

# Norman Mackie and Associates Ltd

## Works4U Support Services

### Independent learning provider

<b>Inspection dates</b>		10-12 November 2014
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
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:

- the development of employability skills is good
- success rates for learners in English and mathematics are high
- working relationships between tutors and learners are very effective and positive
- learners make good improvements in personal and social skills and make gains in self-esteem
- support for learners in teaching and training sessions is very good
- very effective management of programmes ensures the good quality of teaching and learning and good outcomes for learners
- staff have a relentless focus on meeting the needs of all learners
- staff have excellent working arrangements with external agencies and organisations to ensure that the coherence of the curriculum meets local and national employment needs
- safeguarding arrangements are outstanding.

#### This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- tutors' use of questioning does not always allow the tutor to assess fully the knowledge and understanding of all learners and to identify the level of progress they make
- the feedback on the performance of learners' written work is not always routinely and systematically assessed in order for learners to fully understand the quality of their work
- the clarity of targets in progress reviews and reports is sometimes insufficient to support learners in their next steps in learning
- staff use data insufficiently to analyse learners' outcomes fully for those on employability programmes
- the observation reports of teaching and learning do not systematically and routinely focus on the evaluation of learning.

## Full report

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

- Improve the tutors' use of questioning techniques to enable all learners to contribute to teaching and training sessions, ensuring that their level of knowledge and understanding is tested and assessed.
- Improve the quality of written assessment through rigorous evaluation of the standard of performance and comment on how improvements can be made to learners' work including the routine correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Ensure that target setting on all progress reviews and action plans clearly details the next steps in learning and learners understand what they need to do to make progress.
- Improve the analysis and use of data in the identification of programmes and courses that require improvement. Identify slow progress and non-completion and use this information to bring about improvement to the programme.
- Ensure observations of the teaching and training provision focus on and identify the quality of learning that takes place in classrooms and workshops. Identify the aspects that benefit the learners in making good progress and share the good practice throughout the organisation.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- All learners study on programmes that have a clear and central focus on employability. To meet their individual needs, English and mathematics courses and work experience opportunities are provided to ensure that they gain relevant skills to support them in applying for and entering into employment.
- Outcomes for learners are good. A significant number of learners with a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities, many with multiple and severe barriers to learning, are successful in completing their learning goals. In 2013/14, the success rates for learners on functional skills in English and mathematics at all levels were high at 72% and 78% respectively. In the same year, the success rate for learners on the diploma in employability was low. However, a further significant number of learners achieved a certificate in employability. Overall, a high number of learners received an employability award. The retention rate is very high.
- For the year 2012/13, the success rate on level 1 long qualifications was high and well above the national rate. A third of learners partially achieved and received a certificate in employability. All learners completed their programme.
- Learners across the provision have multiple and severe barriers to learning and employment with almost all having significant issues in their lives that affect learning. Learners have low literacy and/or numeracy skills on starting their programmes. However, they demonstrate significant improvement from very low and difficult starting points. They develop good skills which they use during project work and in their home life. For example, construction learners have refurbished Works4U offices, built a construction workshop at the Peacock site and have completed extensive and major work at the Works4U farm to improve the farm animal facilities. Learners are encouraged to work together and develop team-building skills.
- In the construction workshops, trainers manage the programme skilfully to maintain learners' interest and motivation through individual projects in which they design and build products that they can take away. For example, learners produce clock cases, bedside tables and plant containers to a good standard.

- Sensitive and caring support workers and teaching and training staff help learners skilfully to improve their confidence, gain self-esteem and develop independent living skills. This equips them to improve their health and well-being, understand their rights and responsibilities, develop personal and social skills and manage money and housing issues.
- Progression into further education and employment is good. Of the 24 learners in 2013/14, three learners progressed on to college programmes, two into apprenticeships, two into paid employment and 17 learners continued on the newly introduced and flexible employability programmes.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good which is confirmed in the positive outcomes for learners on employability awards and functional skills qualifications. Trainers have high expectations for their learners, many of whom have a significant range of barriers to learning that include autism, self-harm, low self-esteem and emotional and behavioural issues. Staff respond well to their needs in a caring and motivational way developing learners' resilience and independent living skills.
- Learning and support are well planned and managed. In construction sessions, learners develop good mathematical skills through the measuring and construction of complex geometric structures. They work confidently as a team, developing skills to work together successfully, and remain engaged and motivated, enjoying their learning. Instructors make clear checks on the learners' knowledge and understanding of each stage of the learning process, clearly identifying the progress of each learner and their understanding of angles and lengths.
- The therapeutic advantages of the farm work are particularly effective in developing team-working skills and forming positive relationships. Encouraged by support workers, learners nurture strong relationships with the animals and actively care for them. Learners feed and groom the animals and clean the pens; working alongside caring and considerate staff, they develop and extend their practical skills and form good working relationships.
- Trainers know their learners well and develop extremely positive working relationships that add value to the learners' experience and their progress. For example, on a visit to the local cenotaph learners' behaviour was managed very effectively allowing them to participate successfully in the annual two-minute silence.
- Learners benefit from high levels of care and support. They receive sensitive support during sessions and trainers work closely with support workers to ensure that learners benefit from meaningful and useful verbal feedback. Consequently, learners make good progress through the tasks set. For example, in an employability session, all learners completed a knowledge quiz successfully due to the very effective targeted support by the tutor.
- The use of questioning techniques requires improvement. Too often, the more confident learners dominate sessions to the detriment of the quieter learners, and in some cases this leads to competition between learners who are anxious to be heard.
- The good range of teaching activities in English functional skills sessions contribute well to the effective development of learners' English skills. For example, learners used a variety of newspaper articles, images and stories to guide their completion of a comprehension activity successfully. In another session, the trainer, along with learners, celebrated the recent successful employment of one member of the class, which motivated and engaged all learners.
- The integration of mathematics into sessions is good with learners developing a clear understanding of numbers and their practical application. In one session, learners were supported to work out key dates and years when completing job application forms. They are able to understand the importance of developing these skills to gain employment when completing job application forms and writing their curriculum vitae. However, there is inconsistent identification and correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar on learners' written work.

- Verbal feedback in sessions is good. Learners receive constructive comments to support their progress during tasks. For example, in a functional skills English session, learners were given immediate feedback on their performance before progressing to the next task. However, written feedback on learners' marked work is inconsistent. In the better examples, feedback given to learners is constructive and useful; however, too much feedback lacks detail on the standard of performance and a specific focus on how learners can improve their work in the future.
- Initial assessment practices are good. They are detailed and clearly identify the complex and multiple needs of learners. Trainers plan learning skilfully and very effectively through the use of information provided on individual learning plans, risk assessments and individual hazard identification assessments. For example, one learner, at risk of leaving the group, received close monitoring and good support by the key worker during a field trip.
- Target setting on progress reviews and reports requires improvement. Learners have insufficient detailed targets on both progress reviews and action plans and as a result, they do not always understand fully the next small steps in their learning goals.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Staff recognise clearly the differing barriers to learning and use this knowledge very effectively to plan and deliver their sessions. This leads to the majority of learners completing successfully all of the tasks planned. Learners develop a broad awareness of equality and diversity through their involvement in celebrations such as Eid and St. Patrick's Day. Learners explore issues surrounding stereotyping and labelling very effectively and trainers guide them to understand the use of appropriate terminology.
- Learners feel safe and the focus given to safeguarding is outstanding. During induction, learners discuss bullying, harassment, equality and diversity, behaviour and their responsibilities. Trainers and support workers pay particularly close attention to how learners are feeling and through very effective behaviour management and strict adherence to health and safety they ensure that learners remain safe while in their care.

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>
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- Leadership and management are good. Leaders and managers have an ambitious vision for their business and have high expectations for their learners; they have set a clear strategic direction and work hard to achieve their objectives. Works4U staff have a clear focus on the needs of their learners, many of whom have complex and multiple barriers to learning.
- During the first year of operating the employability provision, Works4U recognised that it had misunderstood the timescale for the diploma programme. The majority of learners partially achieved their planned goals and received a certificate instead of a full diploma. Managers have taken effective action to ensure that all learners who received a certificate have now progressed on to a recently introduced flexible award. Learners have new goals based on their initial assessment and are making good progress.
- Staff are passionate about supporting learners to develop the work ethic and their personal and social skills to prepare them for progression into work or further training. Works4U's successful strategy is to maintain a relentless focus on ensuring learners attend regularly, engage with the range of individually planned learning opportunities and develop to their full potential.
- Through the sensitive and targeted support to learners, many of whom find it difficult to maintain punctuality and attendance managers and staff are successful in ensuring that learners, despite their barriers to learning, are attending regularly and making good progress in their studies.
- Quality assurance arrangements are in place to monitor the quality of teaching sessions through observations. Observation reports are extensive in judging the quality of teaching and the progress learners make in improving their behaviour. Staff who are identified as requiring improvement have an appropriate action plan with specific targets to meet in order to bring about improvement. However, the observation reports do not assess the quality of learning systematically.

- The self-assessment report is extensive, self-critical and an accurate representation of the provision. Managers have identified clearly areas that require improvement and inspectors agree with many of these. However, while data are analysed thoroughly and well presented, indicating how effective the provider is in achieving learners' overall outcomes, the analysis is not detailed well enough to separate and judge some of the individual aspects of the provision. Managers have recognised this and plans to implement a computerised reporting system are well advanced.
- The well-planned development and introduction of resources include the recent addition of a bicycle repair shop. Planning is well advanced for the installation of a training kitchen and a music studio on the Peacock site, and a riding arena at the Works4U farm. These will extend the choice of learning activities available to maintain interest and motivate the learners. Learners are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle through a personal development programme at a local sports centre as part of their curriculum.
- Works4U works closely with an extensive range of external organisations including schools, employers, mental and physical health organisations and pupil referral units. Managers plan and manage a flexible provision very effectively for learners who are highly vulnerable and have complex mental and/or physical barriers to learning. Work experience is of good quality. Interventions provide good-quality supportive and targeted provision to meet the individual needs of learners and the requirements of the local community and organisations.
- Staff promote equality and diversity very well. They challenge prejudice and actively confront issues that arise. Learners treat each other, their tutors and trainers, with respect and courtesy and accept each other's learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity. Different cultures and events are celebrated in a variety of ways and staff are encouraged to integrate equality and diversity into their sessions. Managers are vigilant in identifying any form of bullying and discrimination and deal with issues very effectively.
- Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding. Learners with severe learning difficulties and/or disabled learners feel safe, understand the need to work safely, and feel confident in raising their concerns with Works4U staff at all levels. The very effective risk management strategy includes particularly detailed and thorough individual risk assessments for all learners and the identification of likely hazards that they may encounter during their travel to and from the centres and while in training. These are updated as learners develop and become less dependent on Works4U. The managing director reviews thoroughly any serious incidents and preventative actions taken to support staff. The needs of learners are managed sensitively and carefully through particularly well targeted interventions and support activities. These are designed to not only support learners but to encourage and guide them in gaining confidence and becoming independent. Works4U takes the well-being of its learners very seriously; those that attend the centre without having eaten breakfast are provided with food; lunch is also provided for all learners free of charge.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Norman Mackie and Associates T/A Works4U Support Services

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	N/A
Outcomes for learners	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	N/A
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	N/A
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	N/A

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

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Independent learning provider							
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16-18							
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	24							
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Ms Wendy Mackie							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	N/A							
<b>Website address</b>	www.works4u.org.uk							
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>								
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>	
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	34	8	10	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	23							
<b>Full-time</b>	3							
<b>Part-time</b>	20							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	53							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	N/A							

## Contextual information

Works4U, established in 1999 under the title of Norman Mackie and Associates Ltd, provided National Vocational Qualification programmes to local employers based predominately in the care sector. The main office, farm and training centre are situated in Stalybridge. Provision is also provided in Salford, Manchester. Works4U Support Services was formally established in 2007 to provide support services and employability programmes to young people, many of whom are not fully integrated into mainstream education. Norman Mackie and Associates Ltd and Works4U merged in October 2012 to form a single company, Norman Mackie and Associates Ltd T/A Works4U Support Services. The local populations are diverse; many learners have multiple and severe barriers to learning and require intensive support and guidance, reflecting the nature of the provider. The provision is predominately focused on learners aged 16 to 18 with a smaller number of 19+ learners. Around half of the provision is for learners aged 14 to 16 who are integrated into the groups. Programmes are delivered to cohorts of learners from Tameside, Manchester, Stockport and Derbyshire areas.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Alan Hatcher AI

Two 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. 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. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed 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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