

Cumbria Adult Education Service

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 51448

Name of lead inspector: Tim Gardner HMI

Last day of inspection: 28 January 2011

Type of provider: Local Authority

Address: 5 Portland Square
Carlisle
Cumbria
CA1 1PU

Telephone number: 01228 226924

Information about the provider

1. Cumbria Adult Education Service (CAE) is part of the Continuous Learning Unit in Cumbria County Council's Children's Services Directorate. Continuous Learning pulls together the county's 14–19 Partnership and adult learning and is also responsible for the commissioning of 16–19 provision in the county. CAE is funded by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to deliver personal and community development learning (PCDL); adult-responsive learning, including First Steps funded provision; and employer-responsive, including a Train to Gain contract.
2. In 2009/10, PCDL and the great majority of adult-responsive accredited provision was delivered through service level agreement arrangements with a large number of external partners. At the start of 2010/11, the number of providers declined slightly. Skills for Life and employer-responsive provision, including Train to Gain and family learning programmes, are delivered directly.
3. Cumbria has approximately half the land-mass of the North West but only 7% of the resident population of the region. West Cumbria and the Furness peninsula suffer particularly from geographical isolation and economic decline due to long-term shifts in their industrial bases. The geography, topography and rural nature of Cumbria provide real challenges to access and choice of services, with over 50% of the population living in rural communities and 70% of settlements having fewer than 200 people.
4. The current Cumbrian population of 498,900 is forecast to grow, although this increase will be mostly older people not of working age. There is a declining population of 0–24-year-olds in all areas except Eden, and the proportion of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is expected to increase over the next few years. There has been a growth of migrants from Eastern Europe, mainly of working age. Cumbria remains an area with a low percentage of minority ethnics, at under 2%.
5. CAE provides no training on behalf of other providers.
6. The following organisations provide training on behalf of CAE:
 - Abbotsmead Community Development Centre (CDC)
 - Adult Education Carlisle
 - Ambleside Library CDC
 - Appleby Heritage Centre
 - Barrow and District Disability Association
 - Barrow Island CDC
 - Brewery Arts Centre, Kendal
 - Cartmel Community Education Centre
 - Cockermouth and Keswick Adult Education Centre

- Cumbria Community Voluntary Service
- Dallam Community Education Centre
- Fellside CDC
- Flimby and Ewanrigg CDC
- Kingmoor Community and Business Centre
- Kirkbride Learning Centre
- Kirkby Stephen Adult Education Centre
- Lakes Adult Education Centre
- Lakes College, West Cumbria
- Millom Adult Education Centre
- Netherhall and Beaconhill Adult Education Centre
- Ormsgill CDC
- Pennine Way CDC
- Sedbergh Adult Education Centre
- Shap CDC
- Upper Eden Valley Adult Education Centre
- Upperby CDC
- Vickerstown CDC
- Walney Adult Education Centre
- West Lakes Academy Adult Education Centre
- Whitehaven Adult Education Centre
- Wigton Adult Education Centre
- Workers Educational Association (WEA)
- Workington Adult Education Centre

Type of provision	Number of learners in 2009/10
Provision for young learners: Further education (16 to 18)	138 part-time learners
Adult learner provision: Learning for qualifications Learning for social and personal development	1,933 part-time learners 8,690 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain	522 learners

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
---	----------------

Capacity to improve	Grade 2
----------------------------	----------------

Aspect	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3

Learning for qualifications	
------------------------------------	--

	Grade
Preparation for life and work	2

Learning for social and personal development	
---	--

	Grade
Information and communication technology	2
Arts, media and publishing	2
Languages, literature and culture	2

Overall effectiveness

- CAE has a very successful strategic approach that makes maximum use of adult safeguarded funded learning to target provision for the hard-to-reach and most needy learner groups. The wide range of courses and programmes offers learners an opportunity to acquire qualifications alongside the predominantly non-accredited programmes that are even more successful in meeting learner aspirations as well as having a positive social impact. The success rate for qualifications at foundation and intermediate levels are improving each year. The advanced programmes are less successful and the service is working hard to address this. The vast array of non-accredited courses develops a wide range of practical skills for learners as well as increasing their knowledge base. The most distinctive feature, however, is how the courses and programmes develop and instil confidence, self-esteem and an ability to socialise more effectively and take a more active part in both society and in supporting their children and families.

8. Courses and programmes are well taught. Teachers bring both skills and knowledge into their work and they are particularly supportive of the learners. The range and location of courses very effectively meet the diverse needs of local communities. Care, guidance and support for learners are also good.
9. The provision is skilfully managed by both service staff and centre managers. Curriculum leaders play an active role in developing the provision and contributing to very effective systems and processes that continually improve the quality offered to learners.

Main findings

- Overall success rates on both short- and long-course accredited provision have improved each year and are now satisfactory. Foundation and intermediate courses have improved and are now in line with the national averages. Provision for 16–18-year-olds is also improving. Success rates on very short programmes, those for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) and Skills for Life courses are all high. Success rates on advanced level courses are low.
- Learners on non-accredited provision develop a very good range of skills and make significant progress. They develop good social and personal skills. In some cases the impact of the learning is life-changing. Previously disengaged learners become active in both social and employment activities as a result of their learning and attendance.
- All learners thoroughly enjoy their programmes and respond enthusiastically to the positive relationships developed by the majority of the teachers. Learners make good progress and achieve their learning goals. Many continue in learning and progress to a higher level or more demanding courses. Learners produce good standards of work.
- For some learners, the impact of their learning has a dramatic effect on them as individuals and parents. It makes a significant contribution to both their economic and social well-being. The development of confidence, self-esteem, skills and knowledge enables previously disengaged individuals to develop by integrating socially as well as providing support for their children at home.
- Learners feel safe. The service provides good guidance at induction to promote personal safety in a range of contexts. Risk assessments are carried out appropriately and adherence to health and safety requirements is actively promoted.
- Teaching and learning are good. Session planning is thorough. Tutors use a variety of strategies to engage and inspire learners. Sessions are lively, interactive and individualised. Recording of learners' progress by teachers is good. Individual learning plans are well used but in some family learning sessions they do not influence teaching strategies. Not all tutors have sufficient confidence to use information and learning technology (ILT) during teaching sessions.
- Arrangements to meet the needs of users are good. Learners benefit from a wide range of accredited and non-accredited courses provided on a flexible

basis across the county. Provision is specifically targeted and responsive to the particular needs of the community. A good balance is offered between pre-planned and negotiated courses in response to identified community needs.

- Links with partner organisations are good. Productive links with the local authority, community groups, voluntary organisations and a range of employers in the public and private sector successfully maximise provision for learners. Communication is good and partners work together to ensure minimal duplication of provision.
- Tutors use initial assessment particularly effectively to plan learning and provide additional support for those who need it. Learners feel fully supported and many gain sufficient confidence to progress onto further courses. Careers information, advice and guidance are provided throughout the county. However, the numbers accessing this service are not routinely monitored.
- Leadership and management are good. Senior managers set high standards through a clearly defined strategy for planning and developing learning programmes and services. The service plan and its priorities are communicated to all staff and summarised in a useful and succinct pamphlet for teachers and learners. The service is diligently planned to meet county council and government priorities.
- Arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adult learners are good. Learners feel particularly safe and are given clear guidance on acceptable behaviour in lessons. CAE has established a culture where staff and learners are strongly aware of issues of personal safety. The service takes prompt action to resolve any incidents of bullying or harassment and maintains detailed records of incidents.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Accommodation and specialist facilities support good access for learners with mobility difficulties. Monitoring the achievement of individual groups is good. All groups of learners achieve equally. Equality themes are discussed thoroughly in family learning and preparation for life and work lessons but this is not sufficiently widespread throughout the service.
- Arrangements to improve the quality of provision are particularly good. The service gives a high priority to evaluating performance and has an established culture of continuous improvement. Systems are increasingly effective in tackling issues and action plans have clearly stated targets for improvement. However, not all part-time teachers feel they contribute to, or fully understand, the self-assessment report.

What does CAE need to do to improve further?

- Continue to analyse the reasons for low and declining performance in advanced level courses. Develop strategies and action plans to improve the performance in these courses.
- Continue to improve teaching and include the use of ILT to support learning, ensuring that all teachers are confident in its use.

- Extend the participation in, and improve the understanding of, self-assessment by part-time teachers so they can actively participate in the process and take ownership of the outcomes.
- Improve the good practice in promoting equality and diversity by extending the development and implementation of good practice materials throughout the curriculum.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the friendly and supportive teachers who take time to listen
- the way teachers give constructive and positive feedback
- the guidance given to help in working towards a new career
- the good communication with assessors through regular meetings and follow-up emails
- the relaxed atmosphere in classes
- encouragement to extend skills beyond the 'comfort zone'
- the variety of courses from which to choose
- the location of courses and the easy access to them.

What learners would like to see improved:

- more courses at an advanced level
- improve the heating in some venues
- more storage space for work on some courses
- more courses available during the day
- better advertising of courses.

Summary of the views of partners as confirmed by inspectors

What partners like:

- Flexibility of delivery, a thorough diagnostic assessment, excellent tracking and reporting, and a high level of positive outcomes
- The good partnership working and the way CAE tries to ensure that learners' needs and requirements are met
- the excellent course which has given a learning support assistant a sound grounding in providing support in the classroom.

What partners would like to see improved:

- no improvements identified.

Main inspection findings

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

10. CAE's capacity to improve is good. Overall success and achievement rates have improved steadily from 73% in 2007/08 to 77% in 2009/10. Outcomes on non-accredited courses are good at 81% for last year. Since the last inspection visit, the service has made significant improvements to deal with areas for improvement particularly in the quality of provision and teaching and learning. The service has made progress in all areas but recognises the need to improve some aspects of quality improvement.
11. The provider has a clear strategy to sustain improvement through its management structure and thorough monitoring the work of subcontracted providers. The self-assessment process is largely accurate in the strengths and areas for improvement identified. Management of all curriculum areas is good. The service is working towards extending its methods for collecting the views of adult learners.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

12. Overall success rates on both short- and long-course accredited provision have improved each year and are now satisfactory. Success rates on very short programmes, LLDD and Skills for Life courses, education and training, and engineering programmes are all high. Foundation and intermediate courses have also improved and are now either at or above the national averages. The small proportion of 16–18-year-old provision is also improving. In a small number of subject areas, such as health and social care and science and maths where learner numbers are quite small, success rates have declined. Success rates on advanced-level courses are low.
13. Learners on non-accredited provision develop a very good range of skills and make significant progress. They develop good social and personal skills. In some cases the impact of the learning is life-changing. Previously disengaged learners become involved in both social and employment activities as a result of their learning and attendance. All learners thoroughly enjoy their programmes and respond well to the positive relationships developed by the majority of the teachers. Learners make good progress and achieve their learning goals. Many continue in learning and progress to higher-level or more demanding courses. Learners produce good standards of work.
14. For some learners, the impact of their learning has a dramatic effect on them as individuals and as parents. It makes a significant contribution to both their economic and social well-being. The development of confidence, self-esteem, and skills and knowledge enables previously disengaged individuals to develop and become better able to integrate socially as well as providing support for their children at home.

15. Learners feel safe and the service provides good guidance at induction to promote personal safety in a range of contexts. The service completes risk assessments when appropriate and is active in promoting adherence to health and safety requirements.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

16. Standards of teaching and learning are good. CAE has worked hard at improving the quality of teaching and learning. Session planning is thorough. Teachers use a variety of different strategies to motivate and inspire learners. Sessions are lively and interactive. Learners are motivated and enjoy their learning. Some tutors use ILT successfully to support learning. However, not all staff are sufficiently confident with this resource. Peer mentoring for teachers provides them with good opportunities to share good practice.
17. Teachers systematically record progress on both accredited and non-accredited courses. The results from initial assessments are very effectively used to plan learning. Learners are encouraged to reflect and record the skills they are developing in the recently improved individual learning plan. Generally, individual learning plans are correctly used but in some family learning sessions they do not influence teaching strategies sufficiently. Much learning is individualised and additional learning support is accessible and effectively used to help learners progress.
18. CAE is responding responsibly to the changing priorities in adult and community learning. Arrangements and planning to meet the needs of users are good. Learners benefit from a wide range of accredited and non-accredited courses provided on a flexible basis in a wide range of community venues. Provision is responsive to the specific needs of the community and is targeted effectively at meeting users' needs. CAE has successfully developed flexible vocational courses to meet the needs of employers and learners.
19. Links with partner organisations, to enhance opportunities for learners, are good. CAE has developed productive links with the local authority, community groups voluntary organisations and a range of employers in the public and private sectors. CAE uses these partnerships successfully to help address the needs identified within regional strategies for the area. Effective links with partners help to provide courses in a wide range of community venues throughout the county. Collaborative working with community groups has helped identify training opportunities in the community that have addressed specific needs. Communication is good and partners work together to ensure provision is not duplicated.
20. Tutors use initial assessment correctly to plan learning and provide additional support for those who need it. CAE provides adaptive specialist equipment for learners through its extensive partnership links. Learners feel well supported and many gain sufficient confidence to progress onto further courses. Pastoral support is good. Overall, course information is comprehensive. Information, advice and guidance are available throughout the county. However, in some

cases learners are not always aware of the opportunities they have for further learning after completing a course.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

21. Leadership and management are good. Senior managers set high standards through a clearly defined strategy for planning and developing learning programmes and services. The service plan and its priorities are communicated to all staff and summarised in a useful and succinct pamphlet for teachers and learners. The service is effectively planned to meet county council and government priorities. CAE collaborates well with other areas of the council particularly in areas such as safeguarding. Demanding targets are set and mostly met for learner recruitment and achievement. The management of centres and the curriculum are good. Monitoring of the performance of the work of subcontracted centres is particularly good. The programme is coherent and successfully planned to offer good learning opportunities throughout Cumbria. Cabinet members satisfactorily scrutinise the work of the service and receive regular reports on its budget, its quality and how well targets are met.
22. Arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adult learners are good. Learners feel particularly safe and are given clear guidance on acceptable behaviour in lessons. The provider has established a culture where staff and learners are strongly aware of issues of personal safety. Prompt action is taken to resolve any incidents of bullying or harassment and full records are kept of the outcomes. All teachers who work with children and vulnerable adults have completed computer-based training. Managers work collaboratively with other council agencies and the local safeguarding board to co-ordinate policy, practice and the development of training. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks on all staff are held on a central record.
23. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Accommodation and specialist facilities provide good access and support for learners with mobility difficulties. There is good monitoring of achievement by different groups of learners and achievement data show few differences between their success rates and those of other learners. CAE targets learners from deprived areas and uses some of its fee income to further subsidise this provision. Measures to increase participation by male learners are having some success. Equality themes are thoroughly discussed in family learning and preparation for life and work lessons but this is not sufficiently widespread throughout the service. The promotion of equality and diversity throughout the curriculum is variable.
24. Arrangements to improve the quality of provision are particularly good. The service gives a high priority to evaluating performance and has an established culture of continuous improvement. Systems are increasingly effective in tackling issues and action plans have clearly stated targets for improvement. Significant improvements have been made to the quality of provision in curriculum areas and to teaching since the last inspection. Procedures to assure and moderate the quality of learning are thorough. Teachers receive detailed guidance and good peer and mentoring support to improve their teaching

practice. Improved use is made of the arrangements to record and measure learners' progress. The self-assessment process includes the views of staff and learners. However, not all teachers are sufficiently aware of the process and know about the key findings. Judgements in the report are evaluative and detailed.

25. The Service offers good value for money. It has stringent measures for budgetary monitoring and control and regular reports are made to senior managers to verify financial trends. The service meets most of its financial and performance targets set by the funding bodies and the County Council.

Learning for qualifications

Other learning for qualifications provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: Leisure, travel and tourism; health, public services and care; science and mathematics; education and training, and business, administration and law.

Preparation for life and work

Grade 2

Context

26. In preparation for life and work there are 1,332 learners enrolled on courses at the time of the inspection. Of these, 461 are on LLDD programmes. There are 354 learners on Skills for Life courses: 120 learners on literacy, 128 learners on numeracy and 106 learners on ESOL. Additionally there are 354 learners on family learning programmes.
27. At the time of inspection, 66% of learners are women. Most courses lead to a qualification. CAE provides classes in over 50 venues across the county. The great majority of the provision is direct delivery. The skills manager oversees the LLDD and Skills for Life provision with the support of a Skills for Life manager, two curriculum leaders and around 54 sessional teachers. A second manager, with the support of two curriculum leaders, two development officers and 20 sessional teachers, manages the family learning programmes.

Key findings

- Success rates are good, and improving, at over 80% on all accredited courses in LLDD, literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Despite the adverse effects that the floods in West Cumbria had on retention during 2009/10, family learning retention is high at 99%. Success rates are outstanding at 92% for wider family learning and 91% for family literacy, language and numeracy.
- Learners enjoy their learning and most make good progress. CAE recognises that there is still insufficient progress from family learning to Skills for Life programmes. Celebration of learners' work is good and it is promoted through a range of activities. Some of this work is of a very high standard. Learners significantly improve their self-confidence and LLDD learners develop good personal and employability skills.
- The promotion of learners' safety is effective. Learners say they feel safe. They study personal safety as part of the induction programme. Computer safety protocols are promoted thoroughly. Learners are aware of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and how to report any incidents. The service promotes healthy eating and healthy living in LLDD and family learning programmes very successfully.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers prepare lessons carefully and use a good range of teaching and learning methods to maintain the interest and attention of learners. In the best sessions, tutors are sensitive to the individual

needs of learners and effectively challenge the more able. In other sessions there is little differentiation of activity or resources.

- Initial assessment is thorough and for LLDD and Skills for Life learners individual learning plans are effective and developmental. These plans actively encourage learners to reflect on their progress towards fulfilling objectives during each session. In LLDD, the plans are particularly attractive and accessible. Individual learning plans for learners in family learning are less effective and require further development.
- Technology is used effectively where it is available. Computerised resources provide an extensive range of material and documentation to support teaching and learning. Close links with the Cumbria Library Service provides a good range of resources, including a specialist Skills for Life resource centre. CAE has invested in continuing professional development and supports teachers in achieving higher-level awards in teaching.
- The provision meets the needs and interests of learners particularly successfully through content, location and flexibility of provision. Strategies to attract priority learners are highly effective. In family learning most of the learning is non-accredited and not all learners are aware of possible progression opportunities.
- There are some strong partnership arrangements that promote social inclusion and extend opportunities to learners. These include good arrangements with care organisations, schools, children's centres, employers and local libraries.
- Care, guidance and support are good. Information, advice and guidance are now accredited to a national standard. Tutors are knowledgeable about learners' needs and provide good pastoral and learning support. Free childcare support on all courses helps learners to attend their courses. Links with specialist agencies, such as Connexions and other voluntary organisations, are good. Dyslexia referrals are made to South Cumbria Dyslexia Association.
- Curriculum leadership and management are good. Managers are clear about the priorities for the curriculum area and are particularly keen to design provision that meets the needs of learners, including those from deprived communities. Communication is good. National and regional priorities are implemented. Data are now used well to monitor and improve performance.
- Safeguarding is satisfactory. Training is prioritised. Learners, during the induction process, are given clear advice about responding to bullying or discrimination. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory and is promoted among staff, learners, employers and other stakeholders. Data are used effectively to monitor, analyse and improve performance from different groups of learners.
- The observation of teaching and learning is to be extended, with additional tutors carrying out training in preparation to observe. The commitment to improve the quality of provision is strong, although the quality improvement plan targets are not sufficiently specific or measurable. The self-assessment report is generally accurate, identifying key strengths and areas for improvement.

What does CAE need to do to improve further?

- Further develop individual learning plans on family learning courses. Share the good practice developed for LLDD and Skills for Life learners and devise strategies to ensure individual learning plans effectively differentiate teaching and learning activities and resources.
- Ensure that progression routes are clearly indicated in all aspects of provision and to other programmes and providers so that learners are given clear guidance as to where they can progress to next.
- Further develop the range of accredited programmes in family learning so that learners can achieve formal recognition for their work and achievements.
- Continue to develop and regularly monitor the quality improvement plan to ensure clear and measurable targets are set and that data continue to be used to improve performance across all programme areas.

Learning for social and personal development

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

Information and communication technology

Grade 2

Context

28. Information and communication technology (ICT) courses for social and personal development are taught throughout the county. Most of the courses are at an introductory level, although follow-on courses are also offered. Learners attend weekly for two hours, with most courses running for 10 weeks or less. All the courses are delivered by subcontracted centres.
29. During the previous academic year 1,184 learners enrolled on ICT courses, of which 68% were female, 5% had a declared disability and 1% was from minority ethnic groups. Five per cent of learners were under the age of 25 and 39% were 65 and over.

Key findings

- In 2009/10 the success rate was high at 92%. Learners are enthusiastic and enjoy their sessions. They make good progress and develop a wide range of ICT skills. Many learners surprise themselves by acquiring skills which they thought impossible. Learners put their skills to good use in their personal lives and in employment. Overall, learners are punctual and their attendance is satisfactory.
- Learners say they feel safe. CAE has recently produced and distributed to learners a very informative and comprehensive brochure about safe computing.
- Teaching, training and learning are good. Theory and practice are carefully integrated, with practical activities drawing on previously presented theory. Tutors use ILT skilfully to explain and demonstrate step-by-step procedures. Learner-centred learning is competently managed. Class sizes are small and learners receive good individual attention.
- Resources are satisfactory. Computer hardware, operating programs, software and ILT are fit-for-purpose. Most rooms are appropriately laid out and furnished. However, some work areas are cramped and not all ICT rooms are accessible to learners with mobility difficulties. A computing room in one centre visited is inadequate. It has a defective data projector and poorly maintained computers and popular digital imaging software is not available.
- Insufficient attention is given to developing learners' literacy and numeracy skills through ICT. Some learners have low levels of literacy and opportunities for contextualising and improving literacy are lost. Too little attention is also given to developing learners' inputting skills to prevent slow and cumbersome techniques impeding inputting speed, dexterity and proficient work habits.

- Learners' receive good oral feedback on the work they produce in class which helps them to improve its quality and develop their skills. Periodically, their progress is formally and satisfactorily reviewed and recorded. While some individual learning plans contain specific learning and personal targets, in many learning plans they are insufficiently detailed to guide in-session learning.
- A good range of short introductory courses is available throughout the county that meets the needs and interests of learners and local communities particularly effectively. Although learners are consulted about the courses they require, many learners have insufficient information about follow-on courses and some have to wait too long before being able to join one.
- Partnership working is good. Partnerships with large companies have resulted in bespoke courses being run to meet the needs of employers and employees. Good partnerships have been developed with managers in learning venues and with personnel responsible for village halls, community centres and sheltered housing complexes which help to ensure that ICT courses are available in convenient locations.
- Information, advice and guidance are good and they help learners to select the correct courses at the right level. Learner satisfaction is high. Learners speak highly of the in-class, telephone and email support given to them by tutors and the beneficial impact it has on their learning and skills development. Learners have good access to course information.
- Leadership and management are good. Communication with centre managers and tutors, by telephone, email and termly bulletins, is good. The good range of staff meetings, such as the termly area meetings for managers and the newly introduced half-day conference for staff, are particularly effective in providing up-dates for staff and in identifying and disseminating best practice. The virtual learning environment has been successfully introduced.
- Safeguarding satisfactorily complies with government requirements and all ICT tutors and volunteers receive enhanced CRB checks. Learners are satisfactorily informed about healthy and safe ICT working practices, including internet safety.
- Equality and diversity are satisfactorily promoted. Learners of different ages with differing backgrounds and experience are successfully accommodated in ICT classes. They are treated fairly and protected from harassment and bullying, and are satisfactorily informed about the complaints procedure. While recent action to increase male participation in ICT courses has been partially successful, the number of male learners is still relatively low.
- Quality improvement processes and procedures have improved significantly. The process for observing teaching, learning and assessment has improved and standards of teaching have been raised. New and underperforming staff are effectively supported. Procedures for recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) are now more thorough and reliable and all staff complete mandatory RARPA training. The self-assessment report accurately reflects the provision.

What does CAE need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that individual learning plans contain sufficiently detailed learning targets to guide learning and for providing a standard against which learners' progress can be accurately measured.
- Improve learners' literacy and numeracy skills through ICT and give greater attention to developing their inputting skills to enable them to produce work of a higher quality in a shorter time.
- Continue to develop ICT courses in response to learners' needs but also ensure that all learners have sufficient information about follow-on courses which they can join when they complete their current course so they continue to develop their ICT skills.
- Ensure all ICT workrooms are correctly equipped and fit-for-purpose so that learners are not hindered by poorly functioning hardware and non-standard software.

Arts, media and publishing

Grade 2

Context

30. Currently 1,023 learners attend 131 different classes offered at urban and rural centres across the region. Eighty per cent of learners are female and 49% are aged 55 and above. The majority of the provision is in art, design, craft and soft furnishing subjects as well as a small amount of musical-related provision.

Key findings

- Success rates on all non-accredited courses are high at 82%. Attendance and retention on these programmes are good. Learner surveys indicate a high satisfaction rate. However, success rates on accredited provision are low at 54%. Accredited courses constitute only 10% of the provision.
- The standard of learners' work is good on non-accredited courses. Learners' achievements are celebrated appropriately through an exhibition of their work. Learners value the social aspect of arts and crafts courses, appreciating the opportunities to engage with others in the community. The skills and techniques they acquire enable them to produce work for sale, to give to others or for their own use.
- Teaching and learning are good. The excellent choice of projects makes a significant impact on learners' lives. Some teachers' demonstrations are both expert and inspirational. Differentiation and personalised learning are integrated into teaching strategies. Subject-specific health and safety concerns are clearly highlighted and adhered to.
- Insufficient use is made of the available technological resources to support learning although learners are adept at incorporating technology to record ideas and work. In a minority of classes some techniques used by teachers are old-fashioned and do not make best use of available resources.
- Learners are stimulated and enjoy their learning. Projects and topics engage, and in some cases engross, learners. In some classes learners arrive early so they can start their work. The lives of many of the learners are enriched through their participation.
- Assessment is very good. Learners are able to monitor their progress and skills development on a well-designed and extremely effective form. Learners speak highly about being able to track their development.
- The range of provision successfully meets the needs of learners. The choice of subjects offered is wide and classes are timed to satisfy the majority of the learners attending.
- Though there are some inconsistencies in course content across the region, information, advice and guidance are good. Course information sheets are instructive and clearly convey essential detail, requirements, learning objectives and opportunities for progression.

- Curriculum management is good, particularly in performing arts. The observation and assessment of delivery is accurate and other quality procedures, such as the monitoring of teachers' files, are effective. Teachers are well-informed about planning, recording and assessment requirements. However, despite good promotion of professional development, participation in some subject-specific initiatives is low.
- The clear distinction between management roles at curriculum and centre level enables managers to have responsibility and flexibility to determine what courses and programmes are taught at each centre. Centre managers have some budgetary control that allows them to offer classes that do not have to rely on large enrolments.
- Teachers are well qualified and several are current or recent practitioners in their specific areas of expertise. Resources are uniformly good and classes are often located in very pleasant surroundings. Promotion of adult education is extremely good in several of the centres, especially urban ones.
- The self-assessment report is accurate and self-critical and it clearly identifies strengths and areas for improvement. Much progress has been made to deal with most of the specific concerns and issues identified.

What does CAE need to do to improve further?

- Devise strategies to improve the participation rates by part-time teachers in the range of continuing professional development activities such as master classes and other opportunities to identify and share best practice.

Languages, literature and culture

Grade 2

Context

31. There are currently 779 learners of which 508 are on non-accredited courses in English, creative writing, lip reading, British sign language and modern foreign languages. Long- and short-accredited and non-accredited courses are scheduled as day and evening sessions in the main specialist language centres in north and south Cumbria as well as in local schools and community venues throughout Cumbria. Sixty-one per cent of learners are female and are aged 50–75 years or more. Four per cent are 19–24-years-of-age. Approximately 0.2% of learners are from minority ethnic communities. There are currently 60 part-time tutors teaching in this subject area supported by three part-time curriculum leaders.

Key findings

- Outcomes are satisfactory. Although still just below national averages, there have been improvements over the last three years. The standard of learners' work in lessons is good. Retention and attendance are satisfactory. All learners speak highly of the good progress they have made in achieving their personal goals. There is good progression across levels and in lessons.
- Learners benefit from their good development of language, social and personal skills. The learning experiences of most learners have successfully transformed their lives. They develop language skills and confidence in their usage as well as becoming more fluent and widening their vocabulary. For some older learners living in dispersed communities, the classes provide a great opportunity to meet others and socialise.
- Teaching and learning are good. In the better lessons teaching is well planned with an excellent range of activities and resources, including the use of authentic materials. Learners interact well, enjoy their learning and participate enthusiastically in activities. Learners speak highly of the benefits gained from the setting and marking of homework tasks in improving their language competence.
- Very good use is made of ILT in some lessons. Learners benefit from the effective use of smartboard and computerised presentations by teachers for explanations, showing moving picture icons, demonstrations and sharing of learning objectives.
- Initial assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. In some lessons learners are encouraged to identify individual learning targets which are then used to inform future lesson planning and learning opportunities. However, in other lessons the needs of different learners are not always recognised on lesson plans or always evident in teaching and learning.
- CAE is highly responsive, providing a wide range of accredited and non-accredited language programmes. These include European languages as well as a number of minority languages to meet the needs of the local people for social

or work purposes. Good progression routes at larger centres enable learners to progress to higher levels.

- Good partnerships and productive links with schools, community centres, and libraries are in place. Effective relationships with schools support the location of programmes within local communities. These are particularly effective in supporting the well-being of learners and in meeting their individual needs.
- Care, guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Teachers have a very positive approach towards their learners and provide good pastoral support in lessons. Learners value the help they get from their teachers and centre staff. Access to specialist support, including dyslexia support, is good and funds are available to assist learners to complete their studies successfully.
- Learners benefit from good enrichment activities in lessons, for example cooking recipes from other countries, songs and parties at Christmas time as well as trips to cinemas and restaurants to practise language.
- Leadership and curriculum management are very effective. Relationships are good and staff work co-operatively as a team. Teaching staff benefit from and appreciate the good support provided by the centre managers. The use of the virtual learning website has improved communication. However, opportunities for sharing best practice are limited.
- Safeguarding has a high priority. It has good coverage during the learners' induction as well as in the observation of teaching and learning processes. All staff have had safeguarding training. Learners report feeling safe and secure when entering and leaving their places of study as well as in the classroom.
- Resources and accommodation are good overall. Many tutors are native speakers and bring with them the experiences of their own countries to share with their learners. Curriculum leaders effectively support part-time teachers dispersed throughout a large county. Spacious and well-equipped teaching rooms in schools provide suitable learning environments.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is good. Learners are valued. Diversity is particularly appropriately celebrated in terms of topics chosen, materials used and displays about different languages and countries on walls. Learning about the countries where the target language is used helps learners to become more aware of different cultures, acceptable social behaviours and linguistic and cultural nuances.

What does CAE need to do to improve further?

- Continue to devise strategies to improve the increasing success rates so that all learners can be confident they will achieve their identified learning goals.
- Increase the accuracy of target setting and assessment through the ongoing quality monitoring of individual learning plans and progress tracking.
- Make the self-assessment process more inclusive. Ensure greater involvement of part-time staff in the self-assessment process so that they take good ownership of the service's key judgements and findings.

Information about the inspection

32. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by CAE's deputy county manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding bodies, Framework for Excellence indicators, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's monitoring visit and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.
33. 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 service. They also visited learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Additionally, inspectors collected evidence from a sample of the subjects the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Cumbria Adult Education Service (CAE)
Learning types: 14-16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships. **Social and personal development:** all adult safeguarded provision

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Social and personal development
Approximate number of enrolled learners				
Full-time learners	0	0	0	0
Part-time learners	4,085	84	1,223	2,778
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2	2
Capacity to improve	2			
A. Outcomes for learners	2	2	3	2
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2			
A1.a) How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3			
A1.b) How well do learners progress?	2			
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2			
A3. Do learners feel safe?	2			
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>	2			
B. Quality of provision	2	2	2	2
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2			
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2			
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?	2			
C. Leadership and management	2	2	2	2
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2			
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?	2			
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?	2			
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2			

*where applicable to the type of provision

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090105

© Crown copyright 2011