

# Norman Mackie & Associates Limited

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 58507

**Name of lead inspector:** Shahram Safavi HMI

**Inspection date(s):** 17 May 2017

**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** The Peacock  
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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

This is the third re-inspection monitoring visit to Norman Mackie & Associates Limited following publication of the inspection report on 1 November 2016. The inspection found the provider to be inadequate overall.

At the inspection, outcomes for learners, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, personal development behaviour and welfare, and the effectiveness of leadership and management were judged inadequate. Inspectors judged the provision for learners with high needs to be inadequate. This monitoring visit focused on the improvement action plan, governance arrangements, the quality of extra support, the suitability of study programmes for individual learners and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

### Themes

#### **What progress have leaders and managers made in producing and implementing a robust action plan in response to the weaknesses found at the previous inspection? Reasonable progress**

Since the previous visit, senior managers have focused well on taking action and establishing measures to improve staff performance. All staff have an individual weekly meeting with the business manager. These meetings focus on their learners' attendance and performance, and any learner issues that need resolving. Staff also discuss the outcomes from their lesson observations, how well they are implementing the new processes to monitor learners' progress, the impact of any recent training and what further development needs they would benefit from receiving. These meetings set high expectations for staff and are beginning to change the organisational culture. Staff now have a clearer understanding of what is expected from them and how their performance will be measured and supported. Staff are better organised and are now taking responsibility for improving their practices. They are developing a strong sense of accountability.

Senior managers are now making better use of information about learners to improve their progress. For example, the attendance of learners has improved since the previous visit. Staff have worked hard to ensure that learners keep more-organised work files so that they can review what they have learned. Records of learners' achievements are now collated together in a professional portfolio folder. Learners feel proud to present this folder to their families, carers or employers when attending job interviews.

Following the previous visit, managers have revisited and revised the improvement action plan. Now each member of staff's responsibility for implementing actions is clear and they are held to account for the success of their actions. To speed up improvements, managers have visited a number of providers and they have brought new practices to the organisation. For example, they have introduced 'learning walks' to check the quality of lessons. However, the outcomes of 'learning walks' have not

improved all aspects of tutors' teaching and coaching techniques. This is because in their observations, managers do not sufficiently review the impact of teaching practices on learners' progress.

**What changes have been made to ensure that the organisation has effective governance arrangements?** **Reasonable progress**

Nine members now form the advisory board. They have a wide range of expertise that they use well to support and challenge senior managers to improve the quality of the provision. Leaders and managers are benefiting from members' expertise in working with learners who have special educational needs and/or learning disabilities and challenging behaviour. Four of the board members have taken responsibility to report on specific areas of the provision. This includes reporting to the full board about learners' progress, the quality of teaching and learning, safeguarding and health and safety, and functional skills provision.

The board members receive a range of relevant and clear information about the performance of learners before their meetings, for example, information about learners' achievements, retention and behaviour. However, their discussions and any actions for senior managers in relation to learners' outcomes are not recorded. Senior managers provide the board with information about the quality of lessons. However, this information is not accurate and consequently the members cannot challenge senior managers for swifter improvements. The notes of the advisory board meeting do not clearly indicate where members have requested actions to be taken by senior managers. There is no indication of how actions taken by senior managers will be followed up or how the impact of managers' actions will be monitored by the members of the advisory board. The members take their responsibilities seriously and are ambitious for learners and the organisation. They recognise fully the need for swift effective actions to improve learners' experience.

**What progress have leaders and managers made to engage external partners responsible for multi-agency support services to provide learners with effective specialist support?** **Reasonable progress**

Senior managers have taken a number of measures to reduce disturbances to learning in lessons caused by learners' challenging behaviours. The weekly visits to the centre by a counsellor to support learners who need specific emotional support is having a positive impact. A significant number of learners have benefited from sessions with the counsellor. The learners who have attended understand the impact of their behaviour on their learning. These learners are now better able to recognise the consequences of their challenging behaviour on their progress in lessons and that of their peers.

Managers have ensured that tutors have received specific training about managing disruptive behaviour. Tutors are now more confident in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Learners who have episodes of challenging behaviour now move from their lessons to a quiet area and return when they are calm and ready to learn. Consequently, lessons are more productive and learners are making better progress.

Tutors now have more options for support and they readily seek guidance about how best to deal with learners with significant personal challenges. Partnership working between learners' parents or carers and staff is good. The combination of these behaviour management and support strategies has improved significantly the learning environment for all learners.

**What progress have managers made to ensure that all components of individual learners' study programmes reflect their ability level and potential, so that they make good progress and achieve? Reasonable progress**

Since the previous visit, managers have improved how they monitor learners' development and progress. Tutors and managers record termly individual learners' progress against five measures; confidence and self-esteem, attendance, behaviour, qualifications and independent learning skills. Senior managers display this information prominently on a display board to keep the focus on improving learners' outcomes.

The majority of learners study on appropriate courses in English and mathematics and many have achieved their functional skills tests. Most tutors help learners to develop their use of mathematics in vocational subjects, for example by measuring the exact amount of water required for cooking recipes or measuring the position of a lock to fit in a door. Most learners speak clearly and confidently about their learning tasks. However, tutors do not develop sufficiently learners' skills in written English. Learners are not developing the skills to recognise and rectify errors in their written work. Consequently, they continue to make the same mistakes and are not developing their vocabulary or spelling as well as they are capable of.

Managers adjust aspects of the study programme for the majority of learners to meet their developmental and career aims. For example, they add to their programmes lessons in joinery, information and communication technology and animal care. A significant number of learners' portfolios of work and their activities in lessons show that they are benefiting from these changes; alternative activities keep learners motivated and develop new skills that will benefit them in their future. However, tutors do not record this information accurately and consequently learners do not have an accurate understanding of the importance of the skills they are developing. A small minority of learners work below their abilities. Too often, these learners study on courses that result in a level of qualification that is lower than the level that they can achieve.

Learners benefit from specific lessons to help them identify their career choices. During these lessons, learners search for vacancies for traineeships, apprenticeships or employment. Tutors encourage learners to evaluate their skills and qualities against the opportunities available or what employers require. Most learners find it useful to identify any gaps in their experience and qualifications and develop a plan to improve their skills and training so that their job prospects are enhanced. Four learners have been accepted to a traineeship when they complete their programme this summer.

**What has been done to ensure that tutors use the starting points of learners to plan and deliver teaching, learning and assessment to meet effectively the needs of learners, including the need to improve their use of English and mathematics and protect them against harm?**

**Reasonable progress**

Managers have put in place a detailed and extensive staff development programme to improve teaching and training practices. Tutors now benefit from a reasonable range of relevant training and good support from their managers to ensure that their teaching, training and coaching practices match learners' needs.

Managers have sought and adapted a number of effective practices from other providers, for example to improve the quality of learners' individual targets. The impact of this work has been positive on improving tutors' practices, although further improvements are required. In most lessons, tutors provide their learners with clear targets linked to the achievement of their qualifications. Only a minority of tutors include targets for learners to improve their personal development. Managers regularly check learners' daily and weekly targets. Targets set for the most-able learners are not sufficiently demanding. Tutors encourage learners to review their progress against their targets, and many learners review and record their learning well. A minority of tutors set targets that are too broad, for example to 'complete a worksheet in either English or mathematics'.

A minority of tutors do not write targets in an appropriate level of English that learners can clearly understand; consequently, a minority of learners do not evaluate what they learn accurately. Tutors have a very detailed understanding of learners' existing skills and their behaviour and learning challenges. In most sessions, tutors use this information well to plan appropriate activities for individual learners, such as including additional activities for learners who lose attention. For example, they include tasks that help learners to improve their skills in living independently, such as how to complete the electric wiring of a plug. The use of additional motivational tasks to maintain learners' interest and keep a good pace of learning is not yet consistent in all lessons. Learners are not always fully aware of the full range of skills that they develop and how they will help them in their future lives or careers as they are not always accurately explained and recorded.

Not all tutors produce handouts that learners can easily understand and use. Tutors include words in their handouts that learners cannot readily understand, such as 'antitoxin food'. Tutors do not regularly ensure that lesson activity sheets match learners' abilities. Consequently, when learners use activity sheets that are too complex, they lose interest, become bored and do not complete the work to a good standard.

Managers have not ensured that all the risk assessments are completed accurately. They do not ensure that all learners wear suitable protective clothing to reflect good industrial practices, so that they are better prepared for employment.

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