

Summerhouse EEC

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54664

Name of lead inspector: Jo Parkman HMI

Last day of inspection: 25 September 2009

Type of provider: Independent learning provider

Address: Summerhouse EEC
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Information about the provider

1. Summerhouse Education and Equitation Centre (Summerhouse) is a family partnership based in Hardwicke, Gloucester. It provides work-based learning in horse care for apprentices, advanced apprentices and learners on Train to Gain programmes. Summerhouse is also a British Horse Society (BHS) Approved Riding School, a BHS examinations centre, a Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) centre and a competition centre offering competitions affiliated to the British Show Jumping Association and British Dressage. Summerhouse was founded in 1978 to teach recreational riding, and offers BHS examination training from stage 1 to instructor level. Government funded training accounts for around 40% of Summerhouse’s annual income.
2. Gloucestershire’s population is predominately White British and only 4.5% of residents have a minority ethnic heritage. Young school leavers are particularly at risk of social exclusion when they do not participate in employment, education or training. However, the proportion of 16-year-olds who achieve five GCSEs at grade C or above, including mathematics and English, is some 9% higher than the national rate.
3. Summerhouse contracts with the Wiltshire and Swindon Learning and Skills Council. It has expanded its provision since the previous inspection and currently employs 10 full-time and 17 part-time staff.
4. Summerhouse provides training on behalf of the following provider:
 - Hartpury College – national vocational qualifications (NVQs) as adult learner responsive provision (horse care)

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2007/08
Employer provision: Apprenticeships	52 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 1
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Capacity to improve	Grade 1
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	Grade
Outcomes for learners	1
Quality of provision	1
Leadership and management	1
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2

Subject areas	Grade
Equine studies	1

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of Summerhouse’s provision is outstanding. Leaders and managers have very good plans for the development of the training offered at Summerhouse. They have managed the increase in learner numbers, the recruitment of more training yards, the training of assessors and the development of the Train to Gain programme particularly well. Summerhouse has maintained the high quality of its training since the previous inspection. It demonstrates an outstanding capacity to continue to maintain this standard. The achievements of learners are outstanding and most achieve within the agreed time, gaining new skills rapidly. Summerhouse has chosen to work with only those employers who can offer a high standard of training and give learners the best opportunities. Summerhouse works very effectively with its employers and the extent to which the provision meets the needs and interests of employers and learners is outstanding. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Summerhouse provides outstanding care and support for its learners and has a high regard for their welfare and safety. Arrangements to safeguard learners are good and learners say they feel safe and well protected from abuse. Summerhouse promotes equality and diversity effectively and has implemented good strategies to encourage learners with a minority ethnic heritage and male learners to participate in training.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are outstanding. In 2008/09, the success rate for apprentices aged 16 to 18 years old was 80%. Success rates have been well above national rates for the last three years. No significant differences exist in the success rates of different groups of learners.
- Learners develop their new skills and knowledge rapidly and the majority achieve at or before their planned target date. Timely success rates have been well above the national rates for the last three years.
- Learners' work is of a particularly high standard. They develop very good practical skills, work to very high commercial standards and speeds and become competent and safe riders.
- Progression of learners into further training, education or employment is outstanding. Of those apprentices who completed in 2007/08, a quarter progressed to an advanced apprenticeship and all of the remainder progressed to further education or employment within the industry.
- The extent to which learners feel safe is good. They use safe working practices in all settings and regard the safety of the learning environment as good.
- Teaching and learning are good. Learning sessions are inspiring and focus strongly on developing learners' confidence as well as their ability. However, assessors vary too much in the way they give feedback to learners following assessment. In some cases assessor and trainers on yards do not teach topics in the best order to match the qualification.
- Summerhouse is outstanding in providing flexible qualifications with appropriate progression routes into and within a wide range of horse-related occupations. Employers are well qualified and enthusiastic about providing and taking part in training.
- Support for learners is outstanding. Learners' additional needs are identified and adjustments implemented very effectively. Progress and targets are monitored closely. Initial advice and guidance are outstanding. However, a few learners do not receive enough formal guidance about the opportunities open to them once they have completed their training.
- Leaders and managers set a very clear strategic direction for Summerhouse, managing its expansion particularly well. Summerhouse has ensured that all employers provide a high quality learning experience and have an appropriate number of trained and qualified assessors, providing assessor qualifications as part of its provision.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Summerhouse has a clear strategy for safeguarding and places a strong emphasis on learners' health, safety and well-being. Staff have been trained to Local Safeguarding Children Board level 2 in safeguarding.
- Summerhouse's arrangements for equality of opportunity are good and effectively promoted. Managers analyse performance data carefully to look for any evidence of discrimination. Summerhouse implements its strategy for widening participation well.

- Summerhouse has very good arrangements for listening and responding to both learners and employers. Both learners and employers are highly satisfied with the training and support they receive. Employers feel particularly well involved with the training programme and are very satisfied with the progress and development of their learners.
- Summerhouse has very good procedures for evaluating and improving its programmes. Self-assessment is effective and development plans are comprehensive and realistic. Staff development is particularly good and Summerhouse pays particular attention to ensuring that its staff reach their potential.
- Summerhouse provides outstanding value for money. Financial planning and management are very good.

What does Summerhouse need to do to improve further?

- Ensure consistency of approach from all assessors with regard to the feedback which follows learners' assessments.
- Improve the order in which some topics are taught and assessed on yards.
- Improve careers guidance and advice so that all learners have a clearer idea about the possible options open to them on completing their programme.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the very approachable, friendly staff who are always willing to help
- how quickly they progress, develop their skills and gain qualifications, including the good preparation for BHS exams
- the very good training and support which helps them with anything they find difficult
- that they have made the right choices in the training they have chosen
- the practical aspects of their work, and having the opportunity to develop their skills to industry speeds and standards
- working on their portfolios
- that employers have taught them so much
- being involved in the different competitive aspects of the horse industry.

What learners would like to see improved:

- nothing identified.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the help they get for both themselves and their learners
- that Summerhouse staff are always just at the end of the phone if they need extra support
- the training they receive from Summerhouse to brush up on their own skills and get new qualifications
- the training on Every Child Matters and safeguarding that Summerhouse provides for them
- that Summerhouse understands their business needs
- being able to put something back into the industry by providing good training to their employees.

What employers would like to see improved:

- nothing identified.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 1

6. Summerhouse has maintained the high quality of its provision since the previous inspection. Success rates have been well above the national rates for the last three years. The self-assessment report is highly accurate. The accompanying development plan is comprehensive and ambitious but realistic and achievable. Managers monitor progress towards achieving the targets it sets, regularly and thoroughly. Managers and staff work hard to identify any areas for improvement and are committed to making changes where necessary to bring about improvements. Leaders and staff set very high standards but inspire learners to achieve them. Summerhouse listens and responds to its learners and employers carefully and effectively. Staff are particularly well qualified and very well experienced in a breadth of different aspects of the horse industry. Together they form a coherent and effective team, fully committed to ensuring that learners achieve.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 1

7. Success rates are outstanding. In 2008/09, the success rate for apprentices aged 16 to 18 years old, who account for the majority of Summerhouse's apprentices, was 80% some 12% above the national rate. Success rates for apprentices, including advanced apprentices, have been well above national rates for the last three years. Key skills pass rates are high. Learners choose from a wide range of additional qualifications to complete their apprenticeship and pass rates on these are very high. Many additional qualifications are offered as a direct result of employers requests. For example, all advanced apprentices receive information technology training as part of their programme even though it is not required by the apprenticeship framework. Pass rates are very high on other additional qualifications such as first aid, the key skill working with others and the assessor qualification which is offered to advanced apprentices over the age of 19. Pass rates on BHS qualifications are particularly high and nearly all learners who choose to take a BHS qualification are successful. No significant differences exist in the success rates of different groups of learners.
8. The majority of learners achieve within the expected timescale. Timely success rates for both apprentices and advanced apprentices have been well above the national rates for the last three years. Learners on the Train to Gain programme are all meeting their targets for assessment and the completion of units of the NVQ. They are well on target to complete in a timely way.
9. Learners' work is of a particularly high standard. Learners work to commercial standards and speeds and become competent and safe riders. They develop very good working practices with good attention to safety, including the safety of the horses. Many learners work at levels above those expected by their qualification.
10. Progression of learners into further training, education or employment is outstanding. Of those apprentices who completed in 2007/08, a quarter progressed to an

advanced apprenticeship and all of the remainder progressed to further education or employment within the industry. Many Train to Gain learners work as volunteers at Summerhouse so that they can gain work experience to help them progress into employment.

11. Learners are very well motivated, enthusiastic and greatly enjoy their training. They work diligently and levels of attendance and participation are very high. Summerhouse develops learners' team working skills particularly effectively. Key skills are achieved early in the programme so that learners can put their skills of communication and numeracy to good use during the remainder of their training.
12. The extent to which learners feel safe is good. They use safe working practices in all settings and regard the safety of the learning environment as good. Summerhouse creates and promotes particularly fair working environments. The attitude and behaviour of learners are very good and they understand both their rights and responsibilities. However, in some cases their understanding of the wider aspects of diversity is less well developed.

The quality of provision

Grade 1

13. Teaching and learning are good. Many learning sessions are inspiring and focus strongly on developing learners' confidence as well as their ability. Teachers are skilled, well qualified, and bring a breadth of experience to their teaching. Initial assessment of learners is particularly thorough and takes place over an extended period at the start of the programme. Learners attend Summerhouse to work on their key skills portfolios and receive good support to develop their skills.
14. All yards where learners train have qualified assessors and learners' access to assessment is very good. Assessments are fair and timely. However, assessors vary too much in the way feedback is given to learners following assessment. In some cases learners receive little or no feedback other than that they have passed the assessment. In these cases learners are not able to make use of the feedback to further develop and build on their practice, and are not aware of their strengths and areas that could be improved.
15. All learners receive very good, well-planned training in the workplace. Sessions are timetabled into the busy working schedule to ensure that they take place. However, in some cases topics are not always tackled in the best order. For example, although working practices are good, on some yards the health and safety unit is completed later in the training. Completing this unit earlier would ensure that learners can relate the underpinning knowledge to their daily work practice.
16. Summerhouse's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners and employers is outstanding. Learners who have previously been unsuccessful when trying to achieve qualifications often flourish once they are on programmes at Summerhouse. All employers have assessor qualifications and many hold, or are working towards, teaching or coaching qualifications. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about training, taking care to ensure learners develop good employability skills.

17. Summerhouse has developed outstanding partnerships with national and local equine organisations. It uses these well to enable learners to develop experience of national level competition in a variety of equine disciplines and gain event management skills. Learners are able to experience the management of a range of different competitive events and different aspects of the care of competition horses. Summerhouse has used its partnerships exceptionally well to develop a portfolio of very high quality work placements for apprentices.
18. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Learners have a thorough induction to their courses, including a good introduction to health and safety and equality of opportunity. Initial assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills is carried out promptly and any additional needs are met very well. Assessors set very clear individual targets and monitor learners' progress very well. Learners feel that staff are easy to contact, exceptionally helpful and address any problems promptly. However, not all learners have sufficient information about future progression or careers.

Leadership and management

Grade 1

19. Leadership and management are outstanding. Leaders and managers set a very clear strategic direction for Summerhouse. Financial management is strong and plans for expansion are realistic and well thought through. Business plans and the self-assessment report focus strongly on the learners' experience and on raising achievement for all. Significant investment in resources, including horses, has helped to ensure that learners at Summerhouse have a very high quality learning experience. Summerhouse has managed the expansion of its training provision particularly well.
20. Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Summerhouse has a clear strategy for safeguarding and places a strong emphasis on learners' health, safety and well-being. Policies and procedures are clear, well written and understood by staff. All of Summerhouse's trainers and assessors have completed the Local Safeguarding Children Board's level 2 training in safeguarding and are on target to achieve the qualification in November 2009. Summerhouse carries out appropriate vetting checks on staff and the results of the checks are kept centrally as a single record. Summerhouse's policies on bullying and discrimination are implemented effectively and vulnerable learners are well protected. However, as yet learners are not fully involved in the evaluation and further development of safeguarding practices.
21. Summerhouse's arrangements for equality of opportunity are good. Policies and procedures are implemented effectively. All staff attend equality of opportunity update training every six months. Staff have a diverse range of backgrounds and experience. Managers analyse performance data carefully to look for any evidence of discrimination. Individual learners' needs are met very well. For example, learners who are deaf use a radio earpiece during riding sessions so that the teacher can communicate with them more effectively.

22. Summerhouse implements its strategy for widening participation actively promoting equality and diversity. It promotes riding and working with horses to visitors to the local City Farm, offering riding vouchers to encourage participation. All potential learners have the opportunity of two days' work experience to appreciate the requirements of the industry. Learners have a mentor during their training to provide support and advice.
23. Learners receive a very good induction to equal opportunities and diversity. Summerhouse hosts a local RDA group and all learners are encouraged to come and help during the sessions to raise their awareness of the barriers faced by disabled people, how best to assist them and the benefits that riding and interacting horses can bring to disabled people.
24. Summerhouse has very good arrangements for listening and responding to both learners and employers. Managers actively seek feedback from staff, learners, clients and partners. Learners' concerns are responded to promptly and learners feel that Summerhouse pays very good attention to their queries and suggestions. Both learners and employers are highly satisfied with the training and support they receive. Employers feel particularly well involved with the training programme and are very satisfied with the progress and development of their learners.
25. Summerhouse has very good procedures for evaluating and improving its programmes. Self-assessment is used very effectively to bring about improvements. Staff development is especially good and Summerhouse pays particular attention to ensuring that its staff reach their potential. Quality procedures are clear, well understood by all staff and include regular observations of training sessions.
26. Summerhouse provides outstanding value for money. The achievements of learners are very good and the majority achieve by their planned target date. Progression to further education or employment is outstanding. Summerhouse's resources for training are excellent. Financial planning and management are very good.

Information about the inspection

27. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by the provider's centre co-ordinator as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local LSC, the previous inspection report, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
28. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the provider. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in the subject areas the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Summerhouse EEC

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	Learner responsive 19+	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners					
Full-time learners	65				65
Part-time learners	22				22
Overall effectiveness	1				1
Capacity to improve	1				
Outcomes for learners	1				1
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	1				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	1				
How well do learners progress?	N/A				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	1				
How safe do learners feel?	2				
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	N/A				
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	N/A				
Quality of provision	1				1
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	1				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	1				
Leadership and management	1				1
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	N/A				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	1				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	1				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	1				

*where applicable to the type of provision

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