

Suffolk County Council

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54657

Name of lead inspector: Jai Sharda HMI

Last day of inspection: 27 May 2011

Type of provider: Local Authority

Address: Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich
IP1 2BX

Telephone number: 01473 260116

Information about the provider

1. The community learning and skills development (CLSD) service lies within Suffolk County Council’s (the Council) adult and community services directorate. The service offers courses in 11 subject areas. The head of service, supported by two senior managers and a team of curriculum and area managers, is responsible for all aspects of CLSD’s performance. At the time of the inspection the service employed 175 tutors and 30 business support staff. Staff numbers, especially the number of tutors, fluctuate throughout the year.
2. The service contracts with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for the provision of accredited and non-accredited provision in adult and community learning. In 2009/10, the service directly delivered 93% of the provision and subcontracted the remainder, which consisted of learning for social and personal development programmes, to two schools. During 2009/10, the service gained a Train to Gain contract to deliver Skills for Life provision and a small number of information technology qualifications.
3. In 2009/10 the SFA-funded provision delivered learning to 9,686 learners on courses in approximately 200 community venues. Some 4,133 Council employees attended learning programmes provided by Training Matters Suffolk, the trade name of CLSD’s employer engagement arm.
4. Suffolk is a large county with a population of approximately 670,000. The county’s three main towns are set within a large rural landscape and include some areas with the highest levels of deprivation in the East of England. The working population has relatively low skill levels. The county’s minority ethnic population is relatively small at 2.8%.
5. The following organisation provides training on behalf of the provider:
 - Thomas Mills High School

Type of provision	Number of learners in 2009/10
Provision for adult learners: Learning for qualifications Learning for social and personal development	4,173 part time learners 4,792 part time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain	196 learners

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 3
---	----------------

Capacity to improve	Grade 3
----------------------------	----------------

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

Learning for qualifications	Grade
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	3
Preparation for work	2

Learning for social and personal development	Grade
Information and communication technology (ICT)	3
Family learning	2

Overall effectiveness

6. CLSD is a satisfactory provider of adult learning. Learners develop confidence, self-esteem and employability skills. Most learners on courses that lead to a qualification perform satisfactorily, though a few, especially in ESOL, perform less well.
7. In the best lessons, learners are thoroughly engaged in learning activities and tutors provide appropriate materials to challenge them. In weaker sessions, the range of teaching methods is unimaginative. Activities fail to stretch the most able learners. In some lessons, learners struggle with material that is too difficult for them.
8. Tutors do not always set appropriate learning targets for learners. Many learners are unclear about what they have to do to achieve their learning

outcomes. Tutors fail to check whether learners are achieving their targets or making enough progress.

9. CLSD works well with local organisations to meet the very diverse needs of learners in Suffolk. The service has been particularly successful in promoting learning in rural and coastal areas of the county.
10. Support for learners is satisfactory. Tutors provide good individualised support. Many learners benefit from the financial help that CLSD provides for those on low incomes. Learners with physical disabilities benefit from appropriate specialist adaptations to help them achieve.
11. CLSD's senior managers have worked hard to maintain the satisfactory standards identified at the previous inspection. Some aspects of the provision have improved. However, managers have yet to ensure that tutors receive realistic feedback on the quality of their teaching so that they can improve their practice and better meet the needs of all the learners they teach.
12. Procedures for safeguarding learners are satisfactory. Learners say that they feel safe and that everyone treats them with respect. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Learning venues are accessible to wheelchair users. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups reflects the local population.

Main findings

- Learners develop confidence, self-esteem and employability skills. They enjoy their learning and the wider social and economic opportunities their enhanced confidence gives them. Family learning learners value their increased knowledge and understanding of how children learn English and maths in school. Older ICT learners interact more effectively with younger family members through a shared interest and knowledge of computers.
- Overall success rates are satisfactory. Most learners on long programmes achieve at or just below national averages. Short course success rates are satisfactory. Learners in family learning and preparation for work achieve particularly well. However, success rates in ESOL are low. The provider is aware of the relatively small performance differences between different groups of learners and is taking appropriate actions to narrow this achievement gap.
- In the best lessons tutors engage learners well and provide a good range of challenging and relevant learning activities. Learners are keen to participate in lessons and they work well with each other on projects and tasks. Accommodation and resources are generally good.
- In weaker sessions the range of teaching methods used is unimaginative. Few tutors use information and learning technology (ILT) effectively. Tutors do not always use the results of initial assessment to help them plan for differentiated learning. In mixed ability classes more able learners receive insufficient

challenge and some fail to make satisfactory progress. In other classes, practical activities are often too complex for less able learners.

- Target setting for learners is poor. Targets are not always realistic, measurable or time-constrained. Too many learners are unclear about what they have to do to achieve. Monitoring of learners' progress is often weak. Tutors do not always identify slow progress sufficiently early on. Many learners receive insufficient challenge and fail to progress as quickly as they could.
- The service works with local partners to provide courses that meet a culturally and socially diverse population. The service successfully develops provision to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups. Partnerships have helped to widen participation in learning. Provision is well-targeted and carefully planned to avoid duplication. The range of provision and the number of learning venues is extensive and promotes social inclusion well.
- Support for learners is satisfactory. Many learners benefit from the financial help that CLSD provides for those on low incomes. Learners with physical disabilities benefit from appropriate specialist adaptations to help them achieve. Tutors provide good individualised support. Most learners receive clear advice and guidance but a few receive poor quality advice and enrol on courses that they find too easy or too difficult.
- Senior managers provide clear strategic direction that has helped to maintain the performance of the service throughout a period of change and uncertainty. The service contributes well to improving employability and skills for the most disadvantaged groups. Managers communicate effectively with the large number of dispersed part-time tutors.
- Procedures for safeguarding learners are satisfactory. Learners say they feel safe and that staff and other learners treat them with respect. The service has appropriate procedures for carrying out Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and other checks. However, monitoring compliance with this policy is made unnecessarily complicated by the collection of relevant information across a number of different Council systems.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The service meets its statutory duties under gender, race and disability legislation. Managers carry out appropriate equality and diversity impact assessments. The service is fully accessible to wheelchair users at all sites and outreach centres. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups reflects the local population.
- Procedures for quality improvement are satisfactory. The service has made several improvements since the previous inspection and maintained or improved overall standards. The observation of teaching and learning process is thorough, but observers continue to over grade sessions. They often focus too much on teaching strategies rather than on learning and they frequently fail to comment on differentiation.
- Management information is accurate and enables staff to monitor a broad range of performance indicators. However, managers make insufficient use of the available data. For example, the service does not collect sufficient information on the proportion of staff who use the virtual learning environment, or when

they access it. Objectives and success milestones in many documents are not specific or measurable.

What does CLSD need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates for all learners by accurately identifying the reasons for poor performance and taking corrective actions.
- Improve the quality of learning sessions by ensuring that tutors make better use of a wider range of activities that challenge and enthuse all learners.
- Ensure that tutors set realistic, achievable and measurable targets for learners and that they regularly and accurately record the achievement of these targets so that learners understand the progress they have made.
- Strengthen the observation of teaching and learning process to ensure that observers grade lessons realistically and that, where relevant, tutors receive good quality training and development to help them improve.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the chance to practise speaking English
- the help, patience and support from tutors
- the help in supporting children with their learning
- the chance to be included and make new friends
- learning new ways of coping with teenagers at home
- feeling more confident about learning new skills
- using skills learned in lessons at home
- the accessible community venues.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the number of courses offered
- the opportunities for ESOL learners to practise speaking English during lessons
- the computer software, which is often too dated
- the quality of handouts
- the range and number of computers and books for research.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

13. CLSD has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Inspection grades have improved slightly and the overall provision remains satisfactory. The service has consolidated the improvements identified during the monitoring visit. Success rates have risen in line with national rates over the last three years and are satisfactory overall. Senior leaders have carefully steered the provision in recent months during a period of significant turbulence and uncertainty for the service. Staff have remained focused on meeting learners' needs. Learner feedback on the quality of provision is very positive.
14. Arrangements for quality improvement are satisfactory. The service uses stakeholder feedback effectively to improve provision. The quality improvement plan is realistic and monitored regularly. The observation of teaching and learning process is thorough, but observers continue to over-grade lessons. Self-assessment is an established and generally inclusive process. The service accurately identified many of the strengths found by inspectors. However, it did not identify all of the areas for improvement. Inspectors gave a lower grade for most aspects of provision than those in the self-assessment report.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

15. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Learners develop confidence, self-esteem and employability skills. They enjoy their learning and the wider social and economic opportunities their enhanced confidence gives them. Many gain confidence to carry out volunteer work in their local community or gain promotion at work with their improved skills. Family learning learners particularly value their increased knowledge and understanding of how children learn English and maths in school. Older ICT learners interact more effectively with younger family members through a shared interest and knowledge of computers.
16. Overall success rates are satisfactory. Most learners on long programmes achieve at or just below national averages. Short course success rates are satisfactory. Learners in family learning and preparation for work achieve particularly well. However, success rates in ESOL are low. Learners from minority ethnic backgrounds, men and those with a learning difficulty and/or disability perform slightly less well than expected. The provider is aware of these disparities and is taking appropriate actions to narrow this achievement gap.
17. Learners report that they feel safe. They know who to speak to if they feel vulnerable. Staff apply safe working practices during learning sessions. However, tutors in ICT pay insufficient attention to some aspects of health and

safety in the classroom.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

18. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, tutors engage learners well and provide a good range of challenging and relevant learning activities. Learners are keen to participate in lessons and they work well with each other on projects and tasks. Tutors praise and encourage learners well, and help them to build confidence. Accommodation and resources are generally good.
19. In less effective sessions, tutors over rely on whole-group question and answer techniques to check learners' understanding. The range of teaching and learning methods used is often unimaginative. Few tutors use ILT effectively to support learning. In many lessons, tutors use poorly photocopied handouts. Tutors do not always use the results of initial and diagnostic assessment to plan for differentiated learning. Where learners work at different levels in the same group, teachers do not always plan lessons to meet the needs of learners working at higher levels. In these lessons, the more able learners receive insufficient challenge, and some fail to make the progress expected of them. In other classes, practical activities are too complex for the less able and tutors often complete the task for the learner.
20. Target setting for learners is poor. Targets are not always realistic, measurable or time-constrained. Tutors record targets in individual learning plans, but they do not always regularly review them with learners. Too many learners are unclear about what they have to do to achieve. Monitoring of learners' progress is often weak. Tutors do not always identify slow progress sufficiently early on. Many learners receive insufficient challenge and fail to progress as quickly as they could.
21. The service works with a wide range of local partners to provide courses that meet a culturally and socially diverse population. The service has successfully engaged learners from settled rural communities, migrant workers and shift workers in the local agricultural sector. Productive partnerships with community groups, children's centres, the youth offending service and voluntary sector groups have helped to widen participation in learning across the county. Progression opportunities are good and well-signposted. Provision is well-targeted and carefully planned to avoid duplication. The range of provision and the number of learning venues are extensive and promote social inclusion well.
22. Support for learners is satisfactory. Many learners benefit from the financial help that CLSD provides for those on low incomes. The service provides appropriate specialist adaptations for learners with physical disabilities to help them achieve. Tutors provide particularly good individualised support for learners in family learning, ICT and preparation for work. Most learners receive clear advice and guidance about progression to other courses. However, in a

few cases, tutors provide poor quality advice and some learners enrol on a course that fails to meet their needs.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

23. The new head of service and highly committed senior managers have worked hard with staff to maintain the performance of the service throughout a period of considerable change and uncertainty. The service contributes well to improving employability and skills for the most disadvantaged groups. Regular staff meetings help to disseminate good practice. Managers communicate effectively with the large number of dispersed part-time tutors. Staff understand the service's aims and priorities. However, CLSD makes very little use of other forms of communication, such as video conferencing, to reduce travel demands or to promote sustainability.
24. Procedures for safeguarding learners are satisfactory. Senior managers review annually the comprehensive safeguarding policy. Learning venues are welcoming. Learners say they feel safe and that staff and other learners treat them with respect. Staff carry out risk assessments and implement appropriate control measures when necessary. They take appropriate action when learners or other staff raise a safeguarding issue. Sound procedures are in place to ensure that staff carry out CRB and other checks on employees and volunteers. However, monitoring compliance with this policy is made unnecessarily complicated by the collection of relevant information across a number of different systems.
25. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The service meets its duties under gender, race and disability legislation. Managers carry out appropriate equality and diversity impact assessments. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups reflects the local population. CLSD's marketing materials carefully avoid stereotypical images. The service has had some success in increasing the number of men in learning. Staff liaise with a wide range of organisations to encourage learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to join programmes.
26. Managers monitor closely key equality and diversity indicators, such as learners' achievements and complaints, to identify any discrepancies in performance between different groups. This monitoring activity has identified lower success rates for learners who declare a disability, men and those from minority ethnic groups. Managers have taken appropriate actions to minimise these differences but it is too early to judge the impact. The service is accessible to wheelchair users at all sites.
27. Arrangements to gather the views of learners and employers are satisfactory.
28. Learners complete questionnaires which CLSD managers analyse thoroughly. Staff meet and record the views of groups of learners and respond where

appropriate. CLSD gathers learners' views well during lesson observations and through learning evaluation forms at the end of lessons.

29. Procedures for self-assessment and quality improvement are satisfactory. Managers implemented a number of improvement strategies in response to the previous inspection and subsequent monitoring visit. Good collaboration with other adult and community learning providers across the East of England has provided useful opportunities for sharing good practice and peer review. Feedback from these reviews has accurately identified many of the issues found by inspectors.
30. Procedures for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Observers gather detailed information during lesson observations. However, some sessions are over-graded and fail to identify whether learners are learning or making sufficient progress. Observers focus too much on teaching methods and fail to take sufficient account of how well tutors use differentiated learning activities to meet the needs of all learners.
31. Management information is accurate and enables staff to monitor a broad range of performance indicators. However, managers make insufficient use of the available data. For example the service does not collect sufficient information on tutors' use of the virtual learning environment, or when they access it. CLSD has failed to implement fully a number of service policies. For example, tutors do not always comply with all of the agreed action points following observations of teaching and learning.
32. CLSD is committed to managing its available resources effectively, and provides satisfactory value for money. It provides learning opportunities in a wide range of venues across a largely rural county. Staff are well qualified and most have an appropriate teaching qualification or are working towards one. Learners benefit from a satisfactory range of resources to support their learning.

Learning for qualifications

Other learning for qualifications provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: Literacy and numeracy

English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

Grade 3

Context

33. CLSD provides ESOL courses from foundation to intermediate level. The majority of classes contain mixed ability foundation learners. All courses are accredited. Of the 312 adult learners on programmes at the time of inspection, 23% were male. All courses are part-time and taught in two and a half hour sessions during the day or evening. At the time of inspection, 42 courses were running at 17 venues in 11 towns across the county.

Key findings

- Many learners make satisfactory progress with their language skills and improve their confidence to communicate in English. However, success rates in 2009/10 were low. In some classes, the more able learners do not progress quickly enough and the less able do not always receive sufficient guidance on how to improve. Attendance is satisfactory.
- Many learners develop improved social and employability skills. Some gain confidence to progress to other CLSD provision in numeracy or work preparation. Some learners gain enough confidence to participate in volunteer work for their local community while others gain promotion at work as a result of their improved language skills.
- Learners enjoy attending learning programmes in local venues and they feel safe. They develop a greater awareness of their rights and responsibilities through negotiation and development of ground rules governing behaviour and activities during learning sessions. Learners come from a very wide range of nationalities and religious, ethnic and educational backgrounds. They work well together and offer each other good support and encouragement.
- In the most effective sessions, learners practise their language skills through carefully planned activities such as role-play, information-seeking games and small group work based around short video clips. In less effective sessions, tutors use a limited range of whole-group activities and learners have few opportunities to practise their spoken English. Tutors rely too much on whole-group question-and-answer techniques to check learners' understanding.
- CLSD has a thorough initial and diagnostic assessment process to help tutors develop targets on individual learning plans (ILP). However, tutors do not always write targets well or review them regularly. Tutors often fail to take account of targets in ILP's when planning lessons. Instead, tutors often focus on generic whole-class targets rather than on specific individual targets.

- The provision caters for learners with a diverse range of linguistic and social needs. CLSD recruits learners from the county's rural and migrant worker communities and from the population of shift workers in the local agricultural and horse racing sectors. Learners can attend courses during the day, evening or weekend. The service provides some women-only courses in order to meet the religious and cultural requirements of particular communities.
- ESOL learners do not easily understand the language used in many of the course documents they receive. Tutors provide verbal explanations to learners of key processes such as accreditation and health and safety. However, the language of written documents is often too difficult for learners at foundation level. The language used in ILPs is unsuitable for learners whose language ability is at foundation level.
- The service successfully develops provision to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups. Productive partnerships with other educational providers and third sector organisations across the county provide well-targeted, coherent provision. In the current year, the service has worked collaboratively and productively with partners to identify and deliver 10 new projects to specific groups of learners with the greatest needs.
- Learners receive good individual support in sessions from well-trained volunteers. Tutors provide a supportive and interesting learning environment. CLSD has developed good progression routes to employability-related courses. Links with the next step advice service helps support learners to make informed decisions about progression to further learning or employment. Learners on limited incomes receive financial support for travel and childcare.
- CLSD has clearly identified appropriate target groups for its ESOL provision. Managers and tutors are highly committed to improving the provision. Tutors are well qualified and have good opportunities for staff development. However, not all tutors understand or fully implement new measures planned to address the recent 'notice to improve' from the funding body.
- CLSD promotes a culture of inclusivity and mutual respect. Tutors integrate equality and diversity topics with the ESOL curriculum well. However, they do not always plan sessions carefully enough to support learners' diverse needs to ensure that all learners benefit. The service identifies performance differences between different groups of learners. However, it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of measures taken to reduce these disparities.
- The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. Tutors are aware of CLSD's quality improvement processes. The observation of teaching and learning process is satisfactory, but observers often grade sessions too generously. They do not focus sufficiently on progress and attainment. Action planning for improvements in learning sessions has not been effective. Tutors do not always take advantage of opportunities to share good practice.

What does CLSD need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates by ensuring that all tutors make full use of detailed diagnostic assessment to enrol learners on realistic qualification aims and that learners understand fully their course aims and assessment deadlines.
- Make better use of the results of initial assessment to ensure that learners receive clear, individualised and achievable targets so that they and their tutor have a better understanding of the progress they are making and the learning outcomes they are achieving.
- Take effective action to ensure that learners receive course paperwork and ILPs in language that they can understand. The service should ensure that ESOL learners' ILP uses simple language structures and vocabulary at an appropriate level.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that tutors focus more on meeting individual learners' needs by providing a wider range of learning activities of topical interest that are relevant to learners.

Preparation for work

Grade 2

Context

34. CLSD provides work preparation courses from pre-foundation to intermediate level. Courses are part time and 71% are accredited. Learner numbers have declined over the last three years. At the time of inspection, 98 learners were on programme. The service aims to meet the needs of disadvantaged adults such as the unemployed and people with disabilities. The curriculum manager coordinates the provision, supported by a team of tutors.

Key findings

- Success rates are high and have improved consistently since the previous inspection. In 2009/10, some 89% of learners achieved a qualification. Success rates on long accredited courses and on short courses are good at 87% and 85% respectively.
- Learners improve their confidence and motivation. Courses provide a stepping stone to further learning, especially for those who previously found learning difficult. Learners enjoy their lessons and are positive about their prospects of finding work. They develop satisfactory job-related skills. Those on counselling courses develop good vocational skills, which help them when seeking or keeping work.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the better lessons, tutors are well prepared and use a good variety of relevant activities that engage learners and stimulate learning. Classes are generally small and in most cases, learners improve their ability to find or keep work. Peer support is good and sometimes extends outside of the classroom environment.
- The less effective lessons fail to meet learners' needs. In these lessons, more able learners receive insufficient challenge. Tutors over-rely on handouts and simulated activities. In some cases, practical activities are too complex for less confident learners and the tutor completes the task for them. Work related courses do not always contain essential elements, such as helping learners prepare or update their CV.
- Learning targets are insufficiently measureable, realistic, achievable or time-constrained. In some cases, agreed targets are not challenging enough. Tutors do not set personalised targets for learners. Too often, tutors rely on qualification requirements to drive targets rather than use the learner's needs, aptitudes and abilities.
- CLSD provides a good variety of courses to help learners prepare for work. Learning is relevant to community needs and promotes social inclusion well. In curriculum planning, tutors place good emphasis on progression routes. Courses link together well. Venues are well located and accessible to those from rural communities. However, learner numbers have been declining and many classes are very small.

- Tutors provide good tailored support that helps learners achieve. The service makes good use of locally developed partnerships to extend the range of careers information and advice. However, pre-course advice and guidance sometimes lead to learners enrolling on an inappropriate course. Tutors are not always aware of the provision available to learners who wish to progress to a course offered by another provider.
- Curriculum management is good. Success rates have improved over the last three years. More courses now lead to a qualification. The management of assessment and verification is satisfactory. The observation of teaching and learning process helps to motivate tutors to improve. However, this process has yet to raise the overall standards of learning sessions.
- Tutors have high expectations regarding learners' behaviour in class. They tackle discriminatory behaviour promptly. Though mandatory, only about half of the tutors have attended staff training in equality and diversity. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory. However, in one session, the accommodation failed to provide a suitable or safe learning environment.
- Staff training and development are satisfactory. The curriculum manager provides regular and supportive feedback to tutors. Some staff use the service's virtual learning environment to share good practice, but few part-time tutors make use of this resource. The self-assessment report is too descriptive and insufficiently critical. Inspectors gave a lower grade than that in the self-assessment.

What does CLSD need to do to improve further?

- Improve the weaker teaching and learning by ensuring that tutors plan learning to include a wider variety of resources to meet the needs of all learners and to reduce their reliance on worksheets so that learning is more relevant to learners' individual goals.
- Improve the quality of target setting to ensure that learning targets are measurable, realistic, achievable and linked to learners' learning aspirations rather than to qualification requirements.

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 and communication technology

Grade 3

Context

35. At the time of inspection, some 278 learners were enrolled on 49 ICT courses. About half the courses lead to a qualification. Most direct delivery courses are taught in self-contained units of five weeks' duration over 30 weeks. Some learners attend for the full 30 weeks while others study between one and five units over the year. Courses are delivered at a wide range of venues across the county. The ICT curriculum development manager has overall responsibility for the programmes.

Key findings

- Success rates in accredited provision are satisfactory. Success rate data for non-accredited provision is insufficiently robust to make judgements. However, most learners achieve their learning outcomes. Learners' development of confidence and skills is good. Learners' attendance on ICT courses help them to secure employment and to learn new skills which they use at home or in voluntary activities.
- Learners' contribution to their communities and families is good. Older learners interact more effectively with younger family members through a shared interest and knowledge of computers. Others use their skills to help local communities through participation as volunteers.
- Tutors' promotion of health and safety in the classroom is weak. Learner induction places insufficient emphasis on health and safety. In many ICT programmes, learners do not receive an introduction to health and safety, particularly in chair and monitor adjustment and posture techniques. The curriculum manager participates in a county-wide e-safety group, but CLSD has yet to implement an agreed ICT Acceptable User Policy and Agreement.
- Though most learning sessions are satisfactory, tutors' planning of sessions is often weak. In some sessions, tutors work without a session plan. Tutors do not use the results of initial assessment and learning styles questionnaires to plan for differentiated learning. Where session plans do exist, tutors' poor awareness of each learner's progress compromises their ability to plan sessions effectively to meet individual needs.
- Target setting in non-accredited learning is inadequate. Tutors place insufficient emphasis on identifying personalised and measurable learning goals. The pace of learning in some sessions is too slow. Tutors do not effectively monitor learners' progress. In the absence of challenging targets, many learners find

class work too easy. In the poorer sessions, tutors do not recap prior learning to check knowledge and understanding.

- Support for learners is good. Tutors provide information, advice and guidance for all learners before and during their programme. A few tutors have completed a practitioner qualification in supporting learners in ICT awareness. Tutors make good use of a wide range of commercial and tutor-produced materials to support learners. However, the virtual learning environment, designed to enable tutors to share learning materials, is not widely used.
- Learners benefit from the good range of accessible venues. Fourteen centres located in key locations across the county help to promote social inclusion. The service successfully bid for capital funding to enable it to update the hardware and connectivity in these centres. Adaptive technologies are available at all centres. In one centre, the tutor has used voice recognition software to support a deaf learner.
- The ICT manager has been active in developing the curriculum to meet learners' needs. In response to tutor and learner feedback, the manager has planned a range of 'bite sized' qualifications into next year's curriculum to support learners seeking employment and those looking to develop skills to help them work as volunteers in community organisations.
- Managers fail to ensure that all tutors complete mandatory staff development activities. At the time of inspection, only 53% of tutors had completed the safeguarding training and 35% the equality and diversity training. All tutors have or are working towards a teaching qualification. However, about a quarter have yet to register with the Institute for Learning.
- The provider has a satisfactory self-assessment process. Staff are involved in self-assessment and in developing a quality improvement plan. The self-assessment report was insufficiently critical and failed to identify all of the areas for improvement found by inspectors. Inspectors gave a lower grade for the provision than that in the self-assessment.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Staff and learners' understanding of equality and diversity are satisfactory. Learning materials are suitable and promote equalities well. Publicity and marketing materials are free from stereotypical images and are available in a range of formats to meet learners' needs.

What does CLSD need to do to improve further?

- Promote tutors' understanding of health and safety, particularly in an ICT classroom environment to ensure that they integrate health and safety with all aspects of delivery and routinely promote it to improve learner understanding and practice.
- Develop tutors' understanding of how to set challenging, achievable and measurable targets and how to develop strategies for supporting learners in the agreement and recording of these targets in ILPs.

- Ensure that tutors' session plans include planning for differentiated learning outcomes based on the learners' initial assessment, learning goals and progress.
- Review the processes for monitoring tutor completion of mandatory training programmes and service induction to ensure that all tutors complete the training.

Family learning

Grade 2

Context

36. CLSD offers a range of family learning courses in family literacy, language and numeracy, parenting and wider family learning. At the time of the inspection, 125 learners were on programmes, 90% of whom were female and 10% from minority ethnic groups. Three managers jointly manage the family learning provision and 25 tutors currently teach on the programmes.

Key findings

- Success rates for learners taking nationally recognised qualifications in family literacy, family numeracy, parenting and ICT are high, although the number of learners achieving literacy and numeracy qualifications is very low, particularly at pre-foundation and foundation level.
- Learners enjoy learning and feel safe in the wide range of different learning environments. Learners who are returning to learn and those on pre-foundation programmes who feel less confident about returning to learning, overcome previously significant barriers to learning and make good progress. Learners, who are more experienced and skilled when they begin their programme, make satisfactory progress.
- Learners develop a wide range of skills and confidence. Learners improve their literacy, numeracy, parenting, communication and social skills and they significantly increase their self-confidence. They are able to apply their learning well in their homes with their children, with schools and in voluntary and work-place settings. Learners particularly value their increased knowledge and understanding of how children learn English and maths in schools.
- Teachers develop good relationships with learners, which learners greatly value. Most lessons have a good pace and learners work with interest and enthusiasm on a wide range of activities, using a good variety of learning resources, although the use of ICT in classes is not extensive. Intergenerational learning is very effective. Parents, grandparents, carers and children enjoy learning useful skills together, which they take away with them and use at home.
- Where learners work at different levels in the same group, teachers do not always plan lessons to meet the needs of learners working at the higher levels. These learners receive insufficient challenge and many do not make the progress expected of them. Staff carrying out observations of teaching and learning, do not provide sufficient feedback to teachers on how to plan differentiated learning to meet the needs of all learners.
- Learners use scrapbooks, photographic and printed evidence as a record of their learning. Many take examples of their learning back to their homes. Learners benefit from the setting and use of individual and clear and effective targets, although this practice is not of a consistently good quality for all

learners. Initial assessment is satisfactory, although the assessment of learners' progress and development in lessons is insufficient.

- The range of provision in family learning is extensive, although in 2010/11, no family literacy, language and numeracy courses of over 60 hours were available for learners. The service carefully targets provision in areas of disadvantage, and focuses well on widening participation and social inclusion. In 2010/11, the service developed a new Keeping Up with the Children science course and extended external accreditation for parenting courses.
- Partnership working is highly effective. The service has very well established links with schools, community groups, children's centres, the youth offending service and voluntary sector groups, which greatly extend learning opportunities across the county and helps the service to target provision effectively to those with the greatest need.
- Guidance and support for learners are good. Learners receive effective information and guidance before they start programmes and to help them when they leave. Learners receive very effective support from tutors, which helps to meet their individual learning needs well.
- Curriculum management is very effective. Managers have a good understanding of the provision at course level, with some very effective course development in 2010/11. Communication with tutors, team working and the sharing of best practice are good. Arrangements for safeguarding are satisfactory and feedback from learners about the quality of provision they receive is very positive.
- The service places a strong emphasis on widening participation and on social inclusion. It targets provision carefully to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged learners. Learners feel welcome and valued. Many make good progress, often for the first time in their lives. The number of male learners is low. The promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum and in teaching and learning is satisfactory, but insufficiently established.
- The service has effective processes for evaluating the provision at course level. Course evaluations provide detailed feedback on the provision to enable improvements. Self-assessment is inclusive. However, some of the judgements in the self-assessment report are too generous. Observation feedback is detailed, but does not always sufficiently identify the progress learners are making. Some lessons are over-graded.

What does CLSD need to do to improve further?

- Implement strategies to increase learners' take-up of nationally accredited qualifications in family literacy, language and numeracy, particularly at foundation and intermediate level.
- Support tutors so that they are better able to provide sufficient stretch and challenge for learners in mixed level groups, so that all learners have sufficient opportunities to make good progress and achieve their full potential.

- Further develop the promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum and in teaching and learning, through action planning to secure improvements and greater sharing of good practice.

Information about the inspection

37. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the learning standards 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, 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.
38. 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 provider. They also visited learning sessions, assessments or progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subjects the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Suffolk County Council

Learning types: 14-16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learners responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships. **Social and personal development:** all adult safeguarded provision

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	19+ Learner responsive	Social and personal development
Approximate number of enrolled learners			
Full-time learners	0	0	0
Part-time learners	1027	557	470
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3
Capacity to improve	3		
Outcomes for learners	3	3	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3		
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3		
How well do learners progress?	4		
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
Do learners feel safe?	3		
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	n/a		
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	n/a		
Quality of provision	3	3	3
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3		
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?	3		
Leadership and management	3	3	3
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3		
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	3		
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3		
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3		
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3		
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3		
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3		

*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