

Adult Education in Gloucestershire

Inspection report

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Type of provider: Local authority

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Information about the provider

1. Adult Education in Gloucestershire is located within the Community and Adult Care Directorate of Gloucestershire County Council. In 2010/11 the service was contracted by the Skills Funding Agency to provide adult safeguarded and work-based learning. The majority of learning is non-accredited. The service subcontracts with 18 organisations to deliver 85% of the adult education programmes. Many of these subcontractors deliver across a range of subject areas.
2. During 2010/11 the service provided courses to over 8,500 part-time learners in a wide range of subject areas covering community learning, family learning, preparation for life and work and courses for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The service has also provided Train to Gain work-based programmes. The majority of provision is for personal and social development, which was directly inspected.
3. Gloucestershire is a largely rural county with a population of nearly 600,000; 11.2 % of whom are of minority ethnic heritage. Although essentially a rural and relatively affluent county, parts of Gloucester and Cheltenham are within the most deprived 10% nationally with pockets of rural deprivation. Unemployment rates among adults have risen in the last 12 months to 2.6%. Of the adult population 42% are qualified to level 3 or above.
4. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the provider:
 - Cirencester College
 - Gloucestershire College
 - National Star College
 - Stroud College
 - Dene Magna Community School
 - Wyedean School
 - Prospect Training and Recruitment
 - Art Shape
 - Chinese Children and Parents Association of Gloucestershire
 - Cinderford Artspace
 - Chinese Women's Guild
 - Gloucestershire Federation of Women's Institute
 - G L Communities
 - PATA
 - Stroud Valley Project
 - People & Places Cheltenham and Gloucester

- Third Sector Services Northway
- The Churn Cirencester.

Type of provision	Number of learners in 2010/11
Provision for adult learners: Learning for social and personal development	8,549 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain	339 learners

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision		Grade 3
Capacity to improve		Grade 3
		Grade
Outcomes for learners		3
Quality of provision		3
Leadership and management		3
Safeguarding		3
Equality and diversity		3
Learning for social and personal development		Grade
Community Learning		3
Family Learning		2
Skills for Life		2

Overall effectiveness

5. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory overall. In too many sessions teaching does not capture the attention of all learners who subsequently do not always make enough progress. However, outcomes for learners whose circumstances make them vulnerable are mainly good. Many engage well and make rapid progress. They learn valuable practical skills that improve their day-to day-lives well, such as functional language and develop their reading, writing and mathematics. Through family learning, parents develop their parenting skills well; they improve their understanding of their children's behaviour and how best to support their development. The service promotes the health and economic well-being of learners well through the curriculum.
6. The quality of teaching is inconsistent. In the best sessions teaching inspires learners, captures their imagination and their progress is rapid. However, too often teaching is satisfactory. This has been identified by the service. The range of programmes and courses is diverse and most of the county is well served, particularly rural areas. Partnerships extend the breadth of what is on offer well and help ensure that those who traditionally do not engage in learning are able to do so. Advice and guidance for learners and support for them to develop key

life skills are good in Skills for Life and family learning programmes. However, these good arrangements do not extend to all learners across the provision that need additional support.

7. Learners feel safe and most venues provide a safe and secure environment for learners. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. However, learners from some minority ethnic groups do not achieve as well as other learners. Since the last inspection most areas identified as being strengths of the service have been sustained and satisfactory progress has been made in addressing weaknesses. Self-assessment is largely accurate and effective. However, processes for judging outcomes in non-accredited learning are not sufficiently robust.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Retention and achievement rates in non-accredited provision have steadily improved over a three-year period. However, data are insufficiently accurate to validate these. On Train to Gain programmes success rates within the time planned have improved and are now satisfactory. For those undertaking National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), outcomes are good on most programmes.
- Learners effectively develop confidence and self-esteem; they increase their aspirations and practical skills such as parenting and day-to-day language skills. Learners feel safe. In a small number of instances inspectors found that measures to ensure the health and safety of learners had not been put in place.
- The service promotes learners' health and economic well-being effectively through the curriculum. A well-established arts programme, delivered in partnership with health professionals, benefits learners through improving their independence and artistic interests. Learners develop their entrepreneurial skills well through bespoke courses leading to some learners setting up their own businesses.
- The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In family learning, Skills for Life courses, neighbourhood projects and some community and personal development learning, teaching is well planned to support learning. In too many other sessions, tutors dominate sessions and fail to vary their teaching sufficiently to meet the needs of all learners.
- Skills for Life and family learning tutors provide all their learners with clear and detailed individual learning plans, based on sound initial assessment, which direct the learning programme well and evidence the progress learners make. However, for many other learners the new documentation is too wordy and burdensome for them. The service does not extend the good advice and guidance for key life skills available to learners on some programmes to all those who need it.
- The service has established extensive provision across the county through a large number of subcontractors and partners. Remote rural areas are

particularly well served. New management arrangements offer greater support to the smaller providers on whom the service is dependent.

- Very good partnership working has enabled the development of extremely successful learning programmes for hard-to-reach learners, such as those with mental health problems, ex-offenders and those with drug, alcohol or housing problems. These programmes transform the lives of many learners, enabling them to progress to other learning and to develop the confidence to re-enter the world of work.
- Managers use their good knowledge of local communities and business planning reflects well the local authority's vision and values. Planning captures the key areas for improvement well and targets are clearly identified. These are generally met by the service. Arrangements to support and monitor subcontracted provision are well established.
- Safeguarding is suitably promoted. All tutors undergo appropriate checks including enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and receive appropriate training. Tutors give appropriate guidance and information on safeguarding to learners. Most tutors carry out the service's required risk assessments and use suitable control measures to minimise risks.
- The promotion of equality and diversity across the service is satisfactory. Managers use information well to monitor equality and diversity, identify issues and to take action where improvement is required. However, the achievement gap between some minority ethnic groups and other learners with subcontracted provision has not yet been narrowed and tutors have not undertaken recent training to update their skills and knowledge.
- Processes for quality assurance monitoring and evaluating performance are effective. Performance management is appropriately supported by key performance indicators which are monitored systematically. The service has clear action plans that identify well where improvements are needed. The observation of teaching and learning scheme is well designed and accurate. However, the proportion of teaching which is no better than satisfactory has yet to be reduced.

What does Adult Education in Gloucestershire need to do to improve further?

- Improve the weaker teaching through more frequent observations and follow-up interventions so that all learners' needs are met.
- Improve the effectiveness of recording learners' progress and achievement, so that data on outcomes are more meaningful.
- Extend the good arrangements for providing advice and guidance, language, literacy and numeracy support to all learners who are entitled to them.
- Ensure that equality and diversity are actively promoted by training staff to narrow gaps in achievement between different groups of learners.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- gaining qualifications that help with future career goals
- improving their literacy and numeracy skills
- choosing whether to take exams or not
- the chance to learn again
- meeting new people and developing new interests
- sessions that are vocational and not just passing the time.

What learners would like to see improved:

- filling in forms and paperwork
- more guidance to assure them that they were 'on track'.

Summary of the views of partners as confirmed by inspectors

What partners like:

- the very supportive staff
- the essential safeguarding training
- the helpful support for health and safety improvements
- the supportive approach of the observation of teaching and learning scheme
- the good partnership working
- the effective subcontracting arrangements.

What partners would like to see improved:

- opportunities for contract managers to access specific training in equality and diversity
- the amount of paperwork required.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

8. The service has effectively maintained the key strengths identified at the last inspection and has made progress in tackling most of the key areas for improvement, particularly in the provision of information, advice and guidance. Good improvements have been made in the programmes for preparation for life and work. The service sets targets to improve outcomes for learners and these are generally met. However, the measurement of progress and achievement of non-accredited learning is not yet sufficiently reliable.
9. The service has a well-established vision and appropriate priorities to sustain improvements and raise expectations for users. It has an appropriate management structure and sufficient staff and other resources to carry through its plans for improvements. Staff objectives are directly aligned to the planning and development of the service and they contribute effectively to securing sustained improvements. The local authority provides appropriate monitoring of, and challenge to, the service.
10. The process of self-assessment is thorough, evaluative and largely accurate. Subcontractors contribute to the self-assessment effectively. Staff involvement and the use of learners' views contribute well to the self-assessment report. Self-assessment informs quality improvement planning effectively.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

11. Retention and achievement rates in non-accredited provision have steadily improved over a three-year period, now at 92% and 93% respectively. However, data are insufficiently accurate to validate these achievement rates. On Train to Gain programmes outcomes are satisfactory overall. On the small number of courses where learners undertake National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), outcomes are good on most intermediate and advanced programmes. The service has identified accurately that learners from some minority ethnic groups do not achieve as well as the cohort overall. No discernable differences exist in the achievement of males and females or of learners with a disability.
12. In the best examples learners make excellent improvements in their skills, knowledge and self-confidence. Many identify health benefits, and those who join courses to improve their economic well-being report that their learning had prepared them well for future employment. Parents develop well their parenting skills and deepen their understanding of their children's behaviour and development. They play a more active role in the education and development of their children and effectively challenge and encourage their children through a wide range of activities.
13. Learners feel safe. Health and well-being are effectively promoted through the curriculum and through bespoke targeted programmes. A well-established arts

programme, delivered in partnership with health professionals, achieves a wide range of good outcomes including reducing isolation, independence and developing learners' artistic interests. Learners develop their entrepreneurial skills well and this leads to some setting up their own businesses such as dog grooming and a homemade soup company. The artisan course leads to users starting their own business, 'Moreton Artisans', producing hand-made cards and gifts.

14. Vulnerable learners and those who are new into learning on Skills for Life courses and in family learning programmes progress well. They move onto other courses, undertake volunteer roles, gain higher-level qualifications and develop their personal and career aspirations well. While some evaluations effectively evidence the next steps that learners take once they have completed courses, information is not analysed routinely by the service to identify trends in progression to further learning or employment.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

15. The quality of teaching and learning is variable across the service. In the better sessions, skilled and experienced tutors motivate learners through their own love of their subject. Learners are able to produce art work, for example, to a far higher standard than they had expected. The confidence they gain from their tutors enables them to risk speaking in a foreign language, or make mathematical calculations in a safe and secure learning environment supported by fellow students. Learners on Skills for Life programmes progress confidently through their courses, and in family learning, parents and carers gain an enthusiasm for learning which takes them in new career directions. Tutors skilfully tailor the learning tasks to the needs of individual learners, and gently engage the more reticent participants. However, sessions often fail to engage all learners effectively. In too many sessions the activities do not meet the needs of all learners sufficiently and learners struggle with the concepts behind tasks they are given, and rarely progress without constant support. In family learning, insufficient access to information and communication technology (ICT) limits learning.
16. Tutors generally carry out satisfactory initial assessments of learners' needs. However, no consistent approach to recording learners' progress against identified learning goals in non-accredited provision is in place. The new forms used to record achievement and progress are long and detailed and put considerable demands on learners, in particular those with low levels of literacy. In the better classes, learners are clear about the progress they are making, but in others, while learners enjoy themselves, they cannot always identify improvements in their skills or subject knowledge.
17. The provision meets users' needs and interests well. A wide range of community learning and personal development learning courses are in place, particularly in rural areas such as the Forest of Dean. Courses are affordable and accessible to learners. The service works with a large number of providers,

many of whom offer courses to learners at very attractive prices where they are not free. Some Skills for Life courses are available through distance learning for learners who cannot travel to classes easily. In family learning, not enough courses involve children and parents learning together.

18. Through its work with partners, the service is providing innovative and unique learning programmes which are making a significant difference to learners and their local communities. Two projects in Cirencester, run through Chum a local charity, are offering vulnerable learners, with considerable barriers to learning, a chance to acquire marketable skills. Learners are aware of their enormous increases in confidence as well as competence in the craft they are learning, and talk about how the opportunity to learn with others has caused radical change in their lives. Previous projects have resulted in the formation and continuation of a craft cooperative in the Forest of Dean. The service has targeted other projects with good effect at specific groups such as learners with mental health problems.
19. Detailed and expert information, advice and guidance are provided for the learners on Skills for Life and family learning programmes. Guidance experts help learners plan their progression at appropriate points in the programme. Similarly in these programmes, sensitive support for learners who need help with their language, literacy or numeracy effectively improves the provision. However, in community learning and courses for personal development, opportunities to embed literacy and numeracy in the learning materials are missed, and advice and guidance are insufficient.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

20. Planning for service development is effective. Business planning is carefully considered and reflects well the local authority's vision and values. The strategy is focused effectively on reaching the most disadvantaged learners in the community. Managers have good knowledge of local communities, which they use well to inform their planning. They regularly consult with the service's adult learning planning group which consists of representatives from local stakeholders. The service achieved most of its targets last year; however, overall the number of learners recruited was lower than planned.
21. Well-established arrangements are in place to manage and support subcontractors. Communications within the service and with subcontractors are good. Staff appraisal systems are appropriate and targets within these support the business plan well. However, the service's effectiveness in raising standards is variable, for example good improvements have been made to the Skills for Life provision but less so for community learning. A high proportion of the programmes are not accredited and the service has been slow in developing and implementing an effective approach to recognising and recording the progress and achievement of learners on these courses.

22. The service has clear lines of accountability within the local authority, with appropriate levels of monitoring and review. Detailed service reports are prepared for senior officers, the cabinet member for education and skills and the relevant directorate, who provide the service with adequate direction and challenge in carrying out its mission and strategy.
23. Arrangements to ensure that learners are safe are satisfactory. All tutors have undergone enhanced CRB checks and a central record of checks and staff training is effectively maintained by the service. Tutors and contract managers of subcontractors have participated in essential safeguarding training and arrangements are in place to ensure that, where appropriate, new tutors are supervised until their CRB check is completed. Additional training on child protection is provided by the service to family learning tutors. Suitable guidance and information on safeguarding are given to learners and the service has developed a clear policy on e-safety and acceptable use of information technology. Effective responses are promptly made by staff and managers to safeguarding issues and appropriate records are maintained by the service. Thorough processes to promote and monitor the health and safety of the provision are in place. Most tutors carry out the service's required risk assessments and use suitable control measures to minimise any risks. However, inspectors identified a few instances where health and safety risks were identified but remedial action had not been taken by tutors.
24. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The use of management information to monitor equality and diversity is good and business planning includes equality and diversity recruitment targets. All subcontractors have an appropriate policy for equality and diversity or use the service's policy. The policy refers to harassment, but the service has not yet developed a policy for harassment and bullying to ensure that staff and learners are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities. The extent to which equality and diversity are promoted in sessions varies. Useful equality and diversity training has been undertaken by observers of teaching and learning; however, tutors have not received any recent update training other than optional e-learning packages and access to materials to use with learners.
25. The service has an effective strategy to engage with learners to support and promote improvement. Detailed analysis is carried out on learners' feedback from end-of-course questionnaires. This enables developments to be closely tailored to the needs and experiences of learners. Learners receive clear information on the results of the feedback surveys and related actions taken by the service in its 'Listening to Learners' leaflets. More recently the service has introduced a postal questionnaire to help identify the impact of learning six months after learners have completed their course. Several learner focus groups have been held recently. It is too early to judge the impact of more recent aspects of the engagement with users; however, the service has established experience of responding effectively to their views.

26. The effectiveness of self-assessment to improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners is satisfactory. Performance management is appropriately supported by key performance indicators which are monitored systematically by managers. The service has developed reliable management information systems and a risk assessment process which are used effectively to analyse performance of all the programmes. Action plans for improvement are developed for identified weaknesses and the service has recently introduced a curriculum support team to work with providers on their improvement action plans. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this support. The observation of teaching and learning scheme is well designed and accurate. It is complemented by an effective mentoring scheme which has effectively improved teaching which has been judged inadequate. However, the proportion of satisfactory teaching has not yet been reduced. The service has recognised the need to increase the frequency of its observations of teaching and learning, and has recently introduced an annual schedule of observations. With guidance from the service, each subcontractor produces its own self-assessment and quality improvement plan. These are used effectively to inform and contribute to the overall process of self-assessment.
27. The service uses resources efficiently and effectively to secure value for money and has developed sound subcontracting arrangements that support a geographically wide range of provision which enables it to reach its target groups. Smaller organisations are well supported to ensure provision for disadvantaged groups is sustainable. The service uses resources flexibly to meet the needs of specific groups of learners, for example by providing tutors and support for organisations who recruit the learners and supply a venue for courses.

Learning for social and personal development

Other social and personal development learning provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded:

Skills for Life

Grade 2

Context

28. Courses are delivered across the county by a range of providers, in venues ranging from community centres to schools. The service offers a range of courses from foundation to intermediate level for 102 learners aged 19 or over, of which 75 are female. Currently, 43 learners are on literacy and numeracy programmes and 59 on courses for English for speakers of other languages. Ten courses were running at the time of the inspection, of which five were non-accredited.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Success rates are high for accredited learning. Achievements are high for non-accredited learning. Learners enjoy their studies. Many improve their confidence. They are highly motivated and enjoy working with other learners, for example to practise their newly-acquired language skills. In a short space of time learners grasp functional language and numerical concepts that are applied well within the context of their day-to-day lives.
- Learners make good progress in sessions, especially those who have no knowledge of English. They study relevant topics, such as going to the doctor, which enhance their social well-being. Coherent progression routes for learners with low levels of English are limited within the service. Although learners can access further learning, no next step provision for learners to progress to in order to improve their language skills is available.
- Learners feel safe and safeguarding is promoted well by tutors. Risk assessments are carried out at venues and actions identified to remedy issues. Learners are given clear information at the start of the course regarding their rights and responsibilities and who to contact if they have a problem or need extra support. Health and economic well-being are promoted effectively in sessions and include healthy eating, learning about volunteering and accessing health services.
- Teaching and learning are good, with a good emphasis on development of language skills in English sessions through relevant topics which engage learners well. Tutors encourage a supportive atmosphere in which learners rapidly improve their self-esteem. Tutors effectively use a range of teaching and assessment methods to meet the preferred learning style of learners.

- Initial and diagnostic assessments are used effectively by tutors to identify short-term goals and plan sessions. Learners are informed by tutors what they need to do to improve and this is recorded in their files. Vulnerable learners are able to identify well areas which they need to further develop. However, individual learning plans and targets for learners with lower levels of English are not written in language that learners can understand.
- Courses meet the needs and interests of learners well. Learners who lack confidence to access formal learning are targeted effectively through links with partners. Learners can attend a range of venues and choose from different delivery modes. Distance learning courses for literacy and numeracy cater well for learners who are unable to access formally-taught sessions. Learners access good-quality materials using the virtual learning environment.
- Partnerships are good. The service has established good links with local schools, children's centres and employers. Partners value the responsiveness of the service in providing courses to meet the needs of the local community. Courses include literacy and numeracy for learners at a variety of times to suit their needs.
- Guidance and support for learners are good. Learners receive good initial advice and guidance about their course. Tutors identify additional learning support needs well and take appropriate action taken to make adjustments to accommodation or the delivery of sessions.
- Leadership and management are good. Managers communicate well with tutors, who are briefed effectively on service developments. Regular internal and external staff development and training events are available that tutors attend. All tutors are appropriately qualified.
- All tutors receive safeguarding training and learners are aware of safeguarding issues. Tutors promote equality and diversity well in sessions and learners feel at ease with those from cultures different to themselves. Sessions reflect the cultural diversity of learners' backgrounds well.
- Learners' views are collected and analysed effectively by managers to improve courses. All learners give their views, irrespective of their language levels, and tutors conduct oral interviews with classes to identify the effectiveness of the course.
- The monitoring of quality is good. Tutors share good practice and ideas both informally and formally through meetings and observation of each others' classes. However, the self-assessment report does not clearly evidence the improvements made. Resources are good and are used well to support learning.

What does Adult Education in Gloucestershire need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that targets for learners with low levels of English language skills are given to them in language they can clearly understand.

- Ensure that learners with low levels of English language skills have a clear progression route so that they can continue to develop the language skills learnt.

Family Learning

Grade 2

Context

29. Family learning takes place in a range of venues including schools, children's centres and learning centres. Currently, 25 parents and carers are enrolled on wider family learning (WFL) and a further 174 are on family literacy, language and numeracy (FLLN) courses. The majority of learners are women, with men making up 6% of participants. Learners from minority ethnic groups account for 15% of learners and 17% declared a learning difficulty and/or disability. One manager leads the family learning programme provision and nine tutors currently teach on the programmes.

Key findings

- Learners achieve good outcomes, with many passing literacy or numeracy qualifications at intermediate levels. Success rates for both accredited and non-accredited provision are good and overall show a sustained improvement over a three-year period.
- Tutors help learners develop well their confidence and self-esteem. Learners progress significantly during their courses. Many improve their curriculum vitae and raise their aspirations to improve their own and their families' lives. Learners develop their parenting skills well. Parents describe how they have learnt to be more patient with their children and how they break down tasks for them making them easier to achieve.
- Many learners progress onto further learning, volunteering or employment. Some learners go on to achieve advanced qualifications. Others have progressed to become qualified nurses, managers of care homes and school governors. Some learners go on to take a more active role in their community; one group raised £200 for their local school, having sourced donations for a stall from local businesses.
- Learners feel safe and are clear on the process to follow if they have a concern or need support or advice. Clear safeguarding information and advice are included in learners' induction materials. Tutors complete risk assessments at the start of courses and moderate risks well.
- The attendance of learners is good and is regularly monitored by curriculum managers; this has improved retention rates. Tutors contact absent learners and encourage them to return. Punctuality is good and tutors manage the few late arrivals well.
- Teaching and learning are good. Learners take part in lively activities which challenge and encourage them. Courses are well designed to re-engage

vulnerable and disadvantaged learners. Parents develop well their literacy, numeracy and language skills, despite many coping with complex personal issues.

- All learners have clear and detailed individual learning plans and these direct the learning programme well and evidence the progress made. However, some learning aims are not broken down into specific and measurable targets.
- The use of ICT is limited with no ICT facilities available in most venues. Too many courses are for adults only. Insufficient sessions are available where parents, carers and children can learn together to provide opportunities for tutors to support parents or carers as they help their children learn through play.
- Partnership work is outstanding. Partnership activity successfully reaches those most in need. Schools report improved behaviour of parents in the playground and an increase in the number of parents who approach their children's teacher to discuss issues or concerns they have about their children. Curriculum planning is supported through well-established links to family support workers and key staff in children's centres and schools.
- Tutors are highly qualified. Independent information, advice and guidance on progression routes are provided to learners towards the end of most courses to good effect. Many learners progress to other personal development and learning activities. .
- Leadership and management are good. The promotion of equality and diversity by tutors in sessions is inconsistent. Managers understand the changing ethnic make-up of the population and successfully target particular groups, for example parents whose children attend the Islamic school. Self-assessment is accurate, with clear and effective links to quality improvement actions. However, some initiatives have yet to impact on the provision.
- Learners' views are collected and the data analysed and acted upon, for example the setting up of new progression courses. Lesson observations have focused on new tutors and those where improvements are required. The process is an effective quality improvement tool.

What does Adult Education in Gloucestershire need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of courses for parents, carers and children to learn together to ensure that parents and carers are supported in putting their learning into practice.
- Increase access to ICT equipment for learners to provide them with an additional learning resource and to improve their ICT skills.
- Develop specific and measurable targets for individual learning plans for all learners so that they and tutors can monitor their progress more closely.

Community Learning

Grade 3

30. Currently 612 learners in non-accredited community learning programmes. Programmes take place mainly in the daytime in a range of locations including schools, the city farm, community centres and children's centres. Courses include introductory computer studies, gardening, visual arts, crafts, textiles and holistic therapies. Courses range from six to ten weeks duration. Two thirds of learners are female. Around 10% are from minority ethnic groups and around 20% have a declared disability.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Retention is low on some courses. Most learners achieve their learning goals and are proud of their emerging skills, particularly those from vulnerable groups. For example, learners at the city farm are gaining confidence with photography and model making and ex-offenders have begun to work in teams to create and plant a vegetable garden. Learners enjoy their learning and attend well.
- Progression of learners onto other courses is satisfactory. Opportunities for progression within the service are limited. Some learners gain sufficient confidence to volunteer, to continue learning elsewhere and to gain a qualification to help them find employment or become self-employed. However, this is not sufficiently recorded by the service. Progression routes to further education are not always made clear to learners.
- Learners feel safe. They are given information on safeguarding at their induction. Health and well-being are enhanced by opportunities to engage in holistic therapies and relaxation. Course files have extensive risk assessments but the implementation of these is inconsistent. Some rooms are cramped and coats and bags present a trip hazard. Several small electrical appliances are currently in use with no valid testing certificate.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better examples tutors understand the abilities and ambitions of their learners and give supportive feedback. They use a range of interesting learning activities to motivate learners to extend their skills. However, in too many sessions, explanations are too long and learners have insufficient time to practise and develop their individual skills. Checks on learning are insufficient and progress in these instances is often slow.
- The use of individual learning logs to record and review achievement is inconsistent. Often the logs are not used to record unexpected learner

progress, such as improved confidence in group work or discussions. Learners do not fully engage in assessing their own progress and rely on tutors to do so. Initial advice and guidance are satisfactory.

- Good partnerships are in place which encourage learners effectively to engage with formal learning and to progress to further learning and vocational opportunities. Community-based development workers work enthusiastically with local residents and effectively support the learners outside the timetabled sessions. The curriculum has effectively targeted provision for those with issues around substance abuse, mental health problems and ex-offenders.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The role of the curriculum support team has been extended to better support providers across the service but it is too early to assess their impact. The observation of teaching and learning scheme is robust with clear criteria and extensive action plans. However, strategies to improve the satisfactory teaching and learning from the previous year have yet to take effect.
- The promotion of diversity and equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The engagement with under-represented and vulnerable groups is good. The service recognises the lower attainment of minority ethnic groups, but this has yet to be reflected in improvements in session planning. Equality and diversity are insufficiently promoted in sessions and limited celebration of the cultural diversity of the group occurs.
- The self-assessment report is self-critical and accurate. Each subject area has a separate report and improvement plan, but the actions have not been sufficiently rapid to improve the learning experience during the current year. The service recognises that initial advice and guidance and recording achievement need to be more individually focused to support learners and to more carefully monitor their progress.

What does Adult Education in Gloucestershire need to do to improve further?

- Improve the satisfactory teaching and learning by focusing on individual learners' goals and including activities and resources to meet their needs and extend their interests.
- Embed the use of individual learner logs so that learners will understand how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.
- Promote equality and diversity more effectively so that cultural backgrounds are celebrated in sessions.

Information about the inspection

31. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by Adult Education in Gloucestershire's Head of Quality and Contracting, 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 funding body, Framework for Excellence indicators, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's monitoring visit and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
32. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gather the views of learners. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had completed on behalf of the provider. They also visited learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subjects the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Adult Education Gloucestershire

Learning types: 14-16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learners 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. **Social and personal development:** all adult safeguarded provision

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Employer responsive	Social and personal development
Approximate number of enrolled learners			
Full-time learners	0	0	0
Part-time learners	8,988	339	8,549
Overall effectiveness	3	n/a	3
Capacity to improve	3		
A. Outcomes for learners	3	n/a	3
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3		
A1.a) how well do learners attain their learning goals?	3		
A1.b) How well do learners progress?	3		
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
A3. Do learners feel safe?	3		
A4. <i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2		
A5. <i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	n/a		
B. Quality of provision	3	n/a	3
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3		
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3		
B3. How well do partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2		
B4. How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3		
C. Leadership and management	3	n/a	3
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3		
C2. <i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	3		
C3. How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3		
C4. How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3		
C5. How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3		
C6. How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3		
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3		

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