

Cambridgeshire County Council

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 50971

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Type of provider: Local Authority

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Information about the provider

1. Cambridgeshire County Council holds contracts with the Skills Funding Agency to provide Train to Gain and adult and community learning and with the University for Industry to provide learndirect. It offers learning in most subject areas across the county, except Peterborough through Cambridgeshire Adult Learning and Skills (the service). It also holds smaller contracts for ESOL and Development Fund projects.
2. The service is part of the Cambridgeshire's Library Learning and Culture Service. Six managers and four curriculum leaders support the head of service in looking after the provision. Some 284 part-time tutors in 170 venues across the five districts of the county through 34 sub-contractors provide tuition to learners. The service directly provides family learning and the provision for adults with learning disabilities and/or difficulties.
3. Cambridgeshire is a large widely dispersed rural county with an estimated population of 595,700. The county has nine market towns. Cambridge City is the only major urban area. The county has five district councils. Fenland, North-East Cambridge and areas within Huntingdon have the highest levels of relative deprivation. According to the census of 2001, some 4% of the residents are from minority ethnic groups; however the traveller community is the largest minority ethnic group. In 2009, 70% of pupils achieved five or more GCSE and equivalents at grades C or above. Some 63% of the population is of working age. In June 2010, 5% of the population were unemployed as against 7% in Great Britain.
4. In December 2006, the Adult Learning Inspectorate inspected the service's provision in preparation for life and work, family learning and learndirect funded information communication technology. It did not inspect the subcontracted provision within three local FE colleges.
5. The following organisations provide training on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council:
 - College of West Anglia
 - Huntingdonshire Regional College
 - Abbey College, Ramsey
 - Bassingbourn Village College
 - Bottisham Village College
 - Comberton Village College
 - Cottenham Village College
 - Melbourn Village College
 - Impington Village College
 - Swavesey Village College

- Linton Village College
- Sawston Village College
- City of Ely Community College
- Witchford Village College
- St.Neots Community Learning
- St.Ivo School
- Cambridge Cyrenians
- Cambridge Housing Society
- Cambridge Womens' Resources Centre
- COVER
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Learning Trust
- FACET
- Ferry Project
- FLACK
- Huntingdon Community Group
- Illuminate
- Lifecraft
- Red2Green
- Richmond Fellowship
- Romsey Mill
- Stageworks
- VoiceAbility
- Workers Educational Association
- Parkside Federation

Type of provision	Number of learners in (2009/10)
Provision for adult learners: Learning for qualifications Learning for social and personal development	398 part-time learners 12,250 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain	282 learners

Summary report

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

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

Learning for social and personal development	Grade
Sport, leisure and recreation	2
Crafts, creative arts and design	2
Modern foreign languages	2
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	3
Community development	2

Overall effectiveness

6. Learners develop high level of skills in all subject areas. They improve their confidence, skills and knowledge to a high degree and achieve their personal objectives. Learners in craft subjects achieve outstanding standards of skills, work and knowledge. On sports programmes, learners improve their fitness levels and reduce stress. Those following modern foreign languages programmes increase their skills and confidence. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners become more independent and develop their prospects for study and employment. Most employed learners improve their skills and gain qualifications. Learners from the most marginalised groups find direction to their lives. Staff do not provide a few learners with sufficient help and guidance to establish their learning objectives and set targets to progress. Most learners enjoy learning and are highly satisfied. They attend regularly and complete

their courses. The learning venues are easily accessible where learners feel safe and secure.

7. The quality of teaching is good with 19% outstanding lessons. Most tutors are highly experienced and practising professionals. They communicate their passion through teaching, using a range of multimedia resources. A small minority of tutors do not plan sufficiently for the wide range of abilities of the learners. The service works in close partnership with the voluntary sector and schools to meet learners' needs. Care, guidance and support for the learners are good. Work-based learning is satisfactory.
8. The service has a very clear strategic direction and vision. Its arrangements to check the credentials and background of the tutors are strong. The service makes prompt changes in response to the learners and partners' views. It knows its provision well. The self-assessment report is mostly accurate. The service has a good capacity to maintain strengths and deal with the areas for improvements. Value for money is good.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Achievement of qualifications on the small number of accredited courses is high. On non-accredited courses, learners successfully achieve their personal objectives.
- Improvement of economic and social well-being is good. Targeted provision engages disadvantaged groups and impacts greatly on their social skills and employability. Learners thoroughly enjoy their classes and speak highly of the wide range of personal benefits from their learning such as improved confidence and acquisition of new skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. This is characterised by detailed planning, use of a wide variety of stimulating and exciting strategies and brisk pace of learning. A few tutors in community development and in literacy, numeracy and ESOL do not plan sufficiently. They use a narrow range of teaching methods and poor quality resources to meet individual needs.
- The range of provision is good at meeting the needs and interests of learners. A rich mix of direct and sub-contracted provision is highly effective in providing a wide range of courses for learners. The service establishes programmes after thorough research and close collaboration with other providers. A significant proportion is for high priority community groups.
- Working with partners is good with some outstanding features. The service makes an excellent contribution to both local and regional priorities by targeting the provision at priority groups. The service enables many voluntary and community partners to access development funding to design programmes to meet the identified needs.
- Care, guidance and support are good. Classroom and pastoral support is strong. Initial advice and guidance is good. Initial assessment to adjust learning and provide support is rigorous. A few tutors do not provide sufficient guidance to

identify learning objectives and targets to assess progress. Marketing of courses is improving.

- The county council has fully acknowledged the generous benefits of adult community learning for residents of Cambridgeshire and set a very clear strategic vision for the service. Library learning centres, adult guidance service and apprenticeship schemes are under a single leadership. To ensure its future the county council has advanced plans to establish a trust.
- Curriculum management is strong. The availability and use of data, to set targets to improve achievement, continue to be good. Most subjects have well established arrangements for recognising and recording of prior achievement of learners. Support and staff training for the large number of part-time tutors is of high quality. The support for the subcontractors is highly regarded.
- Safeguarding of learners has a very high priority. The service carefully checks all staff including those working for subcontractors their suitability to teach. A two-day training course on safeguarding for adult learning has thoroughly improved staff awareness of this area. Risk assessment and control measures are thorough.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is good. Tutors awareness of diversity issues is high. They successfully include the contribution of different cultures to improve learners' understanding of the diversity in society. Learners feel well respected in harmonious learning environments where they learn to value each other through celebration of cultural festivals.
- Quality improvement is highly effective. Observations of teaching and learning, sharing of good practice, development of the self-assessment report, thorough course reviews and extensive use of electronic resources have enabled the service to improve the quality of provision across the county. Centre managers take prompt action to deal with the areas for improvements.
- The service uses a broad range of venues run by partners to widen access to learning. It has heavily invested in learning resources including a portable suite for information learning technologies. A minority of the centres have issues with hardware connectivity. Although the quality and range of resources has much improved, accommodation including cleanliness is poor in a few centres.

What does Cambridgeshire County Council need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the tutors and learners' understanding of setting and reviewing the achievement of personal learning objectives in a few classes, so that they fully understand the importance of monitoring their own progress and individual achievement.
- Maintain and develop further the strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that learners on all programmes achieve well.
- In partnership with the subcontractors and centres, improve the quality of accommodation of a few centres by setting minimum standards of hardware, connectivity and cleanliness in teaching rooms.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- good one to one tuition in classes
- enthusiastic, knowledgeable and passionate tutors who provide good explanations and work very flexibly to meet learners' needs
- high standards of work in classes
- very inclusive lessons which make learners feel secure, regardless of their ability and experience
- the relaxed approach that encourages learners to work at their own pace on projects of their choice
- pleasant environment in friendly and informal learning centres
- opportunities to learn alongside learners from different cultures
- learning centres conveniently located near learners' homes with crèche facilities.

What learners would like to see improved:

- a reduction in the excessive paperwork on recreational courses
- a decrease in the cost of the courses for a minority of learners
- poor working conditions and limited resources and equipment including heating and cleanliness in a few centres and classes
- parking facilities at a minority of centres
- continuity of classes during the long summer break
- an increase in the number and length of classes in a few subject areas.

Summary of the views of employers/partners as confirmed by inspectors

What employers/partners like:

- support and training the council provides that builds their capacity
- clear contracting and monitoring arrangements
- sharing of knowledge and expertise that benefits learners across the county
- unified range of learning opportunities for the many disadvantaged groups
- productive relationships with the employers to promote training to their employees
- the assessors who provide good support and assessment flexibly for the employed learners
- bespoke courses and off-the-job training provided to the employed learners.

What employers/partners would like to see improved:

- the amount of paperwork
- with the exception of the above, no improvements suggested by employers and most partners.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

9. The service has consolidated its capacity to make and sustain improvements. Since the start of the new subcontracting arrangements, the service has brought under its control much of the current provision that was not previously inspected. The positive changes and the upward trend in achievement and standards, identified by the inspectors at the monitoring visit in December 2008 have increased further. The curriculum leaders have had a very positive impact on learners' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning.
10. The quality and level of support the service provides partners and tutors is invaluable in raising the standards. Around three quarters of teaching and learning is good or outstanding. None is inadequate. Senior managers and political representatives fully recognise the important role the service plays in enriching the lives of the residents of Cambridgeshire and has set ambitious plans.
11. Self-assessment is well established. The self-assessment report takes account of the views of learners and partners; both regard the provision very highly. The report is evaluative, succinct with sufficient detail to give an accurate account of strengths and areas for improvement. The quality improvement plans for each subject area are detailed and have been very effective at raising standards. Learners continue to receive good educational experience and value for their money.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

12. All learners achieve equally good outcomes. Achievement rates on the smaller accredited provision are high. Success rates for Train to Gain learners have increased to a high level, although some 40% of learners are taking longer time to complete their qualifications. On the majority of the non-accredited programmes, learners successfully achieve their personal learning objectives. These include much improved confidence, acquisition of a wide range of new skills, greater development of knowledge and understanding of the chosen topics and subjects. However, these objectives for some 20% of the learners in literacy, numeracy and ESOL, community development and modern foreign languages are not specific or measurable. Retention and attendance rates are high.
13. Learners on language programmes develop good oral skills and demonstrate good understanding of the structure of the target language. Learners on sports related programmes gain significant benefits to affect positively their health such as improvements in flexibility and mobility, ability to relax and reduce their stress levels. Train to Gain learners produce better quality of work and demonstrate higher degree of professionalism in their job roles.

14. Learners feel safe in centres and classes due to sound health and safety procedures and appropriate risk assessments. Learners on sport programmes benefit from valuable input from health professionals and adopt healthy life styles. Family learning themes focus specifically on health and safety at home. Craft programmes, in particular, have a positive impact on the mental health of a minority of learners.
15. Improvement of economic and social well-being is considerable for the learners. Clearly targeted provision engages disadvantaged groups and impacts positively on their social and employability skills. Some 70% of craft learners develop their skills to highly professional standards. Some 20% sell their products and services commercially. A small number of learners progress and become tutors. Some 30% of the learners progress to further education or to employment.
16. A small number of learners make a good contribution to community projects due to their learning and participation on programmes. Partners provide bespoke training to support these learners. Some 60% learners take a more active role in schools and their children's education.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

17. The service offers a high standard of teaching, learning and assessment in most subject areas. The majority of tutors are well qualified and have extensive specialist skills and knowledge. They provide a very broad perspective and stimulus to develop the learners' skills and knowledge to motivate and inspire them. In the best lessons, tutors use detailed and effective planning and a wide variety of stimulating strategies including the information learning technology, to meet the needs of all learners. Tutors are highly competent at checking learners' understanding and recollection. In the satisfactory lessons, the use of these strategies is less evident. Planning is acceptable although tutors focus insufficiently on enabling learners to direct and manage their own learning. A minority of sports courses rely heavily on the class copying and following the tutor. In a few lessons tutors rely excessively on worksheets, do not adapt resources to stimulate learners and learning is unimaginative.
18. Provision is substantial and good at meeting the needs and interests of learners. The service carries out effective research. A significant proportion of provision is for high priority community groups. Tutors and centre managers have made good progress in standardising and labelling courses so that learners understand more clearly the different levels, course expectations and progression opportunities. They cooperate well with partners to reduce duplication and extend learners' choice.
19. The service makes an excellent use of the rich experience and knowledge of longstanding partners to benefit Cambridgeshire residents. It supports a range of partners to access development funding to initiate and develop support

projects. A minority of partners have made exceptionally good use of additional funding to support specialist projects in the community.

20. The care, guidance and support for learners are good. Tutors provide good subject specific and individual support to learners. The tutors in outreach centres provide good initial, advice and guidance. Initial assessment is effective and used well by tutors on most courses to plan learning activities. Learners complete individual learning plans, after helpful discussions with their tutors, that identifies and records learning objectives. The quality of these remains inconsistent. A few tutors do not provide sufficient guidance to literacy, numeracy and ESOL, modern foreign languages and community development learners to identify learning objectives and targets to assess progress.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

21. Curriculum leadership and support to the tutors is good and improving. Staff training is developing tutors' skills. A minority of centre managers have enrolled on teacher-training courses to understand better tutors' work in classes. Managers use a broad range of data well to monitor performance of centres and subject areas, and to set improvement targets in recruitment, retention and achievement. Leadership and management of the Work-based learning are satisfactory and improving.
22. Leaders and managers, including the elected representatives, have set a very clear strategic direction and vision for the service. The learndirect provision, managed through the library learning centres, nextstep and apprenticeship provision the service has brought together to provide a clear focus for adult learning and skills to complement existing provision. The service is developing apprenticeship programmes with a neighbouring county council to make productive use of expertise and resources. Libraries are to become the learning hubs of local communities. Cambridgeshire County Council is bringing together several management teams to provide a more integrated service.
23. The service has good safeguarding arrangements. All staff including those from subcontractors have Criminal Records Bureau check. Most staff have good safeguarding training. Tutors receive detailed guidance including electronic resources on identifying and dealing with the vulnerable adults. Risk assessments including data security are thorough with appropriate control measures.
24. The service has made good strides to promote equality and diversity throughout its service. It knows its communities very well and uses imaginative methods to engage with them. For example, the service engaged with a group of travellers by offering relevant training in willow weaving which it followed up with training in beauty therapy and driving theory. Learning is available at centres used by the community and specialist groups including a Bangladeshi women's group and women's refuge. Most of these learners make excellent progress and achieve good outcomes. The service has established equality and diversity

forums and access to an online community for tutors to share their expertise. Although tutors are doing much good work, not all include equality and diversity in their lessons.

25. The service makes good use of the learners, tutors, centre managers and partners' views to improve the provision. Centre managers take prompt action to resolve any issues learners identify. Learners' satisfaction levels continue to improve.

26. The service has invested significantly in learning resources. Staffing and staff training levels remain high for tutors and guidance and support workers. The service develops the capacity of staff at local centres by offering a range of relevant subjects including initial teacher training. Managers and staff use resources well including the schools and community centres in the evening to improve the lives of Cambridgeshire residents. Outcomes are good for most learners. The service provides good value for money.

Learning for social and personal development

Other social and personal development learning provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: information communication technology, family learning and provision for learners with learning disabilities and/or difficulties

Sport, leisure and recreation

Grade 2

Context

27. The service offers 297 non-accredited courses to 1469 learners across Cambridgeshire in 33 venues. Some 89% of learners are female and 9% from minority ethnic groups. Less than 1% have declared a disability. Courses include yoga, aerobics, fitness, bridge, swimming, tai chi and Pilates. Courses generally last for 1 hour over a ten-week period. A part-time programme leader, centre managers and 60 sessional tutors teach on the programme.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. All learners enjoy their learning and complete the course. Learners' progress in class and the standard of work are good. Achievements of personal objectives are high. The vast majority of the learners acquire new skills and knowledge. Attendance is satisfactory except for a few courses.
- Learners feel safe. Tutors conduct detailed health screening and use it effectively to plan lessons. They pay careful attention to the medical conditions or injuries of the learners and adapt activities using safe alternatives where necessary. This helps learners progress safely. Tutors give a high priority to health and safety.
- Learners achieve a wide range of mental and physical benefits from the classes. These include improved breathing, posture, mobility, fitness levels, flexibility and relief from ailments such as arthritis. The courses help learners to reduce stress and the pressure of their normal daily lives. These courses are particularly helpful for older learners to maintain their health and fitness.
- Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding aspects. Inspirational tutors make particularly effective use of information learning technologies. They provide fast-paced well-planned and fun lessons. Clear instructions and demonstrations help learners correct poor techniques. Tutors are highly effective at questioning to challenge learners, check learning and improve understanding. In a few classes, all the above features are missing.
- The provision meets the needs and interests of learners. Appropriate and relevant courses are available in local venues that complement other provision. The geographical spread of provision is satisfactory. However, most provision is only available during the evenings and weekdays.

- Partnerships are good. The service works closely with a wide range of partners, which benefit learners and the local community. Links to general practitioner schemes, the health related organisations and community groups in the development of provision has had a positive impact at meeting local and national agendas including tackling obesity.
- Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners receive adequate advice prior to starting a course by knowledgeable and helpful tutors. Tutors build positive relationships with learners and provide effective pastoral support.
- Curriculum management including support and training for tutors is good. Communication with all stakeholders is particularly effective. The sharing of best practice has improved. Managers continue to make significant improvements such as the introduction of a tutor forum, use of electronic questioning sites and development of enrichment within the curriculum.
- Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The service meets well the individual needs of learners and adequately promotes aspects of equality and diversity. A few tutors give careful consideration and embed equality and diversity into lessons including the cultural and historical heritage of a subject. However, this is not consistent across all courses.
- Self-assessment uses the views of the learners, tutors and partners as well as evidence from a broad range of data to inform judgments. The self-assessment report reflects the provision well. Most key findings in the self-assessment report broadly match those of inspection. The quality improvement plan adequately identifies actions and managers regularly monitor their progress.

What does Cambridgeshire County Council need to do to improve further?

- Continue the implementation of curriculum planning in order to widen access to progression routes during the day and at weekends so that it enhances the provision.
- Raise the standards of the few lessons that are less than good by increasing the range of learning resources, including information learning technologies, and the variety of learning activities tutors use.
- Improve the promotion of equality and diversity by developing resources and practices that use the wide range of opportunities to promote this area available in different sports, leisure and recreational activities.

Crafts, creative arts and design

Grade 2

Context

28. Some 2110 learners take part in a range of courses for this subject area. All learners are part-time and over the age of 18. Around 80% of learners are female, and 11% of learners are from minority ethnic groups. The service offers 267 courses at beginner, intermediate and advanced level in art and design, crafts, media studies, music, performing arts and dance.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are outstanding. Achievement and retention rates on all courses including the only accredited course in A level art and design are outstanding. All learners are achieving equally well, with the exception of learners receiving fee remission. Attendance is outstanding. Learners attend classes punctually and thoroughly enjoy their learning.
- Progression is good and the majority of learners progress from beginners to advanced level. A significant proportion of older learners continue to develop their skills in painting, drawing and dressmaking successfully over a period of years. A few learners progress from advanced level courses to full-time further or higher education.
- Learners feel safe because of the sound subject based risk assessments and control measures. Staff take good care to ensure that learners travel home safely after evening lessons. Rigorous health and safety arrangements for studios and classrooms are in place. In a recent learner survey, 95% of learners stated that they feel safe in the learning environment.
- The standard of learners' work is good. Learners acquire excellent skills in drawing, jewellery design, watercolour painting, dressmaking and digital photography. Learners are highly motivated and they appreciate the opportunities to market and sell their work.
- Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. Tutors are experienced practitioners, highly committed to helping learners achieve their full potential. The excellent lessons allow learners to take an experimental approach in fine art, and to have fun while they learn to ballroom dance or to make jewellery. The standard of course and lesson planning has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Support for learners is good. Learners are on courses of their choice. They take part in interesting practical induction projects in which they produce professional quality items. Tutors encourage learners to set challenging targets for themselves on individual learning plans, which are being used to monitor learning with increasing success.
- The range of provision meets the needs and interests of learners well including the good range of enrichment activities. Gallery and museum trips are an essential part of most courses. Learners relish the social aspect of these visits, as well as the learning opportunities they provide.

- Successful partnership working has enabled the service to offer learning to groups of learners who face substantial challenges. For example, the homeless learners take part in pottery lessons. Learners recovering from mental illness have attended life craft courses and have produced a high quality illustrated book, entitled "My Life in Cambridge".
- Leadership and management are good. Communication with teachers, tutors development, and lesson observations have all improved significantly. Self-assessment is increasingly rigorous, with effective use of data to achieve improvement. Some 18 tutors have improved their performance after receiving coaching following low lesson observation grades. However, induction and support for new tutors is inconsistent at the different learning centres.
- Continuous professional development for generic and subject topics such as the use of information learning technologies, equality and diversity and safeguarding is good. High quality training takes place at road shows and at interesting venues such as the Fitzwilliam and Victoria and Albert museum. However, not all tutors have taken part in training on devising individual learning plans.
- Equality and diversity are good and well established in the curriculum and in team meetings. Learners enjoy the international approach tutors adopt in drawing, painting and music lessons, where they study the work of African, Asian and American as well as European artists and composers. Learners treat each other respectfully and all are equally welcome in lessons.
- Resources and accommodation are satisfactory. Lessons at the village colleges take place in appropriate studios, a minority of which are well equipped. A few of these venues are too small and poorly equipped. In such centres, tutors provide their own computer and specialist equipment that limits the learning. The service has plans to improve computer facilities.

What does Cambridgeshire County Council need to do to improve further?

- Raise the standard of teaching and learning further by increasing the number of specialist lesson observations and developing a mentoring and peer observation scheme for new tutors to encourage greater sharing of good practice.
- Increase the use of multi-media and information learning technologies in lessons by improving the quality of resources and equipment in a minority of village halls and community centres.

Modern foreign languages

Grade 2

Context

29. The service currently offers 70 non-accredited courses from beginners to advanced levels in Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. Most courses take place in the evenings, taught by 40 tutors in lessons of one and half to two hours at 17 venues. Currently 1005 learners are on these courses. Approximately 67% of learners are women. A part-time curriculum manager, supported by a language coordinator in part of the county, manages the provision.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. They demonstrate well-developed oral skills and most are confident in speaking their target language at an appropriate level. Overall learners' listening and comprehension skills are good and their vocabulary building is effective. Written work, undertaken independently by learners, is of a good standard.
- Learners enjoy their lessons and appreciate a variety of challenging activities, interesting resources and support from their tutors. In lessons, they contribute enthusiastically to activities and are keen to improve and progress. Learners enjoy the use of information learning technologies in lessons and they would welcome more.
- Initial assessment and target setting are satisfactory. Whilst learners contribute to the planning of their courses and lessons informally, a few learners do not record their own personal targets, which would enable tutors and learners to carry out a full review of their individual progress and achievement. In most instances, the targets recorded are identical for the whole group.
- Learners benefit from their learning by acquiring greater knowledge about the language and the development of their language skills. Their personal development is good as they gain in confidence and enjoy the social aspects of learning in a group. Overall learners feel very safe in their learning environments. They receive good support from their tutors.
- Teaching and learning are good, characterised by a variety of stimulating activities, including role-plays and language games, which engage learners and meet individual needs. Enthusiastic tutors plan lessons well. Learners receive good individual support throughout. Well-qualified tutors make productive use of the target language to encourage active listening. However, not all tutors use information learning technologies consistently.
- The range of provision is good and meets the needs of the learners. Opportunities for learners to progress are good across the provision in almost all languages, ranging from beginners' level to advanced level.
- Tutors incorporate equality and diversity issues well into lessons, especially through the cultural context of the languages. For example, learners in a

Japanese lesson, whilst practising hotel bookings, were very interested in the cultural aspects of booking into and staying at a traditional Japanese hotel. In a French lesson, learners enjoyed learning about Mardi Gras customs in France.

- Leadership and management are good. The part-time curriculum leader provides good support and strong leadership to the tutors and manages the provision well. Communication and sharing of good practice is highly effective at all levels through the service's, email and electronic and individual meeting arrangements. Staff especially value the tutor guidance booklet.
- The part-time curriculum leader has started a number of key initiatives. These include planning meetings with centres to standardise levels of courses, decide on course content and reviews of the end of the course evaluations by the tutors. The full implementation of the monitoring of all aspects of curriculum planning has not taken place.
- Observation of teaching and learning accurately identify tutors' training needs. Tutors make good use of opportunities for both generic and language-specific training. Tutors benefit from and appreciate the use of language road shows that focus on good teaching and learning techniques. They are able to access these training events at a number of locations across the county.

What does Cambridgeshire County Council need to do to improve further?

- Encourage all learners to record their own individual learning targets to ensure that their needs met and their progress and achievements are recognised and fully reviewed.
- Further develop the use of information learning technologies by all tutors to improve language learning and support the development of learners' computer skills.
- Continue with initiatives to improve the monitoring of curriculum planning in order to ensure that future provision fully meets the needs of current learners and also the needs and interests of potential learners in the local communities.

Literacy, numeracy and ESOL

Grade 3

Context

30. Some 977 learners are on literacy, language and numeracy, ESOL and family language literacy and numeracy (FLLN) programmes. The library learning centres deliver the learndirect provision, which is managed by a service manager. ESOL is contracted out to external providers and FLLN is managed by a programme manager and four development workers with a contribution from a curriculum leader. Learndirect is the largest element of the provision. Some 90% of learners are women and 27% are from minority ethnic groups. The courses are available weekly for two hours during the day or evening at schools, children centres, libraries and community centres.

Key findings

- Outcomes for all learners are good. Success rates are high for accredited and for non-accredited provision in 2009/10. Development of personal and social skills is good. Learners improve their confidence and self-esteem to a good degree and they use numeracy and literacy skills learnt to help their children with homework. ESOL learners become independent.
- Learners enjoy learning in groups in safe learning environments. They improve their economic prospects and raise their aspirations to go to higher education. However, the more able learners, particularly in FLLN do not have challenging targets that fully extend their knowledge and capabilities.
- Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. It is good on discrete literacy and numeracy courses and satisfactory on FLLN and ESOL courses. The good lessons feature detailed planning, clear explanations, good individual support, regular checks on learning and clear feedback. A few tutors do not plan sufficiently for the more able learners and they provide them with mundane tasks.
- Targets for learners on discrete literacy and numeracy courses focus well on their individual learning needs, enabling them to progress and achieve their learning objectives. However, on FLLN courses some 25% of the learners make insufficient progress. Learner targets and learning outcomes are insufficiently precise. Consequently, progress reviews are unable to measure accurately learners' progress.
- Rooms and facilities in most centres are adequate. Most tutors made appropriate use of resources including information learning technologies to provide stimulating learning experience. However, in a few centres and classes resources are limited. In these cases, tutors use poorly produced worksheets and do not make imaginative use of the technology and available resources.
- The range of provision is extensive and meets the needs of learners well. The programmes are highly responsive and flexible. Learners can attend e-learning through the libraries or attend classes in their local centres. The classes

complement what is already available in the local community and learners can progress to classes such as GCSEs in mathematics and English.

- Partnership working is good. The service works very effectively with local partners to recruit and support learners who find it difficult to access education for a variety of reasons. Partners meet regularly and contribute generously to review, plan and devise a cohesive programme that complements other local activities. These meetings also act as a forum for sharing good practice.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The service has begun to bring together various strands of literacy, numeracy and language into a unified management structure. Tutor development, support for tutors and subcontractors have improved. However, tutors do not have sufficiently clear understanding of setting personal objectives and planning and review of individual learning.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Learners fully understand their rights and responsibilities. They have good awareness of bullying, harassment and discrimination and know how to deal with such issues. Staff celebrate diversity in classes and at social events. Learners learn about valuing each other's cultures including similarities and differences.
- Quality improvement processes are satisfactory. Self-assessment uses a broad range of evidence including data and views from learners and partners. Tutors conduct thorough course reviews that feed into the broadly accurate self-assessment report. Observers of teaching and learning have been too generous in their grades particularly in the FLLN provision. The managers have acknowledged the need for further improvements.

What does Cambridgeshire County Council need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the expertise of tutors to identify, set, measure and record precise personal objectives and targets for learners, and to plan, review and monitor learning more effectively.
- Improve the level of resources including information learning technologies in a few centres and ensure that the tutors have the skills, confidence and support to enhance learners' experience.
- Review and apply more rigorous standardisation of observations so the focus is on improving learning and not measuring only the tutor's performance through sharing other observers' good practice. Ensure that the resulting action plans use a range of measures to improve teaching and learning further.

Community development

Grade 2

Context

31. The provision primarily targets unemployed people, those living in social housing, families including young and lone parents, the homeless, migrant workers, travellers, and recovering mental health patients. The provision consists of yearlong projects as well as shorter programmes for new initiatives to encourage first steps into learning. These include arts, sports, language and basic information technology.
32. Currently 243 learners are on programmes funded through neighbourhood learning in deprived communities (NLDC) or development funding. Some 88% are new learners. Some 64% are female, 19% are from minority ethnic groups and 27% of learners have declared a disability. Three district managers with responsibilities for specific geographical areas manage the provision.

Key findings

- Learners' confidence and their ability to speak out in a group increases significantly. They greatly enjoy their learning, often for the first time. Learners start to believe in their ability to succeed on further courses and to find employment. First steps learners increase their motivation to try new activities and practise new skills.
- Progression to further learning, voluntary or paid work is good. A few learners have become learning champions and they promote their positive learning experiences to recruit new learners. Others gain enough confidence to support their children's learning and engage positively with the school community. Most learners gain information technology skills and gain greater independence and benefits from home computer packages.
- Learners enjoy the informal, local learning opportunities and feel safe. They develop a greater awareness of their rights and responsibilities through negotiation and development of ground rules for behaviour and activities at the start of each course.
- Making positive contribution to their communities through additional community-based projects in the county is a strong outcome for learners. The service has devised training to develop civic participation and give learners a stronger voice within the community. Others increase their involvement and contribution in their local school communities and their children's learning.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In most lessons, experienced and well-qualified tutors use initial assessment well to identify and support individual learner's needs during lessons. Learners have good opportunities to develop thoroughly new skills. However, in a significant minority of lessons tutors make insufficient use of information and learning technologies, often relying on uninspiring paper-based resources.

- Tutors have a good understanding of learners' barriers to learning. They design and plan the provision carefully to sensitively resolve these concerns. However, they do not always involve learners sufficiently in planning and directing their own learning or provide sufficient challenge to individuals.
- The service successfully targets provision to areas of high deprivation. Excellent work builds the capacity of community groups. Detailed analysis of the needs of specific groups such as travellers and migrant workers informs thorough planning of bespoke courses. The provision also successfully re-engages learners who left formal education with few or no qualifications as well as those new to learning.
- Partnerships are outstanding. Tutors work highly effectively with a wide range of voluntary and community providers. Long-term strategic plans are collaborative and inclusive. At an operational level, tutors have excellent networks with local community organisations to plan programmes and to recruit and help learners progress.
- Advice, guidance and support including personal support from tutors are good. Additional learning support in lessons is worthwhile. Learners receive timely informal initial information and guidance from tutors and outreach workers. Learners with mental health issues gain excellent support for their disability. They develop insights into their personal issues and explore the opportunities for progression into learning.
- Staff promote equality and diversity strongly and the diverse curriculum is at the centre of the community development programme. The service directs provision at learners with the greatest need and takes an integrated approach with other providers to develop sustainable provision, prioritise resources, avoid duplication and identify gaps in coverage.
- Tutors, learners and the service's partners make a valuable contribution to the well-established self-assessment. The resulting report is evaluative, critical and largely accurate. The service has robust monitoring systems and provides good support, training and guidance for partner providers to establish clear targets and standards. However, the service recognises it needs to work further with new providers to establish standards.
- The service makes prudent use of the NLDC and development funding to commission a wide range of creative, flexible learning opportunities. This harnesses the expertise of the county's voluntary and community organisations to offer a responsive, inclusive provision. The county website effectively provides information on learning opportunities to avoid duplication.

What does Cambridgeshire County Council need to do to improve further?

- Use a greater range of learning activities and improve the quality of all resources, including paper-based resources in learning lessons in order to challenge, motivate and inspire learners.
- Ensure tutors, through staff development and support, place a greater emphasis on learners' involvement in target setting. Further reinforce this by encouraging and enabling learners to make effective use of opportunities in

their daily lives to take more responsibility for developing their own learning and independent learning skills.

- Ensure a consistent level of high standards and service by adequately supporting and enabling all partners, particularly new ones, through further training and support.

Information about the inspection

33. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Cambridgeshire County Council's Quality improvement and curriculum development manager 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 Skills Funding Agency or other funding bodies, 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.
34. Inspectors used group, 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 Cambridgeshire County Council. They also visited learning lessons, assessments or progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subjects the provider offers, however they did not inspect and grade the directly delivered provision previously inspected and reported upon in the full inspection in December 2006 and the monitoring visit in December 2008.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Cambridgeshire County Council
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	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive	Social and personal development
Approximate number of enrolled learners				
Full-time learners	0	0	0	0
Part-time learners	6890	910	179	5801
Overall effectiveness	2	2	3	2
Capacity to improve	2			
Outcomes for learners	2	2	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2			
How well do learners attain their learning objectives?	2			
How well do learners progress?	2			
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2			
Do learners feel safe?	2			
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2			
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2			
Quality of provision	2	2	3	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2			
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2			
How well do partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2			
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2			
Leadership and management	2	2	3	2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2			
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2			
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2			
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2			
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2			
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2			
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2			

*where applicable to the type of provision

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