

Baldwin Training Ltd

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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' monitoring 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:

- Health and social care

Description of the provider

1. Baldwin Training Ltd. (BTL) was established in September 2003 to provide training for the health and social care industry. It works with over 100 organisations in Sussex and parts of Kent. Currently 27 staff work for BTL. The government-funded programmes currently have 211 learners. An additional 54 learners are on private training courses.
2. Since August 2007, BTL has had a contract for apprenticeships in health and social care with Sussex Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Currently 36 apprentices and 24 advanced apprentices are on programmes, including the six apprentices transferring from the previous subcontract with a local college.
3. BTL has 111 learners on Train to Gain, of which five are on skills for life, eight on management training, 20 working towards the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in support services and the remaining 78 working towards NVQs in health and social care. Previously, BTL was a subcontractor to a local college for Train to Gain but, as from 1 August 2008, BTL has a direct contract with the LSC and all existing learners transferred to the BTL contract. An additional 40 adult learners are working towards NVQs. Skills for life and management training were not in scope for this inspection.
4. East Sussex is the seventh most deprived county in England and has the highest level of deprivation of any county in the south east. In 2005, 4% of the population were from minority ethnic backgrounds. In 2007, unemployment in East Sussex was 4.7% compared with 5.6% nationally. In 2005, 41% of 16 year olds achieved five A*-C GCSEs including English and mathematics compared to 46% nationally.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Train to Gain	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: Grade 1
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Train to Gain	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Train to Gain	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Outstanding: Grade 1
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1
Train to Gain	Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Sector subject areas

Health and social care	Good: Grade 2
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning
Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

5. The overall effectiveness of provision is good. Health and social care, achievement and standards, quality of provision and the arrangements for equality of opportunity are good. Leadership and management and capacity to improve are outstanding.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding Grade 1

6. BTL has demonstrated that it has an outstanding capacity to improve. The effectiveness of steps taken to make improvements is outstanding. BTL has successfully improved its success rates for both apprenticeships and Train to Gain. The effective analysis of data identifies specific problems and contributes to the actions taken to correct these. The detailed and comprehensive development plan provides an effective framework for quality improvement with specific and measurable targets. The development plan is a working document and links well to business planning and the staff training plan. BTL has successfully implemented a large number of improvements since the start of the company which have had a significant impact on learners. For staff, a mentoring system for assessor/trainers with monthly reviews and a better focus on targets and learners; the introduction of a preparing to teach qualification for all assessor/trainers; involvement in the Quality Improvement Agency's (QIA) Skills for Life Improvement Programme and planned relevant training for five staff. For learners, the use of textbooks which are appropriate for learners with literacy support needs and a better initial assessment and induction process including taster days. For management, improvements in the management of the apprenticeship programme; a greater emphasis on employer engagement and the achievement of the Quality Training Standard. Examples of good practice from other providers are effectively adapted to improve provision. Partnership working ensures sharing of good practice.
7. The self-assessment process is outstanding. The learners' experience is the main focus for all the judgements. The inclusive process involves staff, learners and employers. Staff involvement includes regular input and group discussions at the monthly staff meetings, a yearly self-assessment report workshop and a formal discussion as part of their yearly review. Staff are fully involved in prioritising the actions in the development plan. Data supports the judgements where appropriate. The self-assessment process is continuous and is an integral part of quality improvement. Staff meetings and management meetings include discussion about the self-assessment process. The annual report and quarterly reports update staff and are a key communication tool. Judgements are comprehensive and produced under the five key questions in the Common Inspection Framework. Cross referencing to the five outcomes of Every Child Matters emphasises the importance placed on these within BTL. The process and report are self critical and the judgements effectively contribute to the development plan. Inspectors agreed with the majority of judgements in the report but gave higher grades for leadership and management and capacity to improve.

Key strengths

- Good overall success rates on apprenticeships and Train to Gain
- Very good individual training and support to meet learners' needs
- Learner-focused business planning
- Excellent communications and teamwork
- Very effective working relationships with employers
- Very effective use of data
- Strong culture of equality of opportunity
- Excellent use of self-assessment process

Key areas for improvement

- Timely success rates for all programmes
- Access to resources for all learners
- Better co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training
- Action planning to include all areas of quality improvement

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning
Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

8. Achievement and standards are good. Overall success rates are good in 2007/08 for Train to Gain at 83% for NVQ Level 2 and 80% at Level 3. However, the timely success rate is poor in 2007/08 at 35%, but improving. Overall and timely success rates for the subcontracted apprenticeships were not available from the contractor. Data from the LSC show that overall success rates for 2007/08 for apprentices are good at 82% and for advanced apprentices are satisfactory at 64%. BTL has just completed the first full year of their own apprenticeship contract. Out of 20 starts on advanced apprenticeships, one has achieved the apprenticeship framework and the rest are still on programme. Out of 41 starts on apprenticeships, one has left the programme and three have achieved the apprenticeship framework. The majority of the remaining learners, across all apprenticeship programmes, have completed their key skills and are on target to achieve the framework within the set timescales or earlier. No major differences exist between different groups of learners. The self-assessment report refers to the development and effectiveness of strategies to improve retention and timely success rates.
9. Learners develop good workplace and problem solving skills. The majority have increased their confidence and self-esteem. Learners' portfolios are well organised with a satisfactory standard of work. Attendance at off-the-job training is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

Work-based learning
Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

10. The quality of provision is good. The effectiveness of teaching, training and learning is good. Very good individual training meets learners' needs. The comprehensive initial assessment, including literacy, numeracy and language, clearly identifies each learner's current workplace skills and the level of support needed to successfully complete their qualification. However, individual learning plans do not always fully record the details of this process or changes that occur later in the programme.
11. The flexible assessment planning and delivery accommodate individual learners' needs. For example, shorter, more frequent training sessions for those with reduced concentration spans and appointments that take into account learners' work and family commitments. Assessor/trainers set appropriate, achievable, training targets suited to the learners' level and ability. They visit learners who are unable to attend the off-the-job training to ensure that they cover all the basic knowledge and skills. The well planned off-the-job training sessions are appropriately resourced. Well qualified and experienced assessor/trainers and off-the-job trainers effectively share their knowledge and experience with learners. The trainers adjust the pace and content of sessions to match the level and ability of the group or individual. BTL provides fruit for learners to encourage healthy eating.

12. Learners have inconsistent access to resources. The majority of learners receive a textbook and have access to other written material but a few learners are not aware of this. Not all learners use the training centre and therefore do not have access to the computer facilities. BTL provides all learners with the web address of a useful learning resource but some learners are unable to access this as they do not have a computer or the necessary skills. This is an area for improvement identified in the self-assessment report and an action point in the development plan.
13. Employers do not receive sufficient details of the off-the-job training topics to enable them to effectively plan and provide opportunities for learners to explore and develop their skills alongside the knowledge gained. Frequently, the review documents lack sufficient detail to accurately reflect all aspects of the learner's journey.
14. Programmes and activities are good at meeting the needs and interests of learners and employers. Discussions between the learner, assessor/trainer and workplace manager ensure that the chosen optional NVQ units match the current work role and will help with further career progression. Off-the-job training includes a series of short courses. These are also available for all Train to Gain learners even if they are on an assessment programme. The very good working relationship with employers includes frequent, meaningful communication. In the majority of workplaces, employers contribute to the initial assessment and learner reviews. Assessor/trainers keep employers up-to-date on learners' progress on each visit but, in some cases, the formal reports lack detail. BTL has responded to requests from employers to provide training for their support staff who could not previously access suitable training. The NVQ at Level 2 in support services is now part of the Train to Gain programme. The self-assessment report describes how this development is part of the objective to extend provision to previously under-represented groups.
15. Guidance and support for learners is good. Learners enjoy the informative taster day and recall the learning that takes place. Where learners are unable to attend the day, they have a visit to their workplace. BTL effectively uses the information from the day or visit to match the learner to a suitable assessor/trainer. In some cases, this means that an employer may be working with several different assessors/trainers. The careful matching is so successful that employers do not see this as a problem. All learners have a good rapport with their assessor/trainer even those who, initially, were reluctant to have training. Learners with additional literacy, numeracy and language needs receive effective support.
16. BTL successfully works with learners with very low self-esteem to develop their workplace and social skills and to reduce their barriers to learning. Contact with assessors/trainers is good and available at any time. The helpline provides additional support seven days a week up to 11 o'clock in the evening. The good individual coaching, either at work or at the training centre, varies according to the specific needs of individual learners. Assessors/trainers are very skilled in encouraging and raising the aims of learners to achieve realistic goals. All learners receive some guidance about progression within the programmes offered by BTL, however insufficient formal careers guidance is available. This was not identified in the self-assessment report.

Leadership and management

Outstanding: Grade 1

Work-based learning

Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1

Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

17. Overall, leadership and management are outstanding. BTL has strong values and principles focused on the needs of the learners. The partnership of BTL staff working with learners and employers is the central core of the business. The role of employer engagement manager promotes the close working relationship. Developing skills required by the care sector, ensuring staff are well treated in an enjoyable working environment, and taking learning to those in the community who are traditionally hard to reach are three of the priorities in the 2008/09 business plan. Specific and measurable targets are set and a well considered contingency plan identifies potential risks and planned solutions.
18. The directors take great care to ensure all members of staff feel valued and an important part of the company. Flexible working enables staff to work around their other commitments as well as allowing 24 hour cover, if necessary, to match learners' shift patterns. Monthly staff meetings, internal verifier meetings and specific project meetings, plus the informal meetings at the training centre, ensure staff meet regularly and share information. Quarterly updates from the self-assessment process and regular memos keep staff up-to-date on the wide range of activities and improvements taking place. The directors support staff very well and are always available, especially when staff are having a difficult time. Successes are always recognised by the directors.
19. BTL is in the process of transferring its data onto a commercial management information system. During this period, it is also maintaining its existing spreadsheet system. This is comprehensive and contains all the information required for every learner. The data reports range from detailed tracking of learners to comparison of retention, success rates and timely achievement of different groups of learners, employers and assessors/trainers. Staff make good use of this data and it is a key part of the mentoring meetings and target setting. The self-assessment process uses this data effectively.
20. The self-assessment process is continuous and is an integral part of quality improvement. Staff, learners and employers contribute to the process. The comprehensive development plan provides a framework for improvement activities. Quarterly reports keep staff updated. Excellent partnership working promotes the sharing of good practice.
21. Overall, equality of opportunity is good. A strong culture of equal opportunities is at the heart of all work within BTL. The considerate, well-planned and flexible support for learners enables ongoing involvement in training even where there are barriers to learning. Learners identify the need for, and receive, any additional support requirements such as a dictaphone, larger print, coloured paper or the code of practice in their first language. The comprehensive equal opportunities policy meets all requirements and is easy to read. It identifies the key areas in which BTL needs to make progress and has key performance indicators. All of these are monitored and actions identified but, at present, no formal equal opportunities action plan is in place. The newly formed equality, diversity and citizenship group is looking at BTL's policies on equality and diversity and incorporating citizenship into everyday activities and the policy. Apprentices are involved and have identified what citizenship means for BTL. The progress and achievement of different groups of learners is analysed and the results used to make improvements where appropriate. The number of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds has risen from 21% in 2005/06 to 25% in 2007/08. This is in line with those employed within health and social care.

22. All staff have equal opportunities awareness training during their induction and regular updates as part of the staff meeting's agenda. However, little external training is undertaken. Learners discuss equal opportunities during their induction and it is reinforced at the progress reviews by way of a series of questions for discussion. The review form does not always include a record of the discussion.
23. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. The comprehensive policy and procedures give definitions of terms with practical examples linked to health and social care. Risk assessments include areas for safeguarding vulnerable adults and a flowchart on responding and reporting any abuse is available. Staff induction includes responsibilities for safeguarding and how to promote an environment for well-being and personal safety.
24. Overall, support for literacy, numeracy and language is satisfactory. The strategy is comprehensive but no action plan exists to identify target dates for achievement of qualifications for staff or for other activities. Support is effective but, for some learners, recording of specific target setting and review of progress is insufficient.
25. Action planning for quality improvements is not always systematic and formally recorded and does not include all areas of provision. For example, internal verification is satisfactory but, in some cases, the developmental action plans lack detail. Observations of training, assessment and reviews are comprehensive but recording documents do not have a place to record the agreed actions.

What learners like:

- Having a better understanding of other staff in the workplace
- 'Training helps me feel like one of the team'
- A thorough explanation of what needs to be done
- Friendly assessors who are approachable
- 'Assessors make learning fun, they put me at ease and do not judge me'
- Being treated as an individual
- Training days which are really helpful and structured
- Appropriately spaced visits from assessors

What learners think could improve:

- Training closer to home
- More courses on underpinning knowledge
- Books to work from at home
- 'More help with how I could make use of my qualification'
- Internet access for researching