monitor and review improvement targets frequently to ensure that the pace of improvements does not slow down. The managing director and managers intervene quickly when actions are at risk of slow implementation, both with directly delivered provision and that which is subcontracted.
- Staff, including those at subcontractors, have a clear knowledge of what is expected from them. This has ensured that they focus well on apprentices' and trainees' progress and skill development. The managing director has fostered an open and supportive

management style that has led to staff feeling valued and motivated. As a result, they feel confident to identify issues, investigate options and propose solutions. For example, assessors in direct delivery and staff in subcontractors have collaborated in revising apprentices' progress review forms to make them more effective; they have developed new forms that are at the early stages of being used by all assessors.

- The managing director and managers respond well to the training requirements of local, regional and national employers. The company has effective working relationships with local chambers of commerce and local authorities. Managers focus well on providing training to improve employers' performance, for example, to increase employers' customer satisfaction.
- Leaders and managers have not developed a clear policy on the development of apprentices' and trainees' English and mathematics skills. As a result, assessors and tutors, including the staff at subcontractors, are not certain about the company's policy about the correction of spelling and grammatical errors in apprentices' and trainees' written work.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that assessors and tutors in directly delivered and subcontracted provision extend well apprentices' and trainees' understanding of fair treatment of individuals. Assessors and tutors extend competently apprentices' and trainees' understanding about individuals' rights to different beliefs. However, leaders and managers have not been successful enough in increasing the training staff's confidence to enhance apprentices' and trainees' understanding of the need to respect individuals in relation to sexual orientation. Leaders and managers recognise that they need to do more to make certain that apprentices and trainees are better prepared for life in modern Britain.

### **The governance of the provider**

- The company does not have a governing body. Leaders, including the managing director who has extensive experience of governance in schools, are suitably self-critical about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, of their own performance and that of their staff.
- Leaders have taken a series of measures to ensure that they have an external view of the provision; for example, they have commissioned and received an external evaluation of the provision.
- The managing director has reviewed the governance arrangements and the first formal meeting of the governing body that includes an external person with relevant skills is imminent.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The company meets its statutory requirements. Managers have developed comprehensive policies and procedures to keep learners safe. Their procedures for checking staff prior to recruitment in relation to safeguarding concerns are effective. Managers maintain an up-to-date record of safeguarding checks for all staff, including staff at subcontractors.
- All staff, including those at subcontractors, have received detailed training that has improved their knowledge and skills in identifying signs of radicalisation and extremism.

They know the risks which learners can encounter and discuss these well with them.

- Assessors and tutors in directly delivered provision and in subcontractors have not yet ensured that apprentices and trainees have a thorough understanding of the risks when using social media and working online.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers plan and teach the majority of learning sessions well. They use a variety of resources to enthuse and motivate learners, enabling them to make good progress. Learners benefit from teachers' effective use of questioning to develop their thinking skills and clarify understanding.
- Apprentices are confident and enjoy their learning. They value the opportunity to develop and improve their knowledge and practical skills. This enables them to be more effective in their work roles, gaining promotion, moving on to further training at a higher level or gaining greater responsibilities at work. For example, apprentices originally only participating in meetings are now chairing meetings; others set targets as part of staff appraisal and are involved in the recruitment and selection of staff.
- Apprentices benefit from assessors who are highly qualified and have extensive skills and experience. They use these to contextualise learning, link theory to work skills and the apprentices' job roles. For example, younger fenestration apprentices gain valuable practical skills, learning how to work safely, understanding the theory and how it links to practice effectively. They know the reasons for damp-proof courses under window sills and the reasons for distances between sheets of glass on double-glazed units.
- In a small minority of cases, the most able learners find the work too easy, slowing their progress. A few apprentices experience uninspiring and dull teaching and learning sessions within subcontracted provision.
- Managers and assessors monitor apprentices' progress very closely, with frequent reviews and clear target setting to ensure that they remain motivated and maintain good rates of progress.
- Staff support learners well, both in and out of the classroom, to help them achieve their full potential. They benefit from, and appreciate, extra help for their learning from tutors, especially for English and mathematics. However, managers do not yet evaluate the impact of the additional learning support that learners receive.
- Learners produce a good standard of work and are proud of their achievements and progress. They are very positive about the skills and knowledge that they are developing and know how these will help them achieve their career aims. Employers value apprentices' newly acquired skills and the benefits that these bring to their businesses.
- Trainees are well motivated, make good progress and are able to apply their learning and the skills they are developing during the taught programme to their work experience placements. They evaluate their own skills well in relation to their readiness for work and set actions to support areas for development, such as punctuality, reliability and time management.
- Level 5 management apprentices benefit from a series of sophisticated discussions within

a safe environment to explore and test their own beliefs and behaviours relating to equality and diversity. They then apply this to their company's policy on equality and diversity and validate the policy's approach and impact to a good standard.

- In their written feedback on apprentices, work tutors too often do not correct spelling errors or provide sufficient detail to explain how they could improve further, or what they should do to extend their learning.
- Assessors do not involve employers in apprentices' reviews consistently and, as a result, employers are not able to identify different areas of work to enable the apprentice to work outside their job role and develop a wider range of vocational skills and knowledge.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

- Apprentices make good progress with developing their wider skills and attitudes for work, such as team leading, working together, communication and work-related mathematics. As a result of completing their qualifications, apprentices, especially those aged 16 to 19, gain in confidence, responsibility and self-esteem, which motivates them to seek promotion, additional responsibilities, or further training. Employers recognise well the benefit that apprentices bring to their businesses and the vast majority support their apprentices very well.
- Apprentices make good improvements to their mathematics skills, both as a result of achieving functional skills qualifications in this subject and by using mathematics in everyday work situations, such as using spreadsheets for creating and monitoring budgets. However, the development of their English skills is less effective, as assessors do not give apprentices sufficient feedback on their written work to support them to make improvements.
- The majority of trainees make good progress towards gaining an apprenticeship, employment or further training through a good mix of classroom-based training on topics such as writing curriculum vitae, preparing job applications, mathematics and work-experience placements. They undertake work-experience placements in a range of different businesses, for example in hospitals where they work in areas such as data quality, outpatients, intelligence and the pharmacy. They develop well their attitudes to work and work-place behaviours, such as timekeeping and self-evaluation.
- Apprentices and trainees are supported well to achieve their qualifications. Assessors and tutors work well with employers, apprentices and external partners to ensure that that receive the extra help they need to overcome barriers to learning when they occur.
- Teachers and assessors ensure that they introduce apprentices and trainees to topics relating to British values and how to keep themselves safe online during the induction period of their course. However, they do not yet reinforce apprentices' and trainees' understanding of these issues during their course.

## Outcomes for learners

Good

- Since the previous inspection, the proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualifications within their planned timescale has improved significantly and is now high. In the current academic year, all apprentices who were due to achieve their qualifications have done so, with a very small minority withdrawing from their course before the end.
- Current apprentices are making good progress, and in a minority of cases very rapid progress, towards achieving their qualifications in the planned timescale. In the majority of cases, particularly for those aged 16 to 19, they make highly significant gains in their vocational skills, their attitudes to employment and their self-confidence. Older apprentices use their qualifications to gain promotions, pay rises, additional responsibilities or to ensure they are up to date with current legislation relating to their sector.
- Apprentices produce good-quality practical work, for example hospitality supervision apprentices become adept at managing teams effectively, and working to industry expectations. Apprentices' portfolios are well structured and organised, using a wide range of evidence types to prove their competence.
- Apprentices who need to achieve functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics as part of their framework do so very well. A particularly high proportion achieve these at their first attempt.
- The proportion of trainees who are successful in securing employment or further training as a result of completing their traineeship is high, although a small minority do not receive sufficient support when they do not make rapid progress in securing a purposeful next step, such as a job or training. The vast majority of trainees achieve functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics, although a small minority do not study these at a high enough level, based on their prior achievement.
- A large proportion of apprentices, for whom it is appropriate, move on to the next level of training, such as an advanced or a higher apprenticeship. Assessors are ambitious for their apprentices and encourage them to achieve at the highest possible level, for example a large proportion of apprentices who achieve a higher apprenticeship in management move on to achieve the level 7 qualification in that subject.

## Types of provision

### Apprenticeships

Good

- TRP works with 10 subcontractors and has 774 apprentices, with the majority in management, health and social care, administration and fenestration. About a third of these are at intermediate level, half at advanced level and a fifth at higher level.
- Apprenticeships are well planned and since the previous inspection managers have taken decisive action to ensure that more apprentices achieve their qualifications in the planned time.
- Apprentices make positive contributions to their employers' businesses. They develop relevant work skills and know the importance of correct and accurate English and

mathematics in their work. Employers report on the impact that their apprentice has had in making a positive change in business practices. For example, employers in the fenestration industry report that the training has professionalised the industry and that employees are now very aware of the new regulations and work with greater attention to their health and safety.

- Apprentices know what qualification they are completing and what they need to do to complete their programme on time. A few do not fully appreciate the different parts of their course or get the opportunity to develop further their English skills, particularly on higher apprenticeship courses.
- A few apprentices do not develop new vocational skills or knowledge as the course focuses on the assessment of existing skills and knowledge. Most of these apprentices have been in their job role for some time; however, they benefit from gaining a qualification that enables them to advance their career, take on additional responsibilities at work or gain increased salaries.
- Targets set by tutors for apprentices focus too much on evidence requirements and unit completion rather than the development of their skills and knowledge. Although targets are highly individualised they do not challenge the most able apprentices well enough.
- Tutors provide helpful and informative oral feedback to apprentices but they do not record this well in reviews which prevents apprentices reflecting on this at a later stage and planning improvements to their work.
- Tutors do not identify English errors in apprentices' work consistently. As a result, apprentices are not provided with the skills to improve their spelling, grammar and punctuation to enable them to produce work to a high enough standard.

## Traineeships

**Good**

- TRP has 34 trainees in learning with two subcontractors. Just over half of the trainees are aged 16 to 18 and the remainder are over 19 years old.
- Trainees enjoy their programmes and know well the benefits of how attending training can help them develop their careers. They evaluate their own skills well in relation to their readiness for work and set actions to support areas for development; for example, around punctuality, reliability and time management.
- Learners work on a range of interesting and relevant tasks, including a team mathematics challenge, which develop relevant workplace skills. For example, in a written piece of work using a famous person as an example of how to succeed, a trainee had written about a world leader and used this to identify lessons for his own development.
- Staff adopt a flexible approach to traineeships, enabling trainees to continue their programmes when they encounter barriers to their learning. For example, they maintain contact with homeless trainees with poor attendance, including teaching on Saturday mornings and providing evening telephone contact.
- Tutors support trainees well to develop their English skills; they focus on skills which are relevant to the workplace and trainees know how they apply these skills at work. For example, trainees know how to communicate appropriately with customers and clients, are well prepared for interviews and confident to speak during team meetings. Tutors



develop trainees' mathematics skills during lessons, but trainees do not always appreciate or know how they can apply these skills at work.

- Tutors' development of trainees' English and mathematics skills to enable them to achieve qualifications in these subjects is not sufficiently effective. In too many cases, trainees study for English and mathematics qualifications at too low a level. In a minority of cases, staff use information from trainees' prior attainment and assessments at the start of the course well to plan individual learning to address areas of weakness; they ensure that trainees study towards qualifications in English and maths at a higher level than their existing qualifications and skills.
- In the better examples, tutors focus carefully on all aspects of the trainees' progress. Tutors use information on trainees' prior attainment, short-, medium- and long-term goals, specific information about their career aims and aspirations and any extra support they needed to plan an individual traineeship programme. In too many cases with one subcontractor, trainees' programmes and targets do not reflect clearly enough their starting point, career goals and desired outcomes; tutors take insufficient account of trainees' prior attainment, personal learning goals and career aspirations.

## Provider details

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Unique reference number   | 55053  |
| Type of provider  | Independent learning provider                          |
| Age range of learners   | 16+  |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 1,784  |
| Principal/CEO   | Carole Cook  |
| Telephone number  | 020 8640 6662  |
| Website   | <a href="http://www.trpltd.co.uk">www.trpltd.co.uk</a> |

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

| Main course or learning programme level   | Level 1 or below   |     | Level 2  |     | Level 3 |     | Level 4 or above |     |
|---|--|-----|----------|-----|---------|-----|------------------|-----|
|   | 16–18  | 19+ | 16–18    | 19+ | 16–18   | 19+ | 16–18            | 19+ |
| Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)                                      | -  | -   | -        | -   | -       | -   | -                | -   |
| Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age                                     | Intermediate   |     | Advanced |     | Higher  |     |                  |     |
|   | 16–18  | 19+ | 16–18    | 19+ | 16–18   | 19+ |                  |     |
|   | 10   | 230 | 10       | 315 | -       | 153 |                  |     |
| Number of traineeships  | 16–19  |     | 19+      |     | Total   |     |                  |     |
|   | 23   |     | 22       |     | 45      |     |                  |     |
| Number of learners aged 14 to 16  | -  |     |          |     |         |     |                  |     |
| Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding                     | -  |     |          |     |         |     |                  |     |
| Funding received from:  | Skills Funding Agency  |     |          |     |         |     |                  |     |
| At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | Aim Skills Development<br>Boldly Equipt<br>MRG Services UK Limited<br>MRG Services North<br>Funding Connect<br>Omnibus Training Solutions<br>Grenfell Housing and Training |     |          |     |         |     |                  |     |

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

### Inspection team

|                                |                         |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Richard Pemble, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Shahram Safavi                 | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Kate Hill                      | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Susan Gay                      | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Christopher Dearnley           | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Lyn Bourne                     | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Alison Attfield                | Ofsted Inspector        |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

### **Learner View**

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to [www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk).

### **Employer View**

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to [www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2016