

Bellis Training Ltd

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		21–24 October 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- Learners develop a wide range of very good skills that help them at work and in their personal lives.
- Almost all learners achieve their qualifications.
- Staff support learners very well and give them good information, advice and guidance to help them stay on their course and plan their future.
- Staff prepare learners very well to be successful in the workplace. Employers appreciate learners' skills and their positive attitudes to work.
- Managers and staff have a good understanding of local employment needs and prospects. They work closely with employers to provide a wide range of good work experience opportunities for learners.
- Managers and staff are ambitious for their learners and expect them to achieve.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- The number of learners progressing into further learning and employment at the end of their programme has declined over the past three years.
- Plans that staff develop for individuals' progress are not detailed enough to make sure that learners are always stretched and challenged in all their lessons and activities.
- Arrangements to monitor and develop the quality of teaching and learning are not sufficiently clearly structured and linked to enable the provider to check standards effectively and to improve performance.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Immediately begin to share good practice between staff and research good practice externally to improve the planning of learning to ensure that all lessons provide challenge for all learners. Establish regular staff training activities.
- Promptly review individual learning plans and ensure that they detail precise and challenging targets which enable staff and learners to measure learners' progress over time. This should include all of the programme areas of English, mathematics, personal and social development and vocational training. Ensure these detailed targets are regularly reviewed and revised to support learners' timely progress.
- Introduce simplified, systematic and appropriate quality assurance arrangements which provide a clear overview of the quality of teaching and learning. Ensure that these systems accurately and continuously monitor performance and drive improvements. Review their effectiveness and their efficiency regularly.
- Celebrate the strengths and values of the organisation and promote the rich diversity and many achievements of all learners from all backgrounds and starting points. Use this effectively, for example as part of the information on the website, to aid recruitment.
- Regularly review the level of qualifications taken by each learner to ensure that the level appropriately meets their needs and that the organisation is using its resources effectively and efficiently to support learners' progress.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Outcomes for learners are good. In 2011/12 success rates for learners were high and for some were very high. Success rates in most subject areas declined slightly in 2012/13 but they remained above national averages and significantly above those for organisations within the same provider group. All learners in the current year who have taken the foundation level certificate in personal and employability skills have achieved. The standard of learners' work is good.
- Learners develop very good social and employability skills both through individual and group work in classes, and also within the very good range of work placements. These placements give learners well-structured work experience and, in the best cases, additional work-related training opportunities.
- Learners significantly improve their confidence and their personal skills. They appreciate and understand the role that staff from Bellis Training (BT) play in these developments. Many can describe clearly their improving skills and their growing maturity.
- Staff are clear about local economic needs and employment opportunities and they effectively support learners to develop appropriately structured career paths. A significant number of learners have been promoted into supervisory and management roles. One learner who started on a foundation programme has been offered a university place.
- In 2010/11 the progression rate of learners into further education and training or work was good but subsequently this declined, and in 2012/13 only just over half of the learners progressed successfully. Staff have taken actions to improve this. Of the 19 learners who have left the programme in the current year so far, three-quarters have progressed successfully.

- Some groups of learners achieve less well than others, but the numbers in these groups are low. In 2012/13 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) achieved less well than others. Since then, the provider has improved staff understanding of disability through training programmes, and of the five learners with LDD in the current year three have progressed successfully and two remain on programme.
- Learners' attendance in 2012/13 needed improvement. Staff now intervene and respond to learners' absence immediately and this raised profile has significantly improved attendance rates. Staff monitor learners' punctuality daily and require them to make up any lost time in their breaks. However the impact of this is not recorded and it is not possible to monitor improvements.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teaching and individual support are particularly effective in significantly developing learners' personal, social and employability skills. Learners produce high standards of work and successfully achieve a wide range of qualifications that improve their confidence and motivation.
- Learners make very good progress in lessons that develop their personal, social and employability skills. In these lessons learning is challenging and teachers provide a wide variety of activities which are particularly successful in developing learners' skills. For example, in a communications lesson, learners followed instructions to make a shape from a variety of smaller shapes demonstrating how people interpret information in different ways and how body language affects this. Learners produce high standards of work in these lessons and enjoy their learning.
- Lessons and qualifications extend learners understanding of equality and diversity well. In one lesson, an icebreaker activity on religious festivals further extended learners' understanding of cultural differences. Learners generally have a good understanding of equality and diversity from a thorough induction, discussions in the workplace and through the qualifications that they are studying.
- Tutors in vocational lessons do not always challenge learners sufficiently. Learning is mostly limited to the level of the qualification and more able learners are not adequately stretched or have their understanding tested. Tutors do not always plan and monitor learners' individual learning pathways sufficiently well to ensure that they are making enough progress in relation to their potential in each lesson or on their overall learning programmes.
- Information, advice and guidance are very good in identifying the personal support needs of individual learners. Staff work closely with learners to ensure that they are not experiencing any difficulties. A wide range of learning modules including those relating to drug and alcohol misuse is particularly helpful in providing learners with general advice on healthy lifestyles. Specific guidance and personal support are highly effective in helping learners with particular problems; for example, housing, criminal records and acceptable behaviours. BT makes good use of links with external agencies.
- Learners' initial assessments for English and mathematics are comprehensive. In the majority of cases staff use this information well to plan appropriate qualification levels for learners. Where appropriate, some learners have completed a lower level of qualification to boost their confidence and they are then quickly moved onto a more challenging level of work. However, in a minority of cases staff have not planned this effectively and these learners complete multiple qualifications in very short periods of time; for example completing two levels within two weeks and a third level within a month. This number of tests can appear daunting and impedes the speed of their progress to a higher level.

- Staff match learners to appropriate work experience very effectively. They take great care to ensure that the placements meet learners' needs and interests well. Learners may have more than one placement where they are able to try different jobs and, through discussion with staff, decide which career would suit them best. Tutors, assessors and employers work closely with learners to ensure that they learn a wide range of skills while in the work place. Many learners gain employment from their work experience and some have progressed onto supervisory and management roles.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leadership and management are good. Managers have high expectations for learners' achievements and are fully aware of the barriers they face. Strategic priorities are clear and the vision for learners and the future of the company is regularly communicated to staff through a series of twice monthly team meetings. Managers have developed the business well to meet local and national needs, particularly for learners with difficulties or those who are at risk of dropping out of education or training. Managers know their learners well and are committed to providing highly effective employment opportunities and training to improve their life choices.
- The managing director robustly manages assessor performance, checking learner progress on a weekly basis. Assessors are set challenging targets for learner recruitment, retention and achievement and while recruitment remains a priority risk for BT, retention and achievement targets have been met or exceeded. Internal verification meets and, in some areas, exceeds awarding body standards.
- Quality monitoring and action planning for teaching and learning require improvement. Observation records of teaching and learning clearly identify areas for improvement. All teachers are graded by staff from the provider and moderated externally. Records are detailed; however grading is often over generous. Written feedback to teachers following observation is comprehensive but actions for improvement or opportunities for sharing best practice are not identified on improvement plans. Staff record learners' views after each lesson and take prompt action to address any learning needs identified at the following lesson.
- The self-assessment report satisfactorily identifies key strengths, areas for development and actions for improvement. However, the wide range of information managers gather and the numerous quality improvement action plans, including staff appraisal and training needs analysis, do not provide a clear overview of standards or measurement of improvement in teaching, learning and assessment. Some issues remain unresolved from the previous inspection; for example, the insufficiently clear target setting in learning plans.
- Partnerships with other providers and network groups are very effective and provide benchmarking and external moderation for observations of teaching, learning and assessment, health and safety checks and updating opportunities for local education and training issues and themes.
- Employer engagement is highly effective and the provider has developed very good employer links providing a wide range of work placements to support learning programmes. Employers highly value the readiness for employment that learners demonstrate throughout their work experience programmes; they commend, for example, their standard of dress, punctuality, commitment and confidence.
- Managers plan programmes well to include employability, personal and social development and vocational aspects. BT analyses comprehensively the work roles available with each employer and shows how they relate to the qualification outcomes. This helps learners choose work placements and plan their assessments effectively. Some learners are able to take advantage of training qualifications employers provide in the work place. For example, learners in a large

national pub chain are able to complete an appropriate and nationally recognised qualification and an on-line company induction programme in addition to their main qualification.

- Equality and diversity are promoted effectively and learners receive good equality and diversity training. Learners understand all legal equality and diversity themes and employers are aware of their legal responsibilities. Staff have had some equality training and new staff are provided with information at induction. Qualification achievement is high across all groups and managers have identified a priority to improve the ratio of male learners recruited to programmes. Data for equality and diversity are collected but managers do not have a systematic process for analysing any gaps in achievement for particular groups. Marketing material does not sufficiently reflect or celebrate the rich diversity, many achievements and accomplishments of learners or the very good support available to help them succeed.
- The provider meets its statutory duty for safeguarding learners; a named safeguarding officer is responsible for training staff and developing safeguarding learning materials. The safeguarding policy is clear and action to improve risk assessment of learners is planned. BT provides employers with comprehensive and clear material outlining their safeguarding responsibilities before learners start their placement, and the company offers to provide appropriate training. Learners' knowledge of health and safety and safeguarding is good.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Bellis Training Ltd

<p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate</p>	Overall	16-19 study programmes	Employability
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2
Outcomes for learners	2	2	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	2	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Employability training	2

Provider details

Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16-18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 81
	Part-time: 0
Principal/CEO	Liz Sheppard
Date of previous inspection	October 2010
Website address	www.bellistraining.co.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	16	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Part-time	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ N/A 							

Contextual information

BT was formed in 1984 and became a limited company in 2004. At the time of the last inspection over half of the learners were on apprenticeship programmes. As a result of recent funding changes the provider has become part of a consortium and continues to deliver these programmes as a subcontractor. These learners were not part of this inspection. The provider has a direct contract from the Education Funding Agency to deliver Study Programmes, mostly at foundation level. The programme is based at the main office in Hockley and a small centre in Chelmsley Wood, Solihull and all learners have work experience. The majority of learners come from areas with a high index of multiple deprivation.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Sandra Summers AI

Three additional inspectors, assisted by the managing director as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject area in the report above.

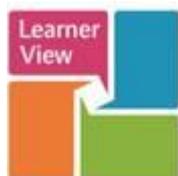
What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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