



Self-Assessment Report

August 2018 – July 2019



Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	3
Description of Programmes	4
Self-Assessment and Quality Assurance Processes	5
Summary of Grades and Judgements for Aug 2018 – July 2019	5
Quality of Education	6
Behaviour and Attitudes	11
Personal Development	12
Leadership and Management	15
Appendix 1 – Outcomes for Study Programme	21
Appendix 2 – Outcomes for Traineeships	22
Appendix 3 – Outcomes for Apprenticeships	23

Background

Juniper Training Limited (Juniper) formerly known as Carver Training was established in 1983 as a youth training centre for warehouse training. It now offers Study Programme, Traineeships (adult & youth) and Apprenticeships.

This self-assessment report will examine the period August 2018 – July 2019 for all programmes.

2018/19 starts:

Programme	Number of starts in 2018/19	Comparison to 2017/18
Study Programme	1559	Increase of 152 learners
Traineeships (16-18 year olds)	106	Decrease of 88 learners
Traineeships (19-24 year olds)	104	Increase of 86 learners
Apprenticeships	130 Intermediate 88 Advanced	Increase of 104 learners Increase of 86 learners

This report will examine the position of Juniper at the start of the contact year in August 2018 and the analysis will scrutinise the impact of changes and measure improvements made across the whole academic year.

Juniper operates from 11 centres and 4 hubs across the West Midlands (Brierley Hill, Lichfield, Walsall, Wednesbury & Wolverhampton), East Midlands (Chesterfield, Derby and Leicester), Shropshire (Telford and Shrewsbury), Staffordshire (Hanley, Leek & Burton) and Cheshire (Stockport & Ashton). Central Support Services (Head Office) is located in Featherstone, Wolverhampton. All centres and hubs are based in areas of high social deprivation.

Maths prior attainment levels of learners when they started programme during 2018/19 were low.

9-4 (or equivalent)	3-1 (or equivalent)	No prior attainment	No data
16%	53%	28%	3%

English prior attainment levels of learners when they started on programme during 2018/19 were low.

9-4 (or equivalent)	3-1 (or equivalent)	No prior attainment	No data
22%	51%	24%	3%

40% of learners on programme during 2018/19 were identified as having Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND); an increase of 1% compared to the previous year. The top 5 categories for SEND were: mental health 9%, dyslexia 8%, other medical condition 8%, social & emotional difficulties and autism spectrum disorder 2%

Of those learners on programme during 2018/19, **43% of learners were assessed as eligible for bursary funding (vulnerable and discretionary)** to support with costs associated with their training, such as travel, clothing, equipment, educational visits and books. This is a decrease of 8% when compared to 2017/18. **55% of all learners in receipt of vulnerable bursary were made up of those learners that were either in care or care leavers.** A full breakdown of numbers can be seen in the Free Meals and Bursary funding table:

Free Meals and Bursary Funding table based on 2018/19 starts:

In receipt of:	Percentage	Number
Free Meals Funding	16%	340
16-19 Discretionary Bursary	36%	756
16-19 Vulnerable Bursary	7%	144
In care/care leavers in receipt of 16-19 Vulnerable Bursary	55%	66

Juniper employs 192 staff. The Management Board consists of the Chairman, the Managing Director, the Head of Operations, two Regional Heads of Performance, the Business Development Manager and the Head of Quality. They are responsible for all aspects of the company's day-to-day management, and are supported by Performance Managers at a centre level. Effective governance arrangements are in place; the AELP Code of Good Governance for Independent Learning Providers has been adopted and the performance and effectiveness of Juniper's governance is assessed against the framework. The governors (non-executive governor David Shouesmith and external specialist Jason Lancaster) provide impartial scrutiny and challenge in governance board meetings. Training is funded through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Description of Programmes

Juniper offers full-time and part-time study programmes from entry level to level 2, which include maths and English, employability skills, personal social development and work experience. The programmes aim to equip learners with the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviours to obtain a positive destination to an apprenticeship, further education course at a higher level or job with training. The programmes are individualised to meet the needs of learners and offer access to a wide range of vocational sectors. Work experience placements are personalised and based upon the needs and interests of learners; they are broad ranging and not limited to specific sector areas. Full-time study programmes consist typically of 550 guided learning hours per learner per year, over a 30-week period. In 2018/19, Juniper introduced new vocational pathways in Childcare, Business Administration, Customer Service and Retail.

Traineeships will last anything from six weeks to a maximum of six months with the content tailored to the needs of the individual student. The core element includes work preparation training (ensuring young people/adults are ready and have the confidence to take the first step in their career) and a continuation of English and maths study (if they do not hold a grade 9-4 in GCSE). In addition to this, trainees complete a high quality work experience placement in their occupational area of interest, providing insight and experience of the world of work and a progression route, preferably an apprenticeship. Adult Education is offered via the 19+ Traineeship Route.

Juniper no longer offers Adult Employability Programmes as a strategic decision to focus on programmes for young people and apprentices.

Juniper offers intermediate and advanced level apprenticeships in the following sector areas through frameworks or the new standards: Business Administration, Customer Service, Human Resources, Warehousing, Team Leading, Early Years and Supporting Teaching and Learning.

Self-Assessment and Quality Assurance Processes

Juniper Training was last inspected by Ofsted in July 2017 and was judged to be good. The self-assessment process underpins Juniper’s quality assurance processes. In compiling the annual self-assessment report, all staff and a proportion of learners (625) and employers (209) have been involved in reviewing and reporting on the quality of provision within their centre. The Head of Quality is responsible for overseeing this process. Performance Managers initiated the quality assurance process within their centres to collate and agree centre self-assessment judgements and grading. Centre Improvement Plans are produced based on the initial findings from the self-assessment process and added to throughout the academic year to strive for continual improvement. The process strives to be robust and accurate and uses centrally collated and confirmed data provided by Juniper’s own Management Information and data from software such as PICS to inform judgements. Additional data and evidence from centre inspections, student focus groups, observations of key learning processes and external quality assurance reports were also used.

The self-assessment report uses the criteria as set out in the Education Inspection Framework (2019). Provision is graded according to EIF descriptors as follows:-

- Grade 1 **Outstanding**
- Grade 2 **Good**
- Grade 3 **Requires Improvement**
- Grade 4 **Inadequate**

Juniper Self-Assessment Grades

SAR Grades August 2018 – July 2019	Grade
Overall Effectiveness	2
Effectiveness of Quality of Education	2
Behaviour and Attitudes	2
Personal Development	2
Leadership and Management	2
Education Programmes for Young People	2
Adult Learning Programmes	2
Apprenticeships	3

Effectiveness of Quality of Education

Strengths

Leaders provide a varied curriculum for Study Programme, Traineeship & Apprenticeship learners, which develops the knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners need to prepare them for their next stage in education, training or employment.

Senior leaders and managers are making greater strategic links with employers and are aligning these to the provision. The introduction of apprenticeship provision to meet learner/local needs, along with the introduction of specific vocational pathways in 2018/19 has broadened opportunities for learners, as well as providing clear progression routes.

The employer engagement team is well established. Leaders and managers have examined LMI information to identify sector areas and the Business Development Manager and Employer Engagement Manager are developing strategic partnerships linked to these. Centres are sourcing higher numbers of work experience and progression providing learners with opportunities that are more closely aligned to local and regional priorities. In response to employer survey feedback, we offer a customer service pathway, health and safety training and first aid training as part of our study programme provision.

Leaders seek the views of employers and learners to provide education and skills training aligned to these needs. For example, Juniper has developed a partnership with a roofing company based in Walsall and has developed a construction training study programme in response to the skills shortage in this area. Leading on from this apprenticeships in roofing and cladding will be offered in spring 2020. The Employer Engagement Manager has worked closely with a range of employers to respond to their needs and Juniper expanded its apprenticeship offer to include apprenticeships in HR support, recruitment resource, recruitment consultant and team leading. The early years offer has grown significantly in 2018-19 in response to the local labour market and employers such as Walsall Council. We now employ eight early years' assessment coordinators to meet the demand versus two assessment coordinators in 2017-18.

The large majority of learners develop substantial knowledge, skills and especially behaviours that prepare them well to have the confidence and ability to progress positively to work, apprenticeships and further learning.

Learners report in feedback surveys and focus groups that Juniper is helping them to develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for their next step. Employers substantiate this; 98% reported that Juniper is helping learners to prepare for the world of work when they start their placement and 94% would consider offering learners a job or apprenticeship at the end of their programme (Employer Survey Feedback – August 2018). Positive progression rates are good for study programmes and traineeships and has increased from 76% in 2017/18 to 80% and 79% respectively in 2018/19.

The curriculum addresses social disadvantage as it provides opportunities for those from disadvantaged backgrounds to access education; the large majority of learners progress to a positive destination upon completion of their programme.

Juniper's training centres are located in areas of high deprivation. Leaders, managers and staff provide inclusive opportunities for learners, many of whom have previously had a poor experience of education,

to engage in education and training. They provide wrap around support and assist learners that have barriers and a lack of external support to gain a positive learning experience.

As a result, the large majority of learners achieve their learning goals (71% for study programme and 75% for 16-18 traineeships) and progress to a positive destination upon completion of their programme (80% of study programme learners, 79% of traineeship learners and 70% of 19+ learners).

In response to the needs of employers and learners, leaders have introduced and developed new vocational curriculum offers and new apprenticeship pathways in 2018/19. These clearly outline what learners should know and be able to do by the end of their programme.

In 2018/19, Juniper introduced study programme pathways in business administration, customer service, retail and childcare. The apprenticeship offer was expanded to include HR support, recruitment resource, recruitment consultant and team leading. Knowledge, skills and behaviours development is at the core of successful learning and progression, Juniper recognises this and staff work hard to ensure that learners develop the vital skills and behaviours to enable them to achieve.

The well-developed roll-on/roll-off programmes enable learners to access effective training flexibly and to meet their needs that enables them to rapidly develop their skills, knowledge, behaviours and confidence to progress into further work and education.

Many study programme and traineeship learners have previously attended college and other education institutions but report a lack of support to enable completion of their programmes. Juniper's study programmes and traineeships have monthly intakes allowing NEET learners to access education to continue their learning journey without having to wait until the start of the next academic year, significantly reducing the risk of learners becoming disengaged and demotivated.

Learners recognise the value of the curriculum they are taught and understand how skills and knowledge are transferable to different sector areas. Leaders and teachers have ensured that there is a strong focus, and opportunities are provided within each curriculum area, for learners to develop their skills and knowledge in broader areas including work readiness and life experience.

Learners benefit from a range of non-qualification activity including reviews, opportunities to develop their personal and employability skills to gain knowledge and understanding aside from the technical and vocational skills that they are developing. Learners on study programme mature through the programme and the opportunities they have through work experience in particular, enable them to appreciate employer expectations and how to communicate better in the adult world.

Learners including those from disadvantaged backgrounds or those with SEND, benefit from high technical and vocational ambitions. Leaders and teachers promote high expectations for achievement and progress of all learners and have robust systems in place to monitor this.

Leaders and teachers ensure a positive and inclusive culture is in place that is based upon high expectations. Centre managers and staff monitor progress of learners through the monthly ILR report and apply interventions to assist them to get back on track. At a company level, leaders monitor the

achievement of different groups to reduce disparity and as a result, there are no significant disparities in the overall achievement and progression of the varying groups of learners. The small minority of learners who do not achieve and progress, staff work hard to enable these learners to access external services and signpost them to alternative provision for more specialist support.

Teachers have good subject expertise and skills to deliver high quality education to young people and apprentices. The few underperforming teachers are well supported to develop their subject expertise and practice.

Leaders put good support in place for new staff and ensure that their progress is monitored in monthly reviews. Where managers identify that new or underperforming staff member requires additional support, the training team, supported by lead practitioners work closely with them to develop their practice. Staff benefit from wide-ranging opportunities to develop through regular and targeted CPD activities, including qualifications, training courses, industry days, company training days, standardisation meetings and shadowing opportunities.

In the large majority of classes, teachers deliver valuable, well-planned lessons that enable learners to understand key concepts. In these lessons, teachers present information clearly and promote good discussion and debate in order for learners to further develop their knowledge and skills.

Learners enjoy their learning and benefit from wide-ranging opportunities to understand key concepts. 95% report that they would recommend Juniper to a friend and most learners recognise how their lessons are enabling them to build their vocational skills and knowledge as well and improve their understanding of maths, English and employability.

Teachers use assessment well to check learners' understanding and provide effective verbal and written feedback that outlines what learners do well and what they need to improve. In a small minority of cases, teachers do not use assessment sufficiently well to inform their future teaching.

Regular feedback and marking of assessments and work help learners to improve their work. Learners are encouraged through positive praise both verbally and written to develop their knowledge and understanding of topics. IQAs and the training and development team support staff to develop their practice in this area and as a result learner feedback improves and is used to inform their teaching.

Teachers ensure that topics are revisited frequently, enabling learners to build and secure skills and knowledge, so that key concepts are embedded in their long term memory.

Teachers provide opportunities for learners to revisit and consolidate their learning through formative assessment methods such as practice assessments, class re-caps and quizzes. Teachers take advantage of the roll on roll off nature of the study programme and traineeship provision to encourage existing learners to explain to new learners key concepts and previous topics.

Qualification outcomes are high in the large majority of centres. In 2018/19, the large majority of learners achieve their qualification aims (overall achievement rates: 71% study programme and 75% traineeship).

Disadvantaged learners develop their skills and knowledge and achieve as well as their peers. Previous disparity has now been eradicated; a narrow gap (7%) exists in progression to positive destinations for this group of learners.

Across all programmes, learners from black and minority ethnic groups outperform their peers in qualifications and have a higher positive progression rate than their White British counterparts.

Effective support of learners with SEND through comprehensive individualised support plans that are used well by staff to meet their needs and enable them to grow in confidence and employability skills. At top level, there is parity in positive progressions for learners with SEND and overall achievement of qualifications (excluding GCSEs).

Most learners' work effectively demonstrates the development and good progress they are making whilst on programme. In a few classes, learner work does not sufficiently demonstrate development and progress but this is being addressed by managers.

Learners take pride in their work and use feedback from their teachers to carefully correct errors and make amendments to their assignments for qualifications. In those few classes where progress is not demonstrable, teachers are supported to improve their practice.

Good careers education, information, advice and guidance is offered throughout their learning programme and in the large majority of centres learners are being well-prepared and are ready for their stage of education, training or employment.

Learners appreciate the support they are getting from their teachers and progression co-ordinators to explore career options, obtain work experience and make applications for their next step. 96% of learners report that Juniper is helping to prepare them to obtain a job, apprenticeship or further learning when they complete their programme.

The large majority of learners are positively progressing to appropriate destinations.

In 2018/19, 80% of study programme learners, 79% of traineeship learners and 70% of 19+ traineeship learners progressed upon programme completion. For those learners who completed end point assessment (EPA) for their apprenticeship standard, 67% achieved a distinction and 33% achieved a pass grade, no learners had to retake their EPA. Most apprentices that reached their gateway point or achieved their framework were either offered a full time permanent position with their company, went on to do a higher level apprenticeship or gained promotion. The remaining few apprentices obtained employment with alternative companies.

Areas for Improvement

For a small minority of learners joining during the academic year, the sequencing of the curriculum is not always sufficiently well developed to enable them to seamlessly join their study programme. However, supportive teachers mostly provide extra help that supports them through this transition.

The roll on, roll off nature of the programme presents the biggest challenge to teachers for study programme and traineeships but the large majority of tutors are adept in ensuring that learners have the best transition and quickly settle into their learning programme.

A minority of apprentices that joined the programme several years ago did not undertake sufficiently rigorous initial assessment and recruitment to their programme. As a result, some joined inappropriate programmes and have either left or progressed too slowly. However, these processes have been improved for new starts.

Recruitment and initial assessment practices have been strengthened in this academic year to ensure that apprentices are joining the most appropriate apprenticeship programme. Strategies include a more thorough interview, better screening of job role descriptions against the apprenticeship standard or framework and closer liaison with employers. As a result, the drop off rate for apprentices has significantly decreased during this academic year.

The initial assessment of apprentices is not consistently used sufficiently well enough to inform teaching.

Better initial assessment is in place but a minority of assessors do not yet use this sufficiently well enough to plan apprentices programme. The apprenticeship manager has taken steps to rectify this and has implemented CPD activities to assist assessment coordinators to improve in this area.

The schemes of delivery and resources used to deliver apprenticeships require further improvement to ensure every apprentice has an individualised programme tailored to meet their needs and those of their employers.

The assessment co-ordinators are taking measures to improve their schemes of delivery and further develop resources, so that programmes can be better planned and managed in partnership with employers.

Vocational study programmes require further development to secure improved achievement rates including through strengthened recruitment processes.

The introduction of new vocational pathways has provided study programme learners with better options for career development. However, the achievement rates for this academic year (70%) require further improvement. Leaders and staff have refined processes in place to ensure that learners are ready to undertake these specific pathways.

There remain achievement gaps for learners with mental health conditions, dyslexia and SEND compared with the overall cohort.

Learners with mental health conditions continue to not achieve their qualifications as well as they should. However, the proportion progressing to positive destinations is improving. Although gaps in achievement for learners with dyslexia have narrowed since the last academic year, a small disparity remains and further work is required to eradicate these gaps.

In a small minority of centres, learners are not sufficiently being prepared for their next steps as there is too much focus on the achievement of assessments and exams.

In these centres, there is too little emphasis on ensuring that learners have secured the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for work or further learning.

Effectiveness of Behaviour and Attitudes

Strengths

Centres provide a calm and conducive learning environment for learners.

Learners behave respectfully and have good rapport with teachers, assessment coordinators, employers and visitors. Staff tackle rare instance of poor behaviour swiftly and apply appropriate interventions.

Juniper's Code of Conduct is introduced to learners before they start their programme and is reinforced well through the various stages of their learning provision.

For example, MPP tutors make clear Juniper's expectations and this is followed through as learners move on to their pathway and work experience. As a result, learners' conduct is good and they develop well behaviours that prepare them for the world of work.

Assessment coordinators have high expectations for their apprentices and provide effective support to develop their professional behaviours.

In the instances where attendance or professional standards are not meeting expectations, either at work or attending scheduled sessions, assessment co-ordinators work closely with apprentices and employers to resolve these issues quickly.

Learners and apprentices value highly their learning programmes and are they are highly motivated to achieve their qualification and career goals.

Learner feedback and focus groups evidence that the large majority of learners are benefitting from purposeful learning. There are frequent examples of achievement and positive progression for learners whose previous educational experience was poor. Juniper enables them to achieve better outcomes with the wrap around support and more personalised service. Apprentices display high levels of engagement and motivation and are well supported through the partnership working of their assessment coordinators and employers.

Staff know and understand their learners well; they care about them and are highly committed to support their needs. The large majority of staff understand well how to get the best out of their learners and apprentices.

Juniper has a strong supportive culture and staff routinely go above and beyond to support learners with barriers and issues outside of their academic circumstances. Examples include helping learners to secure stable living arrangements, support for learners with financial issues and close partnership

working between Juniper staff and external partners (parents, the local authority, the police, health and support agencies).

Learners develop well their employability skills.

Carefully planned taught activities help students recognise their own abilities and understand how to use these to be effective in the workplace. Participation in well-planned work placements enables them to apply these skills in real life and reflect on how they can become valued employees.

Staff ensure there is a strong culture of mutual respect and staff and learners do not accept bullying, harassment or discrimination. As a result, learners feel safe on their learning programmes

Bullying, harassment and discrimination has no place in Juniper provision and all incidents in centres and in the workplace are dealt with swiftly to ensure that an inclusive and positive learning experience is in place for all learners.

Areas requiring improvement

Learners' attendance rates in a few centres is too low.

In these centres, strategies employed by staff including: rapid interventions with learners; phone calls and meetings with parents/guardians; and the use of letters have not yet had sufficient impact. Punctuality is inconsistent in a few centres and requires further improvement before it is good. Lateness in a small minority of centres is not sufficiently challenged. However, learners report that staff are helping them to improve these vital employability skills and there is evidence that learners make improvement in these areas as they progress through their programme.

Effectiveness of Personal Development

Strengths

Most learners understand well their rights and responsibilities as a student, employee and citizen. They are respectful and work well with others to foster productive working relationships.

Learners benefit from opportunities to participate in community projects, fundraising activities, helping others less fortunate. Examples include donations to food banks, parcels for the homeless, garden and community projects such as the Knife Angel Project, raising money for Macmillan and a royal visit. This deepens their knowledge and understanding of broader societal issues, beyond their vocational and academic curriculum and how they can play an active part in public life.

Good progress has been made with learners starting to develop and measure employability skills through their work experience placements. Learners are benefitting from increased employer support and involvement in the learning process to develop their skills. Progression Co-ordinators provide extensive support to learners to ensure that working relationships in placement are positive.

The opportunities for learners to explore personal, social and ethical issues and take part in wider society is embedded in all areas of the provision in the large majority of centres.

Learners benefit from multiple opportunities to explore personal, social and ethical issues in lessons and reviews. Examples include debates and discussions on the Brexit, living in a multi-cultural society and celebrating different religious festivals, registering to vote as well as lessons on stereotyping and employment law.

Learners explore topics such as terrorism and extremism, examples include learners exploring risks of being radicalised, right wing extremism, external guest speakers such as the local police Prevent Team. These activities have enabled them to discuss and debate their views in an environment where extreme views can be challenged and concerns raised.

Staff ensure there is a strong culture of inclusivity and staff and learners do not accept bullying, harassment or discrimination.

Examples include learners explaining what action they would take if they felt that they were being bullied in the workplace, childcare students learning how to support children with SEND and customer service learners developing their understanding of the needs of customers with disabilities.

Staff promote equality of opportunity and ensure learners with particular vulnerabilities are well supported, helping them to understand that difference is a positive.

Learners requiring additional support are identified during the recruitment and initial assessment phase of their programme and individual Support Plans are put in place. Staff monitor the progress and wellbeing of vulnerable learners and those with protected characteristic such as learners who are transitioning, learners with learning differences such as dyslexia and autism. They ensure that those students have access to the resources and equipment needed e.g. reading pens, time and space to talk to staff, fidget objects and maths and English mats. Reasonable adjustments are made for exams and assessments and staff engage external agencies effectively so that they feel supported and safe whilst in training centres, at work and in everyday life.

Juniper is helping the learners with poor prior experience of education to recognise and value their skills and abilities to increase their employability prospects.

Staff provide effective guidance and support to ensure that learners conduct themselves well.

The vast majority of learners are eager to learn and effectively develop their personal, social and employability behaviours and understand the importance of these skills in the context of their progression, career aims and wider society. Apprentices show high levels of professional behaviours, they are well motivated, learn eagerly and understand how this helps them at work and in their everyday lives.

Learners benefit from opportunities to develop their confidence, build their resilience and understand how they can keep themselves mentally healthy.

Learners benefit from a personal development timetable which provides them with the opportunity to explore useful topics and gain important knowledge on keeping themselves mentally healthy. Sessions include exploring the meaning of a growth mind-set vs. fixed mind-set, building resilience, dealing with stress and sessions on mental health. Staff know where to signpost learners locally so that they receive counselling and additional support with mental health conditions.

A high proportion of learners benefit from purposeful work related learning including work experience helping them to understand workplace requirements and make informed choices about their future careers.

Work experience opportunities are good, helping learners to develop their understanding of employer expectations. The earlier exposure to work place settings is raising aspirations and changing the mind-set of learners; as a result, they are more motivated and keen to enter the workplace. The large majority of learners in this academic year have benefitted from work experience, with 82% starting their placement by their planned start date and 74% achieving their WEX learning aim, as well as progression into work or further learning and the achievement of qualifications in 2018/19.

Learners are well supported so that they are ready for the next phase of education, training or employment and successfully transition to their progression destination.

Careers education, information advice and guidance is good and opportunities exist for learners to receive information on the relevant career pathways from Juniper staff and employers, through taster days, employer visits and significant WEX. As a result, learners receive effective CEIAG that assists them to make decisions about their future careers including their next steps when they complete their programme, this is evident in progression data. However, the planning, review and target setting of WEX in a few centres requires further development to ensure that this is consistently good.

Areas for Improvement

In a few centres, learners have a basic understanding of issues related to British values. However, they have not been supported sufficiently to explore these topics in detail beyond a limited overview.

This requires improvement because in these centres, learners are able to identify British Values and provide examples when prompted. However, their knowledge is surface level and they do not yet understand well enough how these relate to their own context in work and in everyday life.

In a small minority of centres, careers education requires improvement during recruitment and initial assessment stage, so that learners are enrolling onto the most appropriate pathway.

With the expansion of the vocational pathways in the 2018/19 academic year, recruitment officers and MPP tutors have in some instances provided limited guidance leading to a small minority of learners enrolling onto a pathway that they are not ready for. This has been addressed but it is too early to measure the impact of these improvements.

Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

Strengths

Leaders promote a culture of high expectations of all learners, including those who are disadvantaged and/or have SEND; there is a positive culture in place which supports the large majority of learners to achieve their learning goals and progress to a positive destination.

Overall qualification achievement rates are good (71% for Study Programme and 75% for 16-18 Traineeships). The large majority of learners progress to a positive destination at the end of their programme (80% Study Programmes, 79% 16-18 Traineeships and 70% for 19+ Traineeships). The performance of different groups of learners is closely monitored by senior leaders and managers who take effective action to address any areas of underperformance. This ensures that the large majority of learners from SEND groups achieve and progress at least as well as their peers. Disadvantaged learners achieve as well as their peers and learners from minority ethnic groups outperform their peers. There is a robust system in place to ensure that all learners with SEND and those from vulnerable groups have individual support plans in place.

Learners with mental health conditions continue to not achieve their qualifications as well as they should. However, the proportion progressing to positive destinations is improving. Leaders have taken action to ensure that additional training is in place for staff, so they understand better the strategies to put in place to support these learners but it is too early to assess the impact of this. This will be closely monitored in the next academic year by performance managers, regional heads of performance and the student support manager to ensure that swift interventions are in place to better support this group of learners.

Although gaps in achievement for learners with dyslexia have narrowed since the last academic year, a small disparity remains and further work is required to eradicate these gaps. Again, this will be closely managed and monitored by leaders and staff to secure the improvements required.

Staff benefit from wide ranging CPD opportunities that align well with the curriculum and develops teachers' subject expertise and pedagogical knowledge to enable them to deliver good quality education and training.

CPD opportunities are plentiful and staff benefit from wide-ranging activities to support their subject and pedagogical knowledge. Activities include undertaking formal qualifications, training courses, industry days, company training days, standardisation meetings, self-study/research and shadowing opportunities. Most teaching staff have (or are working towards) appropriate qualifications and have the appropriate training and skills that enable them to effectively plan and deliver training appropriate to industry practice and employers' needs. Learners value and benefit from staff expertise in improving their understanding of the world of work. Staff act as role models to inspire learners to increase their ambitions; they develop effective working relationships with learners to them to overcome their previous barriers to learning.

Leaders ensure that all learners benefit from effective teaching and high expectations in classrooms, workshops and whilst at work.

A culture of high expectations is evident in the large majority of lessons and apprentice training sessions. Learners benefit from a well-rounded experience at Juniper. Generally, evidence in learning walks, support and challenge visits and observations signify that teaching and assessment practice is good; tutors are less reliant upon the standard lesson plans and resources and therefore apply a more individualised approach to TLA. Teachers are starting to be more creative in the delivery of vocational lessons, with learners more engaged in learning activities and more focussed on successfully completing their qualifications. As a result, learners routinely experience good and better teaching and learning, improving their engagement and progress.

Leaders and staff engage well with learners, parents, their community and employers to support the education and training that learners get.

Most centres involve the support of parents/guardians and support workers to engage learners, in particular, those who have SEND and vulnerabilities. Staff communicate well and welcome their input for example, regular updates are communicated by telephone and email; and parents/guardians/support workers are invited to attend meetings and interventions, so that learners remain on track with their learning programme.

Regular communication between Juniper staff and employers enable learners to successfully engage with their work experience opportunities. Where issues are identified, Juniper staff act swiftly to provide resolutions so that most learners benefit from meaningful exposure to the world of work.

Leaders are considerate of the workload and wellbeing of their staff. Leaders promote and foster an environment of equality and diversity well and effectively protect learners and staff from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Leaders and managers have instilled a strongly supportive culture throughout the organisation whereby bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated. Workload and caseloads for staff are considered by leaders and staff resource is managed well and as a result 93% of staff report that leaders and managers are considerate of workload and wellbeing (Staff Survey Aug 2019).

There is a wide range of health and wellbeing initiatives in place to support staff including: an Employer Assistance Programme – where staff have access to free counselling and support; an option to join a health cash plan – Health Shield – which provides cover for every day healthcare needs such as dental, physiotherapy, wellbeing, eye tests, prescriptions etc.; staff have an additional day off for their birthday and can access the innovative ‘J-Fit’ scheme where staff can earn 5 days additional holiday per year when they participate in regular, physical activity; a cycle to work scheme; critical illness cover and flexible holiday scheme which allows staff to purchase up to 10 days additional leave per annum.

Leaders have high ambitions for all learners, including those who are difficult to engage. As a result, learners with low prior attainment improve their life chances and progress into further study or work.

Juniper is helping the learners with poor prior experience of education to recognise and value their skills and abilities to increase their employability prospects. 80% of study programme, 79% of traineeship and 70% of 19+ traineeship learners, many of whom have previously not succeeded in formal learning, have

secured a positive destination, which is a consequence of their improved engagement, motivation and participation. Most learners who achieve positive destinations sustain them in the longer term (86%)

The large majority of learners are achieving their main vocational qualification aim and learners are increasing the likelihood of obtaining future employment by developing these skills as part of lessons and through work-related activity.

Learners are proud of their work and achievements and these are recognised through bi-annual Celebrating Success events. Learners, many of whom have had a poor previous educational experience or have suffered bullying, feel valued and included by staff and their peers. Consequently, they recognise their skills and abilities and have the confidence to access further learning and work.

Governance arrangements are effective; programmes are well maintained and governors hold senior managers and leaders to account.

Effective governance arrangements are in place. The AELP Code of Good Governance, for Independent Learning Providers, has been implemented and the performance and effectiveness of Juniper's governance is assessed against the framework. This ensures the best interests of learners, apprentices, and employers, and that public funds we receive are well spent and focused on meeting our company goals and government priorities. The governors (non-executive governor David Shouesmith and external specialist Jason Lancaster) provide impartial scrutiny and challenge in governance board meetings. Between them, they provide significant experience and expertise in business leadership and management and performance improvement in the education sector. Improvements in the provision are evident in Dashboard data, centre inspections, learning walks and observations of key learner processes. Leaders and managers are fully aware that the outcomes and quality of teaching, learning and assessment needs to be further improved for GCSE provision and actions to do this are underway.

Clear performance management, business continuity assessment and quality improvement plans have benefitted the quality and performance of Juniper's learning programmes. However, we recognise that specific weaknesses including GCSE achievement and require further work to be improved sufficiently. Financial health is excellent and is effectively monitored by leaders and managers, to ensure that provision and resources can be maintained over time.

Safeguarding arrangements are highly effective. Staff routinely identify, help and protect learners who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming, exploitation, radicalisation or extremism.

Student safety and well-being is paramount. A comprehensive Safeguarding Policy, Procedure and Guidance document is well established with clear lines of reporting that are well understood by staff and learners. Learners feel safe and value the supportive environment. Juniper Student Surveys show that 98% of learners 'Felt safe and know how to deal with issues including: radicalisation, extremism, bullying or abuse' (student survey March 19), this is supported by the views of learners spoken to in student forums. All staff have undertaken Safeguarding training as part of their induction training; in line with 'safer recruitment' policy, DBS checks are undertaken with all staff and a central record held at CSS.

In the last academic year Juniper has employed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead and the sole purpose of his role is to oversee the day to day operation for safeguarding; he monitors the progress of all open

safeguarding cases and supports Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officers to ensure that services are engaged rapidly and learners are kept safe. A minimum three dedicated Designated Safeguarding and Prevent Officers are in place at each centre, all trained to a minimum of Level 3 Designated Persons. Further training and CPD for safeguarding and Prevent is delivered at each company training day, communicated through DSPO E-Bulletins and included in every Quality Meeting.

Photographs of the DSPOs are displayed on the 'Meet the Team Board' in each centre and detailed within the Student Handbook ensuring that learners and staff (from other centres) can immediately recognise them. All work placements, including those for apprenticeships are subject to thorough risk assessments to evaluate suitability and learners safety. Employers are informed about safeguarding and understand how to report concerns when they arise.

A Prevent risk assessment is in place in line with the criteria of the Prevent Statutory Duty and a Prevent action plan with timescales put in place to ensure continued progress. All new staff undertake Safeguarding/Prevent induction training to enable them to identify and respond appropriately to any concerns or incidents and existing staff have refreshers a minimum of once every three years. All centre staff have received WRAP Training refreshers and training on embedding British Values by Marc Inchley (Home Office Trained).

Evidence from student forums and feedback demonstrate that learners within the centres feel safe and use safe working practices. Tutors, support staff and managers build good relationships with learners, which foster respect and trust and enhance the confidence of learners. Learners demonstrate a good awareness of health and safety including e-safety and secure knowledge and understanding of wider areas such as knife crime, gang culture, bullying etc. These are developed further through information sessions delivered by external partner agencies.

Where risks to learners' wellbeing have been identified, safeguarding processes have been followed and have worked effectively to put in place appropriate measures to protect the wellbeing of learners. Vulnerable learners are identified on centres' ILR reports, so that the progress and achievement can be more closely tracked and monitored by leaders and managers.

Areas for Improvement

Leaders need to address disparity in achievement and progression of the following groups:

- 1. Qualification achievement for 19+ traineeship students requires further improvement before it is good (62% overall QAR achievement in 2018/19)**
- 2. Reduce disparities in outcomes for learners with mental health conditions, dyslexia and social and emotional difficulties.**
- 3. Improve outcomes for learners in care**

The most recent EDIMs Data (Aug 2018 – July 2019) shows that previous gaps have been reduced; however, new disparities have emerged in the following areas:

- ❖ Social and emotional difficulties – 13% lower for progression
- ❖ Dyslexia – 14% lower for GCSE maths
- ❖ Mental health conditions – 13% lower for GCSE English, 9% lower for FS Maths, 22% lower for GCSE maths, 11% lower for BTEC and 17% lower for Vocational qualifications

97 learners in 2018/19 were either in care or leaving care (3% and 2% of all starts respectively). MI data shows that:

- ❖ There have been improvements to the achievement of Functional Skills maths for learners in care for 2018/19. However, some disparity still exists and they do not achieve their Functional Skills English, Functional Skills maths, BTEC or Vocational qualifications as well as their peers. However, the previous disparity in positive progression for in care learners has improved and they now progress as well as their peers.
- ❖ Previous gaps for leaving care learners have been eradicated in all areas apart from BTEC achievement where a gap of 28% remains. However, the previous disparity in positive progression for leaving care learners has improved and they now progress as well as their peers.

Whilst it is recognised that national rates of achievement and progression for care learners are very low. In line with government priorities, the achievement and progression of learners in care requires further improvement.

Strategies have been implemented to reduce disparity for all groups identified; impact will be closely monitored by senior leaders, managers and the Student Support Manager to ensure that improvements are secured in the next academic year.

A few centres do not sufficiently involve employers in the planning of their curriculum.

There is not enough employer engagement activities at a local level by a minority of managers across the centre network to involve them in planning the curriculum and as a result options for a small minority of learners are limited. In centres where this is good, leaders have built good links with local employers to seek their views on the provision offer and have aligned their offer accordingly. Further work needs to be carried out in the new academic year to secure improvements in this area.

Leaders and managers have yet to secure sufficient improvement to GCSE outcomes.

Published national data from the National Achievement Rates Tables (NARTs - latest available shows achievement rates in 2017/18), evidences that this remains as the biggest challenge facing the sector with only 11.1% of learners achieving A*-C English and 8% of learners achieving A*-C in maths. NB: These results are for 16-18 year old learners in the 'Private Sector Public Funded', which compares the achievement of all private Training Providers.

Juniper's GCSE maths and English achievement in 2018/19 is 17% for maths (a 4% increase when compared to 2017/18) and 12% for English (a 3% decrease when compared to 2017/18). Due to the nature of Juniper's roll-on roll-off provision, many learners positively progress before sitting their GCSE exams, which significantly impacts upon achievement rates. That aside, the management board recognises that performance is too low and further improvement is required. Therefore, the delivery of GCSEs will continue to be a priority. However, outcomes for learners for Functional Skills maths and English are high and are well above national rates for both provider type and all providers (NARTs data 2017/18).

Leaders need to ensure that the achievement for apprenticeships improves in the next academic year.

Achievement rates for apprentices in 2018/19 are too low (48%) and require improvement for the academic year. This can be attributed to the legacy of new programme implementation, the small number of learners in scope to achieve in 2018/19 (42 apprentices) and teething problems that were experienced in introducing the infrastructure. Leaders have worked hard and have taken several steps to secure improvements including: a more robust recruitment and initial assessment phase to ensure that apprentices are enrolled onto an appropriate programme; better communication between apprentices, employers and assessment coordinators at the start point of the apprenticeship; rigorous performance management processes implemented by the apprenticeship contract manager and staff CPD activities. The impact of these cannot yet be seen on validated data but internal data shows a much improved picture for the achievement of apprentices in the 2019/20 academic year.

Appendix 1 – Outcomes for Learners on Study Programme

Study Programme

Programme	2018-19 Study Programme		2017-18 Study Programme		2016-17 Study Programme		2015-16 Study Programme	
	No. taken	No. achieved						
Starts	1559							
Total No. of Leavers	1554		1461		1188		1225	
QAR	3507	71%	3218	76%	3300	66%	3316	50%
BTEC Award	415	82%	806	82%	1044	77%	1133	70%
BTEC Cert	227	73%						
Vocational Qualifications	447	70%						
F/Skills Maths	959	67%	939	75%	920	74%	890	46%
GCSE Maths*	195	17%	264*	13%*	190	17%	175	14%
F/Skills English	791	73%	854	77%	842	75%	858	45%
GCSE English*	253	12%	387*	15%*	304	13%	240	9%
WEX Aim Ach.	1183	74%	1460	76%	1141	79%	371	32%
Progression	1245	80%	1460	76%	1141	79%	1156	63%
Sustained	1061	85%	656	94%	995	76%	886	79%

**** Data for GCSE shows combined results for Study Programme and Traineeships**

Appendix 2 – Outcomes for Learners on Traineeships

16-18 Traineeships

	2018-19 Traineeships		2017-18 Traineeships		2016-17 Traineeships		2015-16 Traineeships	
	No. Taken	% achieved						
Starts	106							
Total No. of Leavers	104		252		173		69	
QAR	59	75%	206	76%	182	80%	130	45%
BTEC Award in WorkSkills	3	100%	24	88%	46	98%	32	96%
Functional Skills Maths	29	79%	84	70%	60	78%	39	44%
Functional Skills English	21	67%	68	74%	56	86%	29	42%
Work Experience Aim Ach.	108	69%	252	80%	224	82%	63	63%
Progression	82	79%	252	84%	149	89%	55	80%
Sustained	72	88%	168	98%	155	75%	46	83%

19+ Traineeships

	2018-19		2017-18	
	No. Taken	% achieved	No. Taken	% achieved
Starts	104			
Total No. of Leavers	79		252	
QAR	61	62%	61	56%
Functional Skills Maths	32	53%	32	53%
Functional Skills English	28	75%	26	58%
Work Experience Aim Ach.	95	68%		67%
Progression	55	70%	34	57%
Sustained	44	80%	12	75%

Appendix 3 – Outcomes for Learners on Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships

	2018-19						
	Actual Leaver Count	Actual Achieved Count	Actual Not Achieved Count	2018 App Actual %	Remaining Student Count	Total No. 2018 Apps. in Scope	2018 Apps BCS %
Business & Administration	15	7	8	47%	0	15	47%
Construction	1	0	1	0%	0	1	0%
Education & Childcare	7	3	4	43%	0	7	43%
Sales marketing & Procurement	12	6	6	50%	0	12	50%
Team Leader/Supervisor	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Transport & Logistics	7	4	3	57%	0	7	57%
Total	42	20	22	48%	0	42	48%
Target				72%	-		72%

Advanced App Framework	32
Intermediate App Framework	85
Level 2 App Standard	45
Level 3 App Standard	56
Total Starts	218
Total Leavers	42