

# Norman Mackie & Associates Limited

Independent learning provider

## Inspection dates

20–22 September 2016

Overall effectiveness		Inadequate	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>	Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Inadequate</b>		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Inadequate</b>		
Outcomes for learners	<b>Inadequate</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Good

## Summary of key findings

### This is an inadequate provider

- Learners' progress is slow because tutors do not provide learners with suitably challenging activities that extend their skills and knowledge from what they could already do when they started their course.
- The study programme is not effective as it has not been adapted well enough to meet the range of learners' complex and challenging needs; too many learners are enrolled on inappropriate courses and pass rates are low.
- Tutors are frequently distracted from delivering effective learning to deal with learners' personal and social issues because governors and leaders have not successfully engaged the expertise of specialist external support.
- Leaders and managers have failed to take effective action to rectify the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection; the quality of the provision has declined sharply.
- Learners do not have clear targets for their personal development and learning against which they can monitor their progress.
- Quality improvement arrangements, including the self-assessment process, are weak.
- Tutors do not provide learners with feedback on how to improve their work; the most able learners' work is often below the standard they are capable of achieving.
- The English and mathematics skills of most learners are not improving.
- Learners are unaware of their future options as the quality of careers advice and guidance is poor.
- Governance is ineffective.
- A small minority of tutors are not confident to discuss with learners the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Most learners attend regularly and enjoy their time at the provider. Their records of attendance and behaviour show an improvement from the engagement they showed in their previous schools.
- Tutors and support staff provide good care and pastoral support for learners.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Norman Mackie & Associates Limited, locally known as Work4U, operates from Stalybridge, in Tameside, Greater Manchester. The company offers provision to young people, many of whom have significant barriers to learning, very low prior attainment and often a record of disengagement from education, including repeated exclusions from schools and colleges. A significant number of learners are at a high risk of offending or antisocial behaviour. Learners attend the main site or farm for most of their education and training.
- Learners come from Tameside, Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Derbyshire. The company also holds contracts with a number of schools to provide alternative provision.

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

- Ensure that all components of each learner's study programme are at the right level, implemented consistently well and are of high quality, so that learners can make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills.
- Engage more effectively with external partners responsible for multi-agency support services to provide learners with the specialist help and support they need, so that tutors spend more time focusing on learners' academic needs.
- Urgently develop and implement effective quality improvement arrangements, so that weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment are identified quickly and actions are put in place to improve the quality of learning.
- Implement robust governance arrangements so that leaders and managers are supported and challenged to bring about rapid improvements.
- Establish robust arrangements to ensure that learners receive regular independent careers advice and guidance to help them prepare for their next steps in their education, training or employment.
- Make sure that tutors use information on learners' starting points to set clear, detailed and challenging targets for them and use this information to ensure that teaching is well matched to learners' needs and aspirations.
- Ensure that tutors review and record learners' progress accurately, so learners are clear about their progress and what they need to do to achieve.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning in English and in mathematics by ensuring that tutors make checks on the quality of learners' work and provide them with high-quality feedback on how to improve.
- Ensure that all tutors have the skills and confidence to raise learners' awareness about the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leaders and managers have responded well to local authorities', parents' and carers' demands to engage learners with significant and complex barriers to learning. However, they have failed to develop and implement the study programme effectively to ensure that learners progress, achieve and fulfil their potential.
- Since the previous inspection, senior managers have continued to recruit learners with complex needs. However, they have not been successful in ensuring that learners who require specialist support have access to it, for example from mental health services. As a result, tutors and support staff strive to support learners beyond their role and expertise. They have prioritised providing care rather than delivering effective teaching and training. Overall, the company struggles to provide the necessary support for learners' complex needs.
- Quality improvement arrangements are weak. Managers do not monitor the quality of lessons, training activities or work-related learning effectively, because they spend their time dealing with issues resulting from learners' mental or physical health conditions. When they do monitor the quality of teaching, managers focus too much on tutors' delivery of classroom activities without giving sufficient consideration to the impact of these activities on supporting high-quality learning.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that judgements in the self-assessment report are accurate and lead to effective actions for improvement. Managers do not use data well to improve the quality of the provision. They have been too slow to improve the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection; the quality of provision has declined sharply.
- Performance management is not effective. Staff receive a wide range of training, for example on using learners' education, health and care (EHC) plans to set meaningful targets. However, managers do not ensure that tutors use this training to improve their practice. Tutors are not held to account for learners' slow progress; as a result, learners have not achieved well enough.
- Leaders have increased the range of work-related activities available to learners. For example, learners develop their communication skills in a recently opened coffee shop on the premises that is open to public. However, managers have failed to ensure that learners benefit fully from work-related learning. Staff do not set clear expectations for what learners should gain from the workplace and do not monitor and record the impact of work experience on learners' development of skills and confidence.
- Staff at all levels work hard to protect learners from bullying, discrimination and exploitation when on the provider's premises and on work experience.

### The governance of the provider

- Governance is not effective. The directors and senior managers meet regularly but there is no independent challenge about the quality of the provision and learners' experiences. Directors and leaders are committed to supporting learners at high risk of social and economic exclusion. However, they have been unsuccessful in preventing the decline in the quality of the provision and decline in learners' achievements. Despite directors' determination, without appropriate arrangements for accountability, the company does not have sufficient capacity to improve swiftly.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet the legal requirements. Staff are appropriately checked to ensure that they do not present risks to learners; they have received effective training about protecting learners. Staff at all levels are very vigilant and take swift and effective action when incidents occur. They work very effectively with the local community and the police to ensure a safe learning environment.
- Staff have received training on their duties under counter-terrorism legislation and know how to report their concerns about learners at risk. They take appropriate steps to ensure that learners are protected from the risks of radicalisation. However, a small minority of tutors are not confident enough to explain the risks of radicalisation in ways that are meaningful to learners, so that learners can apply their understanding in their everyday lives.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Inadequate

- Most learners have special educational needs and/or disabilities, a significant number are looked after by their local authority and a small minority are in the youth justice system. Staff provide learners with high levels of effective personal support to help them attend their lessons regularly. The large majority of learners study for qualifications that are too demanding considering their level of prior attainment; as a result, they lose interest and do not complete their programmes successfully. A minority of learners, who are the most able, get bored because tutors do not have sufficiently high enough expectations of the standards that they are capable of achieving.
- Tutors do not use the detailed assessment of learners' starting points, including their EHC plans, to deliver lessons to ensure learners' progress. Tutors do not set learners individual challenging targets that take sufficient account of their prior attainment and potential. They do not ensure that in lessons or work-related activities learners build on their skills to develop their competencies further.
- Tutors do not assess, review, and record learners' progress and achievements rigorously and accurately. They do not ensure that the feedback they give learners is sufficiently clear and helpful to enable learners to improve their skills and knowledge. Tutors do not correct learners' misunderstandings in their written work. Consequently, learners are unclear about how well they are doing and their next steps.
- There are significant errors in learners' portfolios of work that tutors have marked as being correct. For example, on a money management course, learners' misunderstanding of the consequences of borrowing to purchase products they could not afford was not explored or corrected. As a result, learners are confused, their understanding is not secure and their progress falters.
- Tutors do not focus sufficiently on improving learners' use of English and mathematics. As a result, learners are not developing their English and mathematics skills well enough and many of them often struggle to use these skills in their everyday tasks and work experience placements. Tutors and support staff also focus predominantly on the development of learners' personal skills, which is to the detriment of the development of their academic and vocational skills.

- Most tutors do not develop well enough learners' understanding of the importance of respecting individuals' difference in relation to protected characteristics. As a result, learners are not prepared well enough for life and work in the diverse society of modern Britain. Learners in arts lessons enjoy learning about the 'Chinese New Year', and gain a better understanding of different races living in Britain.
- Learners are provided with a balanced curriculum that includes educational and vocational lessons, sessions in English and mathematics, work experience and enrichment activities. However, the provider has not devised and delivered all the components of the study programme at the right level and to a consistently high standard, to enable all learners to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Managers have developed good links with local employers and voluntary organisations that offer work experience placements. Tutors help learners to develop their confidence and behaviour in readiness for work experience. Although many learners complete their planned work placements, few benefit as much as they should from this experience because their employers do not give them sufficiently challenging and interesting tasks.

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

### **Inadequate**

- Tutors do not have clear strategies to improve learners' poor spelling, grammar and use of mathematics. This is detrimental to the progress learners make in acquiring the spoken and written skills in English and the skills in mathematics that they need in order to thrive at work and in everyday life. For example, although learners may grow in confidence in using their communication skills with their peers in the training centre, they are not confident in transferring these skills in unfamiliar surroundings or with people they have not met before.
- Learners do not receive sufficient information, advice and guidance to plan their future options. As a result, learners do not have clear and realistic view of how they can achieve their long-term career aims or employment. Staff do not check learners' understanding of the career information that learners receive.
- Learners benefit from dedicated sports sessions. A small minority of learners have developed a good attitude to keeping healthy and fit, for example by attending weekly sport activities and dance sessions.
- Learners increase their confidence in a way that is particularly evident in their willingness to attend lessons and try new activities, such as attending work placements with employers. Parents and carers report how well their children develop their confidence, independence and behaviour, and in some instances contribute more in the home environment.
- Most learners, who previously had poor attendance at school, attend regularly. Learners behave well in lessons and workshops, and work well together in team activities.

## Outcomes for learners

## Inadequate

- Almost all learners who start on their courses have abilities and skills that are below those expected for their age. Because of the weak quality of the provision, learners do not make the secure progress to reach levels appropriate to their potential and aptitude.
- In 2014/15, the proportion of learners aged 16 to 18, and those aged 19 and over who were successful in gaining qualifications declined sharply and was low. The provider's data indicates that the proportion of learners who achieved their qualifications in 2015/16 improved slightly, but remains low.
- The standard of learners' work is not good enough because it includes a significant number of persistent errors that they are not aware of and so they are unable to learn from their mistakes and make corrections. Too many learners produce work that does not meet the requirements of the qualifications that they want to achieve. Learners' work often does not reflect that they have a thorough understanding of the topics covered.
- Learners develop an appropriate range of vocational skills when they first start on their courses; for example, they develop basic skills in carpentry. However, learners do not develop their skills to a higher level as tutors plan activities that require learners to spend too much time repeating the same tasks. Only a minority of learners develop good standards of work; for example, learners produce good standards of work in arts lessons.
- Not enough learners progress to further courses or employment. In 2015/16, around half of learners returned to the provider to complete their qualifications and very few enrolled on higher-level qualifications. Around one fifth of learners progressed to supported internships in the local college.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	58507
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	50
Director	Wendy Mackie
Telephone number	0161 303 1069
Website	<a href="http://www.normanmackie.com/">http://www.normanmackie.com/</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+
	31	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	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 traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	26							
Funding received from:	Education Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	None							

## 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

Shahram Safavi, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Elaine Price	Ofsted Inspector
Jean Webb	Ofsted Inspector

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