

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Barber Bird Ltd**

**14 June 2006**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people aged over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**).

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the Common Inspection Framework by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

## Pre-inspection analysis

The resources allocated to a cycle 2 inspection are primarily determined by the findings from the previous inspection. Account is also taken of information about achievement and retention obtained from the funding body, and any significant changes in the size or scope of the provision.

Where a provider has received good grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is relatively light. If the provider offers a number of areas of learning, a restricted sample is inspected.

Where a provider has received satisfactory grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is less intensive and it is possible that not all areas of learning are included.

Where there are significant unsatisfactory grades from cycle 1, the intensity of the cycle 2 inspection is broadly the same as cycle 1, and all significant areas of learning are inspected.

Providers that have not previously been inspected will receive a full inspection.

## Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half of the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and in at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning.

## Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes, as well as to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes equality of opportunity and quality assurance. The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - inadequate*

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Barber Bird Ltd

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## INSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Barber Bird Ltd is a registered company situated in the village of Thurcroft, five miles from the centre of Rotherham, South Yorkshire. The company was founded in 1986. It has a contract with South Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council, to provide hairdressing apprenticeships for young people. There is a managing director and an executive director who also acts as centre manager. She is supported by a small team of three, including a training manager. There are also five staff who are involved in the training, assessment and internal verification of the apprentices. Hairdressing training takes place in salons throughout South Yorkshire.

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

**Grade 4**

2. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate.** Barber Bird's leadership and management are inadequate, as are its arrangements for quality improvement. Its arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. The provision in retail and commercial enterprise is inadequate.

3. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment report was clearly written against the Common Inspection Framework, and was sufficiently judgemental and critical. However, the self-assessment process is not sufficiently inclusive of the views of learners and employers to accurately evaluate its strengths and weaknesses. The self-assessment report identified some of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors but significant weaknesses were not identified in the report. The grades in the self-assessment report were higher than the grades given by the inspection team, except for equality of opportunity.

4. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** Barber Bird has been ineffective in carrying out actions to promote improvement, and the quality of the provision has deteriorated. Some actions identified by the previous inspection team are still to be completed. The inspection team felt that Barber Bird has been able to demonstrate some improvements since the previous inspection and there is evidence of action-planning for quality improvement.

### KEY CHALLENGES FOR BARBER BIRD LTD:

- significantly improve the retention and achievement rates
- review the effectiveness of key processes for managing the business
- review the effectiveness of the internal verification system
- develop business planning and target setting
- use management information more effectively
- maintain the good work on literacy and numeracy support

## GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = inadequate

Grades awarded at inspection

Leadership and management		4
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality improvement		4

Retail and commercial enterprise			4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<b>Hairdressing</b>		<b>4</b>	
Apprenticeships for young people	65	4	
NVQ training for young people	3	None	

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

5. Inspectors reported on and graded the training provision in hairdressing. All the provision was inspected in the same week and judgements were also made about leadership and management, including the arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality improvement.

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	9
Number of learners interviewed	30
Number of staff interviewed	11
Number of employers interviewed	6
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of visits	4

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievements and standards

6. **Learners develop the skills that are needed to operate effectively in employment.** Portfolios of evidence are well structured. There is a good range of evidence to support the national vocational qualification (NVQ)

7. **Retention and achievements rates are low.** In 2003-04, the success rate for apprentices was 86 per cent, with six of the seven learners completing their frameworks.

Since then, success rates have declined to 42 per cent in 2004-05. In the current year, 28 per cent of apprentices have completed the framework to date and 23 per cent are expected to complete in the near future. The achievement rate for advanced apprentices was 50 per cent for 2003-04. However, none of the learners completed the framework in 2004-05. Of the advanced apprentices who started in 2004-05, 50 per cent are still in learning. Timely success rates for apprentices are low but have improved slightly. In 2003-04, none of the apprentices completed their frameworks by their expected end date. In 2004-05, of the 42 per cent of apprentices who were successful, 12 per cent completed by the end date on their individual learning plan. The timely success rate for advanced apprentices in 2003-04 was 33 per cent. Since then, none of the advanced apprentices have completed the framework by their expected end date.

### The quality of provision

8. **Learners receive good support to meet their individual needs.** Approximately 75 per cent of learners who join the programme have additional learning and/or social needs.

9. Learners receive good individual support during their off-the-job training sessions. Staff effectively help learners to raise their literacy and numeracy skills and prepare them for the apprenticeship framework. Pastoral support is good. Staff have a caring and supportive approach to learners.

10. **Progress reviews are very effective.** The review process enables comprehensive feedback to be given to learners on their progression towards all aspects of their apprenticeship. Learners have a clear understanding of the requirements of their framework. During the workplace review, learners are encouraged to work through their portfolios and identify their own targets. Good links have been established with many employers and they take a full role in the progress reviews.

11. **The teaching of literacy and numeracy has many good features.** Clear learning objectives are set at the start of the lesson. The tutor uses relevant examples to ensure learners understand topics.

12. **There were several instances of poor reinforcement of learning,** and learners' work was not checked and corrected early enough. Some learners waited for long periods for instructions. In some classroom sessions there is insufficient encouragement given to learners to research topics.

### Leadership and management

13. **Barber Bird has good links with employers and external organisations.** Employers have a good understanding of the background knowledge and practical training sessions carried out at the training centre.

14. **The company takes a full role in offering training to a wide range of disadvantaged young people** from local communities, who would otherwise have poor prospects of employment. A number of local secondary schools send pupils to Barber Bird to take part in the company's re-engagement programme, which is aimed at encouraging disaffected young people to enter work-based learning. They develop good personal skills and improve their self-confidence, self-esteem and behaviour at school. A number of visiting speakers have been invited to the centre to talk to learners about health and safety.

Learners value these sessions.

15. **The company's management and delivery of literacy and numeracy support is particularly effective.** Barber Bird has a good reputation for supporting learners with additional needs. Learners value the support they receive and the progress they make to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. The resources used for literacy and numeracy are good.

16. **Learners who attend the training centre have regular equality and diversity sessions** and the content is changed on a quarterly basis. These sessions are lively and interactive and learners are encouraged to explore their own ideas of equality and diversity and to share them with the group. There is good reinforcement of equality at reviews.

17. **Strategic planning is weak.** Barber Bird produces annual strategic plans, but the plans do not focus sufficiently on the future direction of the company. Staff and employers are not sufficiently involved in the strategic planning process. Barber Bird's three-year development plan does not have clear targets with accompanying timescales for the company's future development.

18. **Insufficient focus is given to staff training and development.** There is no planned programme of training linked to appraisal outcomes or weaknesses identified during self-assessment. Staff are not sufficiently involved in identifying their own training needs through the company's appraisal process. Reviews of staff performance at appraisal are not detailed enough and needs are not accurately identified.

19. **Barber Bird does not have clear targets with timescales for retention, achievement and progression rates.** Targets are not set for individual members of staff at appraisal.

20. **Many of the weaknesses in quality assurance identified at the previous inspection have not been rectified.** The company's policy does not clearly identify and explain the quality systems used to monitor and improve the provision. Barber Bird has written procedures for different stages of its training programmes, such as initial assessment, induction and progress reviews.

21. **Training is not formally observed.** Staff do not receive any structured feedback about the standard of their training and there are no action plans to bring about improvements. Internal verifiers do not observe some important parts of learners' training programmes.

22. **Actions agreed at meetings and timescales for their completion are not systematically identified.** Staff do not meet on a sufficiently regular basis. There is insufficient sharing of good practice at assessors' meetings.

23. The company gathers regular feedback from learners and employers. **However, the questionnaires are poorly designed** and they do not provide detailed feedback to help the company improve its provision. Employers are not involved sufficiently in the self-assessment process.

24. There are currently 10 advanced apprentices, **but there has been no teaching or assessment of the technical certificate for these learners.**

25. **There is insufficient formal planning of internal verification sampling** to ensure that key aspects are examined. Insufficient planning makes it difficult to measure the success of the internal verification system. Learners are not interviewed to identify their satisfaction with the assessment process. There is insufficient feedback for assessors after sampling has taken place. Where feedback is provided, it is rarely focused on raising the quality of assessment practice.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Strengths**

- good links with employers and external organisations
- particularly effective management and delivery of literacy and numeracy support
- effective strategies to ensure learners have a clear understanding of equality and diversity

### **Weaknesses**

- weak strategic planning
- insufficient focus on staff training and development
- insufficient analysis of performance against specific targets
- slow development of processes to effect improvement

## **Retail and commercial enterprise**

### ***Hairdressing***

#### *Strengths*

- good support for learners who have additional learning and social needs
- very effective reviews of progress, with effective employer involvement

#### *Weaknesses*

- low retention and achievement rates
- insufficient learning opportunities in some off-the-job training sessions
- insufficient action taken to ensure advanced apprentices can achieve all components of the framework
- some weak aspects of internal verification

## **WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT BARBER BIRD LTD:**

- the learner representatives
- 'the staff are really, really friendly and helpful'
- going to college
- basic skills sessions
- 'you get help when it's needed'
- 'I'm on track and the staff are working with me to get me through'

## **WHAT LEARNERS THINK BARBER BIRD LTD COULD IMPROVE:**

- the number of clients in the training centre - there are not enough
- the college - 'I would like to attend more often'
- more opportunities to practise their skills
- 'cutting out the repetition'
- more staff to cover absenteeism and holidays

## DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 4**

#### Strengths

- good links with employers and external organisations
- particularly effective management and delivery of literacy and numeracy support
- effective strategies to ensure learners have a clear understanding of equality and diversity

#### Weaknesses

- weak strategic planning
- insufficient focus on staff training and development
- insufficient analysis of performance against specific targets
- slow development of processes to effect improvement

26. Barber Bird has good links with employers and external organisations. Employers are fully involved in the various stages of the learners' training, such as induction and progress reviews. They have a good understanding of apprenticeship frameworks and their learners' progress. Employers' awareness of background knowledge training and practical sessions carried out at the training centre is good. They value the relevance and quality of the training carried out by Barber Bird. Communications with employers are good and the company has a good reputation for the support and advice it offers to employers. However, employers' attendance at events organised by Barber Bird to share ideas and discuss general concerns is poor.

27. The company takes a full role in offering training to a wide range of disadvantaged young people from local communities, who would otherwise have poor prospects of employment. A number of local secondary schools send pupils to Barber Bird to take part in the company's re-engagement programme, which is aimed at encouraging disaffected young people to enter work-based learning. The school pupils enjoy their training and some have achieved a NVQ in hairdressing at level 1, or individual units of the qualification. They develop good personal skills and improve their self-confidence, self-esteem and behaviour at school. Barber Bird has worked successfully with another training provider to offer hairdressing training as the vocational option on an Entry to Employment programme. All the learners achieved an NVQ in hairdressing at level 1 and most have progressed to become apprentices with Barber Bird. One learner has subsequently achieved the apprenticeship framework and seven have completed an NVQ in hairdressing at level 2. Managers liaise effectively with a range of external agencies to support learners who have particularly challenging social problems. A number of visiting speakers have been invited to the centre to talk to learners about health and safety. Learners value these sessions.

28. The company's management and delivery of literacy and numeracy support is particularly effective. Barber Bird has a good reputation for supporting learners with additional needs. In each of the last three years since 2003-04, more than 70 per cent of

the learners have been identified as having poor literacy and/or numeracy skills. The company has appointed a member of staff with responsibility for the co-ordination and delivery of additional support. Learners value the support they receive and the progress they make to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Initial assessment is used well to establish the exact needs of each individual learner and to ensure that support can be targeted to rectify their particular weaknesses. Support for learners with poor literacy and numeracy skills is arranged to fit in with learners' work commitments. They can choose to attend individual or group learning sessions to improve their skills. The resources used for literacy and numeracy support are good.

29. Resources are managed satisfactorily. The company's training centre provides a welcoming and friendly environment. Provision of computer equipment for learners is adequate. The centre is maintained well and all the rooms have recently been redecorated. However, some classrooms are too cramped for the numbers of learners attending training sessions. Most staff have a range of responsibilities and work effectively together to ensure all aspects of the business are managed appropriately.

30. Strategic planning is weak. Barber Bird produces annual strategic plans, but the plans do not focus sufficiently on the future direction of the company. Much of the commentary in the most recent plan consists of a description of the provider, its training processes and what it has achieved to date. Future strategies for the growth of the business are unclear. The annual strategic plans are not sufficiently linked to each other. Barber Bird's three-year development plan does not have clear targets with accompanying timescales for the company's future development. Overall targets in the strategic plan are not broken down into short- and medium-term objectives. Some of the targets are not challenging enough in relation to the company's current performance. Improvement indicators included in the plan are vague and the associated actions and success indicators are not sufficiently detailed and do not give a clear focus on improving the retention and achievement rates. The company does not analyse in enough detail what resources will be required to bring about improvements, or the resulting financial implications and outcomes. Staff and employers are not sufficiently involved in the strategic planning process. Actions to maintain and build on the strengths, and to rectify the weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report, are not incorporated in the strategic plan.

31. Insufficient focus is given to staff training and development. Some staff have been funded by the company to take qualifications related to their roles and responsibilities. However, Barber Bird does not have a learning plan that identifies key priorities for staff development. There is no planned internal programme of training that is linked to appraisal outcomes or weaknesses identified during self-assessment. Records of continuous professional development show that some staff have received regular training, particularly in key skills and skills for life, which is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. However, others have not attended any internal or external training events for a considerable period of time. Staff do not formally share the outcomes of training events with colleagues. Staff are not sufficiently involved in identifying their own training needs through the company's appraisal process. The outcomes of internal verification and tutors' own assessments of their performance during training sessions are not reviewed during appraisals, or used to identify specific development needs. Job descriptions for some staff do not accurately reflect their roles in the company, and are not used as part of the appraisal process. Reviews of staff performance at appraisal are not detailed enough and their training needs are not

accurately identified.

32. Insufficient analysis is carried out of the company's performance against specific targets. Barber Bird does not have clear targets with timescales for retention, achievement and progression rates. The company's overall performance is not reviewed on a sufficiently regular basis. Some staff are not aware of key performance indicators or whether targets are set for retention and achievement rates. Targets are not set for individual members of staff at appraisal. Learners who are at risk of leaving the programme are not always identified at an early stage.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 3**

33. Learners receive basic information about equality of opportunity during induction and there is a copy of Barber Bird's equal opportunities and health and safety policy in the induction pack. Learners who attend the training centre have regular equality and diversity training sessions and the content of the sessions is changed on a quarterly basis. These sessions are lively and interactive and learners are encouraged to explore their own ideas of equality and diversity and to share them with the group. Learners are provided with videos and worksheets and there are some useful and relevant posters in the training room to stimulate discussion. Learners speak highly of these sessions and demonstrate a good awareness of equality and diversity and recent legislation. The training sessions also include exploring forms of harassment and bullying. Learners are encouraged to identify their own understanding of these issues and discuss the implications. Learners' understanding of the company's grievance procedure, which is contained in the induction booklet, is also discussed at these sessions. There is good reinforcement of equal opportunities at reviews where there is good employer representation. Learners are asked a series of equal opportunities questions and relevant information is recorded. A tutor who is responsible for equality and diversity and basic skills training carries out all reviews.

34. All learners are assessed for preferred learning styles and learners who have dyslexia are provided with extra support and suitable training materials. Barber Bird monitors the achievement and timely achievement rates of learners who have a disability or a learning need, compared with other learners. There is adequate access for people with restricted mobility to the training salon and toilet facilities.

35. Barber Bird gathers information on learners' gender, ethnicity, age, disabilities and additional learning needs. It monitors the proportion and success rates of learners by these criteria and they are included in the self-assessment report. Barber Bird recognises that the proportion of learners applying to and entering, the training centre from minority ethnic groups is low. In 2004-05 it was 5.8 per cent and in 2005-06 it is 2.5 per cent. The number of young men entering the profession is also low at 5.8 per cent for 2004-05 and 6.3 per cent for 2005-06. The company has developed good links with local schools and the wider community to widen participation. It has produced promotional materials to include images of men and learners from minority ethnic groups. Barber Bird has a useful website where positive images are reinforced. It has printed promotional materials in Chinese, Urdu and Arabic.

36. Barber Bird's equal opportunities policy is regularly updated and is made available to all staff, learners and employers. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of equality at the quarterly equal opportunities training, where current legislation is explored. All employers are encouraged to have their own equal opportunities policy and they have to

demonstrate a satisfactory appreciation of equal opportunities through their involvement with progress reviews. A copy of the equal opportunities policy is in the learners' information pack. However, the current policy does not contain reference to recent legislation. Previous equal opportunities policies have included reference to legislation, but this practice was discontinued for the current policy. Barber Bird is working on reinstating this section. The induction pack for learners does not include a policy on anti-harassment and bullying.

37. There is no record of staff taking equality and diversity training. Staff demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of equal opportunities and one member of staff has responsibility for preparing and delivering equal opportunities training for learners. These sessions contain references to relevant current legislation.

### **Quality improvement**

### **Contributory grade 4**

38. Barber Bird has been slow to improve the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection and to introduce new quality assurance processes. The company's policy does not clearly identify and explain how quality is monitored in order to improve the provision. Barber Bird has written procedures for different stages of its training programmes, such as initial assessment, induction and progress reviews. However, the procedures do not always accurately reflect how the activities are implemented in practice and do not clearly identify how they should be carried out to ensure that all learners benefit from a consistent experience. Few of the procedures are dated. The company's main promotional literature has a number of typographical errors, although these have been identified by staff and the brochure has been withdrawn for corrections to be made. There have been some recent initiatives, such as the introduction of centre action plans that are designed to provide a greater focus on the learners' progress, but it is too early to judge the effect on the quality of provision.

39. The performance of tutors is observed informally by managers, who also observe on-the-job training when they visit salons. Inspectors graded learning sessions as satisfactory overall. However, training is not formally observed. Staff do not receive any structured feedback about the standards of training they deliver and action plans are not agreed with them to bring about improvements. Assessors receive verbal feedback after the internal verification of learners' portfolios and observations of assessments, but written evaluations are only produced when weaknesses are identified. The lack of formal written feedback on assessors' strengths and what they need to change makes it difficult for assessors to improve their practice.

40. Minutes of meetings are not always recorded accurately. Actions agreed at meetings and timescales for their completion are not systematically identified. Actions are not routinely followed up at subsequent meetings to check whether they have been carried out. Staff do not meet on a sufficiently regular basis to discuss general issues or improvements to training. There is insufficient sharing of good practice at assessors' meetings.

41. The company gathers regular feedback from learners and employers. However, it is not clear how the information gained from questionnaires is used to improve the quality of training. The questionnaires are poorly designed and do not provide sufficiently detailed feedback to help the company improve its provision. Very few employers complete the questionnaires sent to them. Learners and tutors evaluate some training sessions, but it is

not clear how often these evaluations are carried out, or how the feedback is used. The company is aware of the importance of feedback to improve provision and has recently appointed learner representatives to report on the views of the different groups of learners who attend the training centre. Two recent meetings have been held with the learner representatives and early indications are positive as a number of their suggestions have already been acted upon by the company. They include the repainting of all the classrooms at the training centre and changes to the dress code for learners who are working in the training salon.

42. Two of the company's managers are responsible for writing the self-assessment report. The most recent report was written in April 2006 for the inspection. Draft copies are circulated to staff to ascertain their views. The inspection team found the report to be clearly written against the Common Inspection Framework, sufficiently judgemental and critical. However, employers are not involved sufficiently in the process. Inspectors' judgements matched some of those in the report, but the provider has not recognised the significance of some important weaknesses. The grades given by inspectors for leadership and management and the area of learning were lower than those identified by the service.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Retail and commercial enterprise

Grade 4

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Hairdressing</b>		<b>4</b>
Apprenticeships for young people	65	4
NVQ training for young people	3	None

43. Barber Bird employs four full-time and two part-time assessors, as well as two tutors for key skills and literacy and numeracy training. All the assessment team staff support learners in the workplace, as well as those who attend the training centre every two weeks. The assessment staff are qualified and three assessors are also qualified internal verifiers. Barber Bird provides training for 44 salons. All assessors attend standardisation meetings.

44. Learners are referred by Connexions, employers or by recommendation through their reputation for working with young people who have been disadvantaged or disengaged from education. Barber Bird has links with local schools for the delivery of NVQs in hairdressing at level 1.

45. Barber Bird delivers hairdressing training to learners in the Rotherham area. At the time of the inspection, there are 55 apprentices, 10 advanced apprentices and three learners taking NVQ units at level 2.

### **Hairdressing**

#### *Strengths*

- good support for learners who have additional learning and social needs
- very effective reviews of progress, with effective employer involvement

#### *Weaknesses*

- low retention and achievement rates
- insufficient learning opportunities in some off-the-job training sessions
- insufficient action taken to ensure advanced apprentices can achieve all components of the framework
- some weak aspects of internal verification

### **Achievement and standards**

46. Retention and achievement rates are low, and have declined in recent years. In 2003-04, the framework success rate was 86 per cent, with six of the seven learners completing their frameworks. Since then the rate has fallen, to 42 per cent for 2004-05. Although this is in line with the national average for this year, it is low. In the current year, 28 per cent of apprentices have completed the framework to date and a further 23 per cent are expected to complete it in the near future. The completion rate for advanced

apprentices was 50 per cent for 2003-04, but none of the advanced apprentices completed the framework in 2004-05. Of the advanced apprentices who started in 2004-05, 50 per cent are still in learning. Timely success rates for apprentices are low but have improved slightly. In 2003-04, none of the apprentices completed their frameworks by their expected end date. In 2004-05, of the 42 per cent who were successful, 12 per cent completed by the end date on their individual learning plan. The timely success rate for advanced apprentices in 2003-04 was 33 per cent, but since then, none of the advanced apprentices have completed the framework by their planned end date.

47. Learners develop the skills that are needed to operate effectively in employment. The attainment of skills and knowledge is appropriate for the time that learners have been on the programme. Portfolios of evidence are well structured. There is a good range of evidence to support the NVQ.

Programme	End Year	Success Rate	No, of learners	Provider NVQ Rate	National NVQ Rate	Provider framework rate	National framework rate
Advanced Apprenticeships	2003-04	overall	5	50	43	50	32
		timely	3	33	27	33	20
	2004-05	overall	4	25	40	0	29
		timely	3	0	28	0	20
Apprenticeships	2003-04	overall	7	86	62	86	49
		timely	9	0	38	0	30
	2004-05	overall	19	47	48	42	41
		timely	17	12	32	12	28
NVQ training for young	2003-04	overall	30	63	46	0	0
		timely	27	44	31	0	0
	2004-05	overall	22	68	47	0	0
		timely	19	37	28	0	0

For details of how to calculate overall and timely success rates please refer to the "Quality Improvement Pack" (available from the Learning and Skills Council's website: [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)).

### The quality of provision

48. Learners receive good support to meet their individual needs. The provider deals effectively with the significant barriers to progression that learners are faced with before they can move successfully into employment. Barber Bird is well known in the Rotherham area for supportive approach to learners with additional needs and works closely with employers are equally supportive of learners who have been socially or educationally disadvantaged. Good employers provide an environment where learners can develop the technical and social skills that they need to progress in the hairdressing industry. Learners receive good individual support during their two weekly off-the-job training sessions. They can also request extra support either at the training centre or in the workplace. Many of the learners have low levels of literacy and numeracy skills. Staff effectively support learners to raise these skills and prepare them to work towards the apprenticeship framework. Pastoral support is good. Staff have a caring and supportive approach to learners.

49. Progress reviews are very effective. The review process enables comprehensive feedback to be given to learners on their progression towards all aspects of their apprenticeship. The reviews are effectively linked and provide a clear continuous picture of the learners' development. Learners have a clear understanding of the requirements of their framework. During the workplace review, learners are encouraged to work through their portfolios and identify their own targets. Good preparation before the review allows the reviewer to have a clear picture of the learner's performance. Off-the-job training sessions are also discussed at the review. Good links have been established with many employers through their part in the progress reviews. Issues around equality and diversity are suitably explored. A new system of setting targets and supplying feedback on performance at the off-the-job training sessions has improved the links between on- and off-the-job training.

50. The resources in the salons and at the training centre are adequate. The training centre provides learners with the opportunity to use a good range of quality products on their clients and for retail purposes. Staff are adequately experienced. Some staff have a strong commercial background in the industry and use their knowledge effectively in their communication with learners. However, some key members of staff do not have formal hairdressing qualifications and the provider has no future plans to deal with this.

51. In the teaching sessions observed by the inspection team, 25 per cent were good, 50 per cent were satisfactory and 25 per cent were unsatisfactory. In the good sessions, clear learning objectives are outlined at the start and learners are well engaged by a good mix of relevant and stimulating learning materials. These sessions are lively and interactive, drawing on the experiences of the learners. Learners speak positively about their experiences in the training centre. However, there is some poor reinforcement of learning and infrequent checking of learners' work and progress. Learners are not always fully engaged in learning and do not take advantage of learning opportunities that are presented to them. Good health and safety practice is not always reinforced. In some classroom sessions, insufficient encouragement is given to learners to research topics. Subjects are insufficiently explored and learning is not checked to ensure that learners have a clear and sufficiently broad understanding of the subject.

### **Leadership and management**

52. The management of learners' progress is satisfactory. Assessors make regular visits to salons and are well received by the employers. Learners' progress is monitored. Learners, staff and employers are aware of individual progress which is recorded in journals and displayed in the training centre. Barber Bird encourages employers to display progress records in the staff rooms of the training salons.

53. The provider has a well-established system of recording the internal verification sampling that has taken place. Records show clearly that sampling is taking place for all aspects of the qualifications and for assessors and learners. However, there is insufficient formal planning of internal verification sampling to ensure that key aspects are looked at in the future. Insufficient planning makes it difficult to measure the success of the internal verification system. The same weaknesses around internal verification were raised at the previous inspection and these have not been dealt with. Learners are not interviewed as part of the internal verification system, to identify their satisfaction with the assessment process. There is insufficient feedback provided for assessors after sampling has taken

place. Records of sampling do not help assessors with their development. Where feedback is provided it is rarely focused on raising the quality of assessment practice. Feedback is mainly focused on activities that the learners need to complete. Many of the feedback records are incomplete and it is unclear if actions have been dealt with. Internal verifiers do not observe some important parts of learners' training programmes, such as initial assessment, induction and progress reviews.

54. There are currently 10 advanced apprentices in learning. Of the 13 who started, 11 started the programme before the removal of the technical certificate from the framework. There has been no teaching or assessment of the technical certificate for these learners. Learners are not aware that they are required to complete a technical certificate as part of their framework. Currently, these learners will not be able to complete their full frameworks.

