

Nacro

Inspection date

28 June 2007

Inspection number

301020

Contents

Background information	3
Inspection judgements	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider.....	4
Summary of grades awarded	5
Overall judgement.....	6
Effectiveness of provision	6
Capacity to improve	6
Key strengths	6
Key areas for improvement.....	6
Main findings	7
Achievement and standards	7
Quality of provision.....	7
Leadership and management	7
Equality of opportunity	7
What learners like	9
What learners think could improve.....	9
Engineering.....	10
Employability training	13
Learners' achievements	16

Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Engineering
- Employability training

Description of the provider

1. Nacro is a national registered charity, founded 41 years ago, and is a company limited by guarantee. Its objectives are to reduce the number of people who commit crime, ensure the criminal justice system works fairly and effectively to reduce crime, and to work towards all prisoners being offered resettlement help relevant to their circumstances, in prison and on release. The head office is in London. The training programmes are located in the operations directorate, and are delivered through five geographical regions across England and Wales at 33 sites, with 133 teachers and trainers.
2. Since the previous inspection Nacro has significantly reduced its provision and has completed the first stage of the process of national restructuring. It no longer provides New Deal programmes and focuses on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes, which comprise 93% of its provision. At the time of inspection there were no learners on programmes in Wales. E2E provision in Newcastle is provided under contract to Newcastle City Council. Currently 23 learners are being trained under this contract and were included in the inspection. Nacro has a lead contract for Swale and Medway and Surrey. It continues to offer a small amount of apprenticeship training. It provides mainly programme-led pathways in: health, public services and care; agriculture, horticulture and animal care; engineering and manufacturing technologies; retail and commercial enterprise; leisure, travel and tourism; arts, media and publishing, and business, administration and law. Some learners are working towards National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). Engineering provision was the only programme-led pathway inspected.
3. Nacro provides training programmes for young people who have not been successful at school. Many have not been in education or training for several years, and many have been in care. Approximately 40% are young offenders or known to the youth justice system. Around 75% of learners are male and 9% from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	satisfactory: Grade 3
Capacity to improve	satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievement and standards	satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	satisfactory: Grade 3
Leadership and management	satisfactory: Grade 3
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject area

Engineering	satisfactory: Grade 3
Employability training	satisfactory: Grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

satisfactory: Grade 3

4. The effectiveness of the provision at Nacro is satisfactory. Achievements and standards, the quality of provision, leadership and management and equality of opportunity are all satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

satisfactory: Grade 3

5. Nacro's capacity to improve is satisfactory. The provision has significantly changed since the previous inspection, where leadership and management were found satisfactory overall. This standard has been maintained at a time of significant structural change. Performance is slowly improving on E2E provision, and progression rates to employment are high in engineering. The quality of provision is satisfactory, but there are significant variations between centres. The good practice in a few centres is not shared and the quality assurance arrangements, although improved, have not yet addressed the variations in practice. Nacro has maintained some key strengths, in particular the good quality of personal support for learners in motor vehicle and E2E. Some of the previous weaknesses remain.
6. The self-assessment process is good and involves all staff, as well as taking account of learners' views. However, although it identifies many of the weaknesses, they are not given sufficient weighting, and in some cases the strengths are no more than normal practice. Inspectors found the centres' self-assessment reports to be more accurate than the overall self-assessment report, demonstrating an understanding of what needed to be done to improve.

Key strengths

- Effective management of change
- Wide range of partnerships
- Particularly good learner support
- Good achievement of personal, social and vocational skills on E2E provision
- High rates of progression into employment and apprenticeships in engineering

Key areas for improvement

- Significant variations in performance across the provision
- Unsatisfactory aspects of teaching and learning
- Inadequate target-setting and recording of progress on E2E programmes
- Insufficient suitably qualified and experienced teaching staff on E2E provision

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

7. The rates of progression to employment and apprenticeships on motor vehicle programmes are good. Many learners on E2E provision develop good personal, social and vocational skills. Success rates are low, but improving, on motor vehicle and E2E programmes. On E2E provision, success rates vary considerably across centres, but the achievements of additional national qualifications at level 1 and 2 are good in most centres. Provision subcontracted from Newcastle City Council is satisfactory. Many learners make significant progress in the development of social and vocational skills. Learners who attend probation offices achieve well.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

8. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory aspects of teaching were found in E2E. With a few exceptions, target-setting in E2E is not sufficiently specific, and assessment of learning is not sufficiently thorough. The identification of learners' additional support needs is satisfactory in most centres.
9. In most centres the three strands of the E2E programme are well balanced with a good range of appropriate additional learning activities. In some centres the work-related element of the E2E programme is insufficient. In engineering, on- and off-the-job training are not adequately co-ordinated. Support for learners continues to be a strength across the provision and staff work well to meet learners' needs.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: satisfactory: Grade 3

10. The trustees have provide clear direction for the structural changes being implemented by the senior management team. The change to date has been well managed, with regional and centre staff kept up to date with the changes taking place and the reasons behind them. Although performance is beginning to improve overall, this is not yet evident in all centres.
11. NACRO has good working relationships with partners. Very effective liaison exists with key organisations in the community, such as the youth offending teams, Connexions, Jobcentre Plus, local schools, colleges and the police. Some good links have been established with employers in some areas, but these are less effective in other areas. Local trainers are active in provider forums and local area groups. These links have had a significant impact on learner recruitment and support. An example of partnership working is a course on acceptable behaviour on public transport run in collaboration with a local bus company. Management of subcontractors is particularly effective. Good collaborative working takes place among partners who are potential competitors. Meetings are well chaired and used to share good practice.

12. Staff have helpful and supportive supervision meetings every two months. However, targets set are not related to the business planning. Induction and training for new staff is satisfactory, but some topics, such as equality and diversity, are not covered in sufficient detail. Staff training in child protection is up to date. There are not enough appropriately qualified staff in E2E.
13. The equality and diversity scheme has been revised recently, and is very thorough. The equality newsletter is produced regularly. Nacro fully supports staff groups established to support specific minorities such as those who are disabled. Staff training comprises a brief induction. However, some good training events have been provided. Access for disabled learners is poor in many centres, with insufficient toilet facilities. A disability audit has been completed for all centres and there are action plans in place, but there is no regional oversight of these audits. Little promotion of equality and diversity takes place during teaching in many centres and the assessment of learners' understanding of these issues is poor. Detailed analysis of data is carried out and used to inform management but actions have yet to be taken to address the issues identified.
14. Aspects of quality improvement are not yet effective across the whole organisation. Much work has been put into the development of systems to improve the quality of the provision but these have not addressed the variations in practice. Communication has improved and the management information system is now much better developed. A well designed and thorough training package on the completion of learner files is given to all staff. However, learner files are still not being satisfactorily completed in all centres, with poor target-setting a common issue. A system for observing teaching and learning has been implemented but staff have not received sufficient guidance in using it. When lessons are judged unsatisfactory, training staff do not always receive appropriate support. Rates of progression and achievement are very good in some centres but vary considerably across the organisation. Some weaknesses identified in the previous inspection, such as the poor target-setting in E2E and the failure to monitor standards of training in engineering, remain.
15. The skills for life strategy is included in development plans. Centres have successfully introduced initial and diagnostic assessments. Learners additional support needs are met to a satisfactory standard in E2E provision and are well met in engineering.
16. The self-assessment process is thorough and all staff are involved in the production of the report. Inspectors found the centres' reports to be more evaluative and critical than the overall report. Good use is made of feedback from learners to improve the provision. The self-assessment report is too descriptive and is insufficiently critical, a weakness identified at the previous inspection. Some identified strengths are no more than normal practice and some key areas for improvement have not been identified.

What learners like:

- The environment at Nacro – ‘It's a relaxed place to be’
- The staff – ‘I can talk to them about personal problems and they understand’
- Work experience – ‘It's been really motivating in my workplace’
- The opportunity to make new friends
- Its positive effect on them – ‘I'm a changed person’
- ‘I've gained lots of confidence’

What learners think could improve:

- The way they are viewed – ‘We're sometimes treated like children’
- The staff – ‘They could listen to the learners more’
- ‘It would be good to have more jobs to keep us occupied’

Engineering

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

17. Nacro provides motor vehicle training for 51 learners, of whom most are in Sandwell, with others in three different centres. Six learners are on NVQ level 2 programmes, and the remainder are the programme-led pathway (PLP) in vehicle fitting and vehicle maintenance. Motor vehicle training is used to provide vocational tasters for learners on E2E programmes. Three of Nacro's centres provide off-the-job training, which is supported by training in work placements. At Sandwell learners receive their NVQ training and assessment in the workplace. Trainers visit learners in the workplace at least once every four weeks. Work placements are with a range of small- to medium-sized companies involved in a wide range of motor vehicle work.

Strengths

- Good progression in to employment
- Good work placements
- Particularly good pastoral support
- Very good literacy and numeracy programmes

Areas for improvement

- Low success rates
- Weak co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- Inadequate monitoring of the quality of training by employers

Achievement and standards

18. Progression into employment is good. During the last year of the programme, 77% of learners moved to employed status, and a further 5% progressed into full-time education. Progression onto a full apprenticeship programme is good.

19. Overall framework success rates on the apprenticeship programme are low and are below the national average. However, they have improved, from 33% in 2005-06 to 48% in 2006-07. The proportion of learners who successfully complete by a planned date has risen and is now above the national average. Success rates vary between centres with the Sandwell centre having the highest success rates. The number of learners who follow a motor vehicle qualification as part of their E2E course has fallen dramatically, but success rates on this course have risen to a satisfactory level.

Quality of provision

20. Work placements are good. Learners are well matched to work placements, usually within two weeks of starting the training programme. The provider currently has access to a large

number of potential employers. A thorough work-placement information pack is used to inform the employer of their role and responsibilities. Employers are very supportive and are keen for learners to progress. Staff respond very quickly to any issues that employers raise. Learners are quickly found a new work placement if necessary.

21. Nacro provides particularly good pastoral support for learners throughout the training programme. The organisation is highly effective in addressing personal and social issues, providing specialist support for ex-offenders, drugs and alcohol counseling, careers guidance, anger management training, housing support, and sexual health counseling. Learners are given incentives, such as help to obtain a driving licence and to achieve the driving theory test. These help to motivate and retain learners. In addition, learners make effective use of information technology and the internet to develop their life and employability skills. Staff work effectively with individual learners to help them develop their literacy and numeracy skills. They strive to find appropriate and productive methods of engaging with individual learners. Learning support materials have been developed with vocationally relevant motor vehicle content. Many learners develop their skills sufficiently to enable them to undertake an apprenticeship programme.
22. Training is satisfactory or better. Lesson plans are good, with thorough planning of activities. Training staff have good, relevant industrial experience. The initial assessment and induction processes are thorough. Staff use information collected during initial assessment to produce individual learning plans, which are informative, kept up to date and reviewed regularly. NVQ assessment is satisfactory. Evidence brought in from the workplace is clearly cross-referenced to the NVQ units, and is easy to access. However, in some cases some of the NVQ evidence is not sufficiently detailed, and there is an over-reliance on one observation in the workplace to cover too many aspects of the NVQ.
23. The range and quality of resources vary from centre to centre, but are satisfactory overall. Some training centres have their own dedicated practical training area. At Sandwell, where there is no practical training area, all practical training is carried out in appropriately resourced workplaces. Accommodation used to teach theory sessions is satisfactory and the teaching resources are good.
24. The co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training at Sandwell is weak. This was a weakness at the previous inspection. Training is rarely planned and is usually dependent upon the flow of work at each work placement. Employers are not aware of the topics learners are covering in the off-the-job sessions and are not involved in planning the programme. Some learners have undertaken practical work at their work placement before the theory work has been covered in the technical certificate.

Leadership and management

25. Management of engineering programmes is satisfactory. Communication within the motor vehicle teams are good. Regular staff meetings take place and focus on those learners at risk of not completing their programme. Managers have introduced a number of initiatives to improve success rates for learners, but it is too early to judge their effectiveness.
26. Arrangements for promoting and monitoring equality of opportunity are satisfactory. Learners receive appropriate information about equality and diversity during their induction. Effective policies are in place to tackle bullying and harassment. Learners' understanding of their rights and responsibilities at work is satisfactory. All trainers have

completed Nacro's equality, diversity and disability training and fully understand related issues. Progress reviews are used effectively to question and reinforce learners' understanding of equality and diversity.

27. Arrangements for monitoring the quality of practical training in the workplace are inadequate. Although learners have good opportunities to develop their skills, training staff do not observe workplace training and do not know what formal training learners are provided with. Few employers have a copy of the NVQ standards and most do not understand the evidence requirements. The self-assessment report is too descriptive and insufficiently accurate. Some strengths are no more than normal practice and some key weaknesses have not been identified. Inspectors awarded a lower grade than that in the self-assessment report.

Employability training

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

28. The Entry to Employment (E2E) programme is Nacro's main training programme and is offered at 33 sites across England and Wales. These sites are managed by five regional managers. At the time of inspection 1,079 learners were on E2E programmes. Of these 755 were male and 123 were of minority ethnic heritage. 448 were known to the justice services. The programme varies in length according to learners' needs.

Strengths

- Good development of learners' personal, social and vocational skills
- Wide range of stimulating enrichment activities to engage learners
- Very good personal support for learners

Areas for improvement

- Unsatisfactory teaching in some centres
- Inadequate target-setting and progress reviews
- wide variation in performance between centres

Achievement and standards

29. Achievement in E2E is improving and rates are satisfactory overall. Success rates are good, at 71% for NVQ level 1 provision, and 85% for other level 2 qualifications. For most learners these are the first nationally recognised qualifications that they have achieved. Progression rates are on or slightly below the national average, but there are wide variations in performance between centres. Where success rates are low, this is in part attributable to the number of learners who are taken into custody. The proportion of learners in centres who achieve all of the aims as recorded in their passports also vary significantly. The number of learners achieving literacy and numeracy qualifications is improving. In the provision offered through probation offices, rates of achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications are good and above set targets.

30. In all of the centres the development of learners' personal, social and vocational skills is good. They work well to develop these skills and work well with others. In many centres learners develop useful vocational expertise. Learners who have been unsuccessful in school, often with poor attendance, participate well. For many, remaining in learning is a key achievement.

Quality of provision

31. Teaching and learning are good in one centre and satisfactory in the others. However, unsatisfactory teaching and learning were observed in some centres. In these lessons,

tutors did not take sufficient account of individual learners' needs and little learning took place. Too much use is made of simple question and answer sessions, where very few learners responded. Tutors use learning activities not appropriate to learners' age or ability. Insufficient attention is given to the wide range of ability in classes. In the good lessons learners' individual needs are met and management of learning is effective. Tutors make good use of lively and stimulating activities to engage learners.

32. Learners benefit from a wide range of stimulating enrichment activities. A good amount of the activities are practical and well suited to learners' needs. Individual centres work well to ensure that additional learning activities are sufficiently varied and meet learners' needs. The formal E2E curriculum has a good balance of the three strands in the best provision. However, in some centres, learners do not have access to an adequate range of vocational and work placement opportunities. In others literacy and numeracy provision is not well established.
33. Personal support for learners is very good. Tutors make good use of their own in-depth knowledge and understanding of the youth justice system to provide appropriate learner support. They have a very good knowledge of local referral agencies and provide learners with relevant guidance. In the best centres progress reviews are used constructively to motivate learners to improve. Support provided for learners with additional support needs is satisfactory.
34. Target-setting and progress reviews are inadequate. Many initial targets are insufficiently specific. Assessment during the programme is not always sufficiently thorough. Paperwork in the passports varies significantly in level of detail and effectiveness as a record of learning.
35. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with very good vocational resources in most centres. In some centres learners are not given sufficient space to work. Access for people with restricted mobility is not adequate at most centres. ICT facilities are not adequate in many centres and do not prepare learners well for further study or employment.

Leadership and management

36. Leadership and management are satisfactory in most centres. Staff work well to encourage learners to achieve, providing a safe place for learners who have not done well in mainstream education. Managers fully understand why the organisation is undergoing structural change. In some centres the views of learners are responded to well. A catering facility, staffed by learners, was developed following requests from learners. Not enough teaching staff are qualified to level 4. However, tutors who work in the probation offices are well qualified.
37. Quality improvement is unsatisfactory. The wide variations in performance between centres has been identified but not addressed. Guidance for quality improvement has been provided, but recommendations have not been implemented well in all centres. Observations of teaching and learning are insufficiently thorough. In most centres inspectors found that lessons to be graded too high.
38. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Staff work well to ensure learners feel secure in the centres. The arrangements for safeguarding are satisfactory. In the best centres the

expected code of conduct is enforced effectively. In others, unacceptable remarks or gestures are not always appropriately challenged. Tutors have received initial training, but in only a few centres has there been sufficient training related to promoting equality of opportunity through teaching and learning. Passport paperwork shows considerable variation in the ways in which learners' understanding is checked. Data is collected through the improved management information system, but the reports are not always used. Data shows that in some centres performance by learners from minority ethnic backgrounds is not adequate. However, no actions have been implemented following such analysis.

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes** managed by the provider 2004 to 2006:

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Apprenticeships	05-06	overall	36	25	58	19	53
		timely	43	12	38	7	33

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

Outcomes on **Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes** managed by the provider 2004 to 2006:

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
04-05	3040	21	38
05-06	2922	31	42

* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

** Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period

