

Tees Achieve - Stockton Borough Council

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54630

Name of lead inspector: Bob Busby HMI

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Type of provider: Local authority

Address: Billingham Community Centre,
The Causeway,
Billingham.
Stockton on tees.
TS23 2DA

Telephone number: 01642 528814

Information about the provider

1. Tees Achieve is part of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's Regeneration and Economic Development Team. The service offers vocational and non-vocational courses across 12 subject areas in 92 venues including a few employers' and partners' premises outside the borough. Following restructuring around the time of the previous inspection Tees Achieve now directly delivers adult and community learning and work-based learning provision funded primarily by the Skills Funding Agency, as well as YPLA-funded 16-18 provision, Future Jobs Fund and ESF funded projects. The main operational office is located in Billingham. Currently 1860 learners access learning on courses provided by Tees Achieve. Approximately two-thirds of the funding comes from the Skills Funding agency.
2. Tees Achieve is led by the learning and skills manager, supported by a deputy and a team of six education managers, who in turn manage a team of seven area leads. In 2010-2011 Tees Achieve employed 185 staff of whom 127 are directly involved with teaching and assessment.
3. The unemployment rate in Stockton between October 2010 and September 2011 was 10.2% which is higher than the national rate of 7.7%. The proportion of the population aged 16 to 64 who hold no qualifications is 12.2%, slightly higher than the national rate of 11.3%.
4. Tees Achieve do not offer training on behalf of any other providers.
5. The following organisations provide training on behalf of Tees Achieve:
 - Five Lamps Organisation (NVQs, youth work and business administration)

| Type of provision | Number of learners in (previous year) |
|---|--|
| <p>Provision for young learners: Further education (16-18)</p> <p>Foundation learning, including Entry to Employment</p> | <p>65 part-time learners</p> <p>105 part-time learners 27 learners</p> |
| <p>Provision for adult learners: Learning for qualifications</p> <p>Learning for social and personal development</p> | <p>1157 part-time learners</p> <p>2911 part-time learners</p> |
| <p>Employer provision: Train to Gain</p> <p>Apprenticeships</p> | <p>128 learners</p> <p>251 apprentices</p> |

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 |

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|--|--------------|
| Learning for qualifications in employment | Grade |
| Construction, planning and the built environment | 3 |

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Learning for social and personal development | Grade |
| Arts, media and publishing | 2 |
| Preparation for life and work | 3 |

Overall effectiveness

6. Most learners make good progress and attain significant improvement in their levels of self confidence. Success rates for apprentices are satisfactory but low for advanced apprentices. On non-accredited courses, retention has improved and is now high. Most learners complete their courses. Many tutors are skilled at agreeing and setting specific learning goals but this is not consistent across the service. Where specific targets are set, tutors accurately record learners' progress.
7. Tees Achieve provides a satisfactory quality of education and training for its learners. Learners enjoy classes and value their increased confidence and skills in particular in relation to improving their employment prospects. Many classrooms are well equipped with good access to information and learning technology (ILT) resources but these are not always used effectively. In the better lessons, tutors include a good range of practical activities and learning is well planned and effectively paced. In the weaker lessons tutors' questioning

techniques are not effective in measuring individual learners' levels of understanding. Tees Achieve works effectively with partners to provide a good range of provision at convenient venues and times.

8. Tees Achieve leads and manages its provision satisfactorily. It has suitable arrangements for ensuring that learners are safe. Policies for equality and diversity are appropriate. Tees achieve is strongly committed to working with the most disadvantaged groups. Data are routinely analysed to identify variations between different groups and identify appropriate actions to close achievement gaps. However, equality and diversity are not sufficiently promoted within some lessons.
9. Tees Achieve's arrangements to observe teaching and learning are satisfactory but too often focus too much on teaching and not enough on learning. Not all observations monitor the quality of learner targets and recording of learner process. The views of learners are used well to improve provision. The self-assessment process is accurate but staff are not fully aware of how their views have contributed.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Learners develop good skills and gain confidence. In particular, learners on photography courses produce excellent work. They speak strongly of the impact of their gains in confidence and self-esteem and recognise their usefulness in helping gain employment. Learners display good levels of practical skill and make good progress in class relative to their starting point. Attendance at sessions is good.
- On apprenticeship programmes success rates declined in 2010/11 to be just below national average rates at level 2 but well below national rates for advanced apprentices. Similarly, the proportion of learners achieving within their expected timescale declined in 2010/11 to be just above national rates for apprentices at level 2 but well below national rates at for advanced apprentices. Success rates on Train to Gain programmes in 2010/11 were just above national rates.
- Overall, retention rates have improved and are now high across most curriculum areas. The effectiveness of arrangements for the recognition and recording of progress and achievement (RARPA) varies across the service. Across the service there are few significant differences between the levels of achievement of different groups. However the service is aware that learners aged 16-18 achieve at lower rates than other learners and where achievement gaps exist within curriculum areas.
- The quality of teaching, training, learning and assessment are satisfactory overall. However, insufficient teaching is of a good quality. In the better lessons, tutors and trainers include a good range of practical activities to ensure learners understand the topics and can apply them well to their work and life.

The use of information and learning technology is very effective and tutors promote equality and diversity well.

- In the weaker lessons, the setting, monitoring and recording of clear, specific and time-bound targets for non-accredited courses is not consistently effective. Tutors do not use effective questioning techniques to monitor learners' understanding or extend their knowledge. Tutors do not use ILT to make learning interesting and the promotion of equality and diversity is not sufficient.
- The arrangements to assure and improve the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, not all the records of the observations comment sufficiently on learning and generally there is too much focus on teaching activities. Not all observations monitor the promotion of equality and diversity, the quality of learner targets and recording of learners' progress.
- The provision meets the needs of learners and the community well. The service offers a wide range of programmes in most vocational areas at the entry, foundation, intermediate and some at advanced level, including apprenticeships. The service has increased significantly the provision for learners who do not traditionally access learning and the proportion of these learners on most courses is good. The provision is very successful in enrolling new learners.
- The service works particularly effectively with employers, partners and other providers to develop provision for learners with multiple barriers to learning. It has worked well with the local providers and has offered courses for people who are unemployed or are at the risk of losing their employment. The service is working with providers to offer progression routes for all its learners, although in some subject areas these are not yet established.
- The service's arrangements to provide personal support, advice, and guidance for learners are good. This support arrangement is very effective for learners with multiple personal issues. Learners receive clear information about most training and learning opportunities and the service is in the advanced stages of further improving this. The service's arrangements to collect, analyse and use information to monitor the impact of the support that it provides is satisfactory.
- The merger of adult and community learning and work based learning, together with its inclusion in the Regeneration and Economic Development Service provides a strong contribution to the Council's priorities. Staff morale is high. Management information is used well to plan and monitor the provision. Performance management is satisfactory although the use of specific and measurable targets to manage performance is insufficiently developed. Governance provides good support and challenge.
- Tees Achieve exhibits a strong ethos and commitment to working with the most disadvantaged groups to increase economic and social well-being. Data are routinely analysed to identify variations in participation and performance and identify appropriate actions. The promotion of equality and diversity to learners through teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but is inconsistent across the service.
- Tees Achieve use self-assessment well to provide a broadly accurate picture of the quality of the service and it has been used well to bring about

improvements since the last inspection. The views of users are very important to the provider which thoroughly analyses them to improve the quality of provision. However, the process for involving staff is not clear to all staff, some of whom perceive the process as management led.

- Accommodation and resources are mostly of good quality. Staff are well qualified and learners benefit from their expertise and experience. Resources are well managed to ensure continuing financial viability. However, the use of specific and measurable targets to drive forward improvement is insufficiently developed and processes for the sharing of good practice within and across subjects are not fully effective.

What does Tees Achieve need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates through more effective and frequent progress monitoring and stronger target setting to ensure that all learners are aware of what they must accomplish in order to succeed.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all lessons are good or better by ensuring that good practice in teaching and learning is systematically identified and shared both within and across subject areas.
- Improve the setting, monitoring and recording of clear, specific and time-bound targets for all learners, particularly for learners on non-accredited courses by ensuring that the existing arrangements are systematically implemented. Ensure that the implementation process is monitored.
- Further improve the observation of teaching and learning by ensuring that the records of observations are sufficiently detailed with a good focus on learning and the promotion of equality and diversity.
- Further drive forward improvements in the quality of provision ensure that all targets used for quality improvement and staff performance management are specific, measurable and challenging and that progress towards their achievement is closely monitored.
- Redevelop the arrangements for staff contribution to the self assessment process to ensure that they are fully involved in the process and can consequently take full ownership of the resulting report and quality improvement plans.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**What learners like:**

- excellent teaching from very approachable tutors
- being directed to very useful websites for reference information
- the unpressurised environments in classrooms
- being treated as an adult
- getting help with difficult topics
- good one-to-one support
- gaining a recognised qualification and improving job prospects.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the amount of time during breaks and lunch times
- more frequent sessions
- the amount of one-to-one support
- access to computers
- software for dyslexic learners
- the information on course content at the start of course
- the information on progression opportunities.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**What employers like:**

- good partnership working
- good communications
- prompt responses to requests for information.

What employers would like to see improved:

- No views expressed.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

10. Tees Achieve has made satisfactory improvements since its last full inspection and has maintained its key strengths. Good financial viability together with efficient management of resources provides a sound base for future development of the provision. The use of management information, a key area for improvement at the last inspection, has greatly improved with the implementation of a new management information system that has directly impacted on managing improvements in retention and attendance. Outcomes in preparation for life and work, which were below minimum levels of performance in 2008/09 have improved year on year to close to national averages in 2010/11. Success rates on apprenticeships have continued to improve but remain at a satisfactory level against national averages.
11. Self-assessment now provides an accurate picture of the quality of the provision although some grades are overstated. The views of learners and employers are used effectively to bring about improvements in the quality of provision. Governance is effective in its role of challenge and support. A new system for the observation of teaching and learning has been implemented and is satisfactory in improving teaching and learning. RARPA, although much improved, remains an ineffective process in some subjects.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

12. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Learners develop good skills and gain in confidence and self-esteem. Most learners make good progress in class relative to their starting point. Attendance at training sessions is good. On apprenticeship programmes success rates declined in 2010/11 to be just below national rates for intermediate apprentices but well below national rates for advanced apprentices. Similarly, the proportion of learners achieving within their expected timescales declined in 2010/11 to be just above national rates for intermediate apprentices but well below national rates for advanced apprentices. Overall success rates are comparable for men and women in 2010/11 but more women achieve within their planned timescale. The service is aware that learners aged 16-18 achieve at lower rates than other learners and have taken steps to improve this.
13. Success rates on Train to Gain programmes in 2010/11 were just above national rates. Success rates were high on skills for life programmes but slightly below national rates on intermediate and advanced programmes. The proportion of learners achieving within their expected timescales on intermediate programmes were slightly below national rates but significantly below at advanced level.

14. Retention rates have improved since the last inspection with only a small number of learners leaving their programmes early although this varies across subject areas. Retention across all programmes in the current year is 92%, improving from 88% at the same time in the previous year. Retention on non-accredited programmes has increased to 93% in 2011/12 compared to 89% at the same point in the previous year.
15. The arrangements for the recognition and recording of progress and achievement (RARPA) vary between subject areas; they are robust in arts, media and publishing where tutors set realistic, challenging learning goals and monitor learners' progress well. However, in other areas targets are often not sufficiently specific and progress is not well monitored.
16. Learners feel safe attending learning sessions. Most construction learners have a good awareness of how to stay safe and they understand and appreciate the arrangements in place to keep them safe. Safe working practices are suitably prioritised, particularly in work-based learning. The service provides good guidance on safe use of the internet.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

17. Teaching, training, learning and assessment are satisfactory overall. However,, too many lessons are not of a sufficiently high standard. The quality of provision is good in arts media and publishing and satisfactory in construction and build environment, literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and employment programmes.
18. In the better lessons, tutors and trainers include a good range of practical activities which help learners to understand the topics and apply them to their work and life. In carpentry lessons practical demonstrations have been very effective and learners have carved complex shapes to form wooden toys. Tutors use their vocational experience well and creatively to set high standards and motivate learners to achieve them. For example in photography and arts lessons tutors use their own artwork to demonstrate and reinforce the importance of using good techniques. Tutors have a good understanding of the needs of learners and provide good individual coaching. Learners participate well in the discussions. Tutors use a good range of teaching methods, including information learning technology (ILT) to make lessons enjoyable, interesting and to build on the learners' knowledge. In the good or better lessons, tutors and trainers use questioning techniques very effectively to assess learners' understanding and to ensure that the more able learners can fully benefit from the lesson. Tutors use very effective techniques to promote equality and diversity in the lessons. For example, in a family learning lesson the tutor encouraged the learners to consider the way that people from different cultures may view speaking loudly. Diagnostic assessment and support of learners' literacy and numeracy needs are effective.

19. In the weaker lessons, tutors and trainers do not sufficiently plan activities for the individual needs of learners and do not extend the knowledge the more able or experienced learners. In these lessons, learner targets are often not sufficiently clear, specific, time-bound and not well recorded. The tutors do not use questioning techniques sufficiently to check learners' understanding. Tutors make little use of ILT to make learning interesting and do not sufficiently integrate literacy and numeracy into the lessons. In the less effective sessions, tutors do not sufficiently promote equality and diversity through teaching, learning and assessment. The setting, monitoring and recording of clear, specific and time-bound targets for non-accredited courses are not effective in some sessions.
20. Trainers regularly visit apprentices in the workplace at times convenient for learners and employers. During these visits, trainers satisfactorily review the progress of apprentices and agree the tasks which learners need to complete for the next visit. However, some trainers do not plan in sufficient detail the apprentices' training and assessment. All assessors are observed regularly by internal verifiers and standardisation meetings are held regularly. Arrangements to monitor and verify assessment practice are effective.
21. Since the last inspection, arrangements to assure and improve the quality of teaching and learning have improved and are now satisfactory. In 2010/11, almost all tutors were observed. In 2011/12 the service has changed the criteria to observe the tutors and a smaller number of sessions have been observed. The service uses the findings of the process satisfactorily to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, not all the records of the observations evaluate learning sufficiently. Generally there is too much focus on teaching activities. Not all observations monitor the promotion of equality and diversity or learners' progress towards attainment of targets. All records of observations are moderated for accuracy. However, the grades awarded for the sessions are not always accurate.
22. The provision meets the needs of learners and the community well. The service offers a wide range of programmes in most vocational areas at entry, foundation, intermediate and some at advanced level and includes apprenticeships. Since the last inspection, the service has increased significantly the provision for disadvantaged learners or learners who do not traditionally access learning. The proportion of these learners on most courses is now good. Significant numbers of learners who join the provision have personal barriers to learning such as low self-esteem, substance misuse, criminal records and long periods of unemployment. The provision is very successful in enabling these learners to take their first steps back to learning. In 2011/12, the proportion of new learners is high. The service's system for recording learners' progress to other courses or employment is not fully developed. The service does not provide sufficient work-placements for learners on employment programmes.
23. The service works particularly effectively with employers, partners and other providers to develop provision for learners with multiple barriers to learning, particularly those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. The service

uses its partners well to develop and offer new courses. For example, in partnership with voluntary organisations the service has developed courses for learners who have suffered sexual abuse, drug dependency, mental health issues or who are young parents. It has worked well with other providers to offer courses for people who are unemployed or are at risk of losing their employment. The service is working with other providers to offer progression routes for all its learners, although in some subject areas these progression routes are not yet established.

24. The service's arrangements to provide personal support, advice, and guidance for learners are good. The arrangement is particularly effective for learners with multiple issues. Learners have good access to tutors and they discuss their personal barriers in confidence. In 2010/11, a significant number of young parents, offenders, learners with mental health issues and learners with physical or learning disabilities and/or difficulties were supported well to continue their programmes and progress. The service provides transportation for learners who have restricted mobility and provides appropriate support for learners with dyslexia. Its arrangements to collect, analyse and use information and data to monitor the impact of the support that it provides is satisfactory. Learners generally receive clear information about most training and learning opportunities and the service is further improving this.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

25. At the time of its last full inspection Tees Achieve were in the process of merging its adult and community learning provision and its work-based learning provision. This merged provision is now located within the council's Regeneration and Economic Development Service. This arrangement provides an opportunity for the service to provide a strong contribution towards the council's priorities around engaging with disadvantaged groups, increasing employability, and promoting learning to all. The senior management have worked hard to maintain staff morale during this period of change and uncertainty and staff are motivated by the clear benefits and opportunities from the new structure.
26. Tees Achieve has significantly improved its use of data to plan and manage the provision since the last inspection when it was a key area for improvement. Managers receive regular reports which have had a particularly beneficial impact on managing and improving the retention and attendance of learners and ensuring the viability of courses being delivered.
27. Performance management of staff is satisfactory with frequent team, one-to-one staff meetings and a well established performance appraisal process. However, the use of targets to drive forward improvements in the provision is insufficiently developed and staff targets are often not specific or measurable, and, in some instances, not sufficiently challenging. Tees Achieve has only recently started to subcontract to another provider and the procedures for managing this relationship are good.

28. A cabinet member provides good support and challenge through monthly meetings with the head of Regeneration and Economic Development and Tees Achieve senior managers. These meetings are strongly focused on monitoring outcomes and financial budgets. The cabinet member has a very good understanding of the provision through visiting centres, meeting with staff, and attending lessons.
29. The service has robust arrangements to safeguard learners. Staff and learners have a good awareness of safeguarding. All staff have been suitably trained and managers have received further training. Training is refreshed annually. Tees Achieve maintains good links with the local safeguarding board. All staff have undergone enhanced criminal records bureau (CRB) checks. A suitable central record is maintained but this does not include all training. CRB checks are refreshed systematically every three years but where a decision has been referred to senior managers for approval is not sufficiently recorded on the register. A high priority is placed on ensuring learners understand how to stay safe on the internet.
30. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Equality impact assessment informs planning and monitoring of the provision but is not always well recorded. Tees Achieve has appropriate policies for equality and diversity. Procedures for dealing with bullying and harassment and for investigating complaints are rigorous. Tees Achieve engages disadvantaged groups well. Many of the community venues are located in areas of deprivation or located to meet the needs of under-represented groups. Data are routinely analysed to identify any differences in levels of achievement of different groups of learners and implement appropriate actions where necessary. Centres have a wide range of literature and materials aimed at promoting awareness of equality and diversity. Tees Achieve has good strategies to ensure effective inclusion of learners with disabilities. The promotion of equality and diversity to learners through teaching and learning is satisfactory.
31. Tees Achieve has good arrangements for engaging with users to support and promote improvements. A good range of methods are used to gain the views of learners. The feedback is thoroughly analysed and used to improve the provision. For example feedback from construction learners led directly to improvements in the provision of computers. Arrangements to inform learners of the impact of their feedback are good. However, whilst learner and employer feedback is used within the self-assessment report there are missed opportunities to fully utilise it to provide evidence for self assessment findings.
32. Quality improvement processes are satisfactory. The process for the observation of teaching and learning is satisfactory and is leading to improvement. Tees Achieve has used self assessment to make significant improvements since the last inspection. Inspectors found the self assessment report gave a broadly accurate picture of the provision although some grades were overstated. Whilst staff views contribute to self-assessment, the procedure for this is not fully understood by staff. Some perceive it as being

management driven. Quality improvement plans are well understood and accepted by staff at subject team level although many of the targets are not sufficiently specific or measurable and are open to interpretation. Work-based learning subjects have an effective monthly review process which compiles a range of performance and quality indicators to manage the provision and promote improvement although this is currently not up to date in construction. Processes to share good practice are not sufficiently effective. For example, opportunities to benefit the wider provision by sharing exemplary teaching practices in photography have been missed as have opportunities to share the effective monthly work-based learning review process with staff delivering other types of provision.

33. The use of available resources together with the satisfactory outcomes for learners provides satisfactory value for money. Learners benefit from mostly good accommodation and high quality learning resources although the benefits of using information learning technology in teaching and learning is not always fully exploited. Staff are well qualified and have good experience and expertise. The provider is committed to managing resources in a sustainable and efficient way. Rationalisation in the number of buildings has provided greater efficiency whilst maintaining a wide range of locations within the community. The viability of courses is well managed although some individual classes observed had small numbers of learners. Continuing financial stability has been, and remains, a key priority for the service.

Learning for qualifications in employment

Construction, planning and the built environment

Grade 3

Context

34. Twenty-two learners are completing programmes in building and construction. Seventeen learners are on apprenticeship programmes in carpentry and joinery, with fourteen on the intermediate apprenticeship and three on the advanced apprenticeship. The remaining five learners are completing an introductory basic construction skills course. Most learners are employed or gain experience with a work placement in local companies. All learners attend the training centre for theory sessions.

Key findings

- Success rates over the three years from 2007/08 to 2009/10 have increased and in 2010/11 are high. Success rates for learners completing their programme by the planned completion date have varied considerably over the same time period but in 2010/11 were below national average rate. Of the learners that remain on programme, all are making good progress and are on target to achieve before their planned end date.
- Learners develop good practical skills. They develop trade specific skills, working towards construction industry standards. Learners confidently apply their skills, needing a minimum of supervision, for example when replacing old window frames in customer properties. Learners' written work in portfolios is satisfactory. Learners enjoy their learning and are aware of the progress they are making. They use appropriate personal protective equipment and adopt safe working practices.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors plan and manage sessions well with a suitable mix of appropriate activities. They use teaching aids including ILT effectively. Learning materials and resources are satisfactory. Tutors use demonstrations well to reinforce practical skills and principles although in some theory sessions they do not sufficiently check learners' understanding. Tutors do not sufficiently link into and reinforce functional and key skills in most lessons.
- Assessment on apprenticeships is satisfactory. Assessors frequently visit learners in the workplace. They plan assessments thoroughly but are flexible to respond to on-site evidence opportunities. A suitable range of diverse evidence is incorporated into learner portfolios. Checking of knowledge is thorough and learners are given clear guidance on any future evidence requirements. Assessors carry out sufficient observations of learners' work to develop learners' knowledge and skills.
- Progress reviews are satisfactory, covering all aspects of the training programme. Appropriate targets are set and reviewed at subsequent meetings. Employers are fully involved in the process and share in the agreement of

learner actions. Assessors ask questions on equality and diversity, safeguarding and health and safety during reviews but do not always promote and develop further learners' understanding of equality and diversity.

- The current provision is satisfactory in meeting the needs and interests of learners and employers. Progression from apprenticeship to the advanced programme is satisfactory but limited in choice. The recent introduction of a basic construction skills course covering a range of trade skills with progress onto intermediate level now provides more choice of apprenticeship progression opportunities into other construction trade areas.
- Tees Achieve uses partnerships well to develop the provision. Communication with employers is good. Learners who have recently been made redundant have benefited from these good links by being given the opportunity to gain valuable experience at a different employer, enabling them to complete their programmes. Some learners on the introductory course also benefit from a work placement with local employers. The centre has started to offer taster days for local schools but this has not yet resulted in progression onto apprenticeships.
- Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Initial assessment is effective. Learners with additional support needs are promptly supported by specialist staff. Tutors also continually support learners. Information, advice and guidance are now more effective at ensuring potential learners fully understand the requirements of the programme before they start their apprenticeship. Personal, pastoral and welfare support are also satisfactory.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The addition of a basic construction course assists learners in confirming they have made the correct vocational choice. This is now resulting in improving retention and success rates. The observation of teaching and learning which includes progress reviews is satisfactory. Learner progress data and information is regularly used to monitor all aspects of performance, but this information is not updated with sufficient frequency.
- Engagement with users to promote improvement is good. The service makes good use of learner and employer feedback to improve provision. For example, recent responses to learner concerns have resulted in improved computer facilities in the training centre. Learners and employers have regular opportunities at progress reviews to comment on the existing provision. Learners complete the learner survey and also benefit from a confidential interview opportunity to express any concerns.
- The use of self-assessment to improve provision is broadly satisfactory; inspectors agreed with the grade awarded but find the report brief with insufficient reference to the variable performance of recent years. However, the SAR provides a useful progress update on last year's areas for improvement.

What does Tees Achieve need to do to improve further?

- Further improve success rates by developing more effective links with local companies enabling all learners to have a suitable workplace experience to gain the opportunity of successfully completing their practical training.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that tutors more frequently check learners' knowledge and understanding and make more use of naturally occurring evidence to reinforce and develop functional skills.
- Improve learners' understanding of equality and diversity by training assessors to develop more effective strategies to promote equality and diversity to learners.
- Improve the accuracy and use of data in the learner monitoring process by more frequent analysis of learner progress data and information that contributes towards their successful framework completion.

Learning for social and personal development

Arts, media and publishing

Grade 2

Context

35. There are currently 844 learners enrolled for the 146 part-time classes being offered at local schools, community centres and local employer premises. The service offers programmes in music, woodcrafts, creative media, jewellery, art, stained glass, pottery, soft furnishings, dress making, card craft and DIY. Almost all classes are non-accredited.

Key findings

- Success rates are high and improving having risen over the past three years from 82% to 90%, currently 8% above the national average.
- The standard of learners' work is high. The skills and techniques learners acquire enable them to produce work for sale, to give to others or for their own use. Learners enjoy their work and their social well-being is enhanced. Several learners have won prestigious photographic competitions and one has been able to set up a full-time business in wedding photography.
- The quality of the provision for photography is very good. In addition to the uniformly good teaching, learners are producing particularly high standards of work and their ability to critique their own work and that of their peers is perceptive and informed. There is a good partnership with the Royal Photographic Society enabling learners to present their work and for some to gain Licentiate status.
- Learners are stimulated and engaged in their learning. Class sizes are often small, having a negative impact on the learning experience but attendance is mainly high. Learners find the projects and topics both interesting and enjoyable. Learners take considerable pride in their achievements and delight in sharing their successes with others. However, a small minority of learners are not being fully challenged.
- There is much good teaching and learning. Most classes seen by inspectors were judged to be good. The excellent choice of projects has a significant impact on learners' lives. Teachers have high expectations of all learners. Reflection and evaluation are embedded into most lessons and tutors set learners ambitious targets. ILT is used well to enliven learning. However, some lessons are not well structured and do not sufficiently encourage reflection and evaluation by learners.
- The range of provision is wide and meets the needs and interests of learners. Enrolments in 2011-12 have increased by 35% up on the previous year. Learners have good opportunities for progression internally, from beginners to

improvers and to more advanced levels in several subjects and 13% of learners progress to accredited courses elsewhere in the service. Many learners progress from non-accredited courses within the service to degree level courses offered locally.

- Curriculum management is good. Communications between managers and teaching staff are good. All staff feel valued and supported. The system for observing teachers in order to improve the quality of teaching is coherent and robust. Teachers find generic staff development activities help to improve their lessons and understanding. They are very positive about working for Tees Achieve. However, strategies to encourage the sharing of good practice are currently under-developed.
- Managers suitably analyse data in detail to inform planning. Health and safety, risk assessment and safeguarding are well embedded into planning and delivery. Learners feel safe although there is poor control of access at one centre. The self-assessment report although brief, is mainly accurate.
- In almost all instances the centres are well-resourced and pleasant places to attend and learn. Some are strategically located in areas of deprivation. Learners have access to good specialist equipment, particularly in woodcraft and digital photography. Staff are well-qualified and have a good range of experience.

What does Tees Achieve need to do to improve further?

- Develop strategies to ensure that all learners are appropriately challenged during teaching sessions allowing them to fulfil their potential.
- Review and develop exemplar practices in order to share best teaching practice across the service to ensure all learners receive equally high quality teaching.

Preparation for life and work

Grade 3

Context

36. Tees Achieve offers courses in literacy and numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), employability, and foundation learning. This year, 767 learners have been enrolled, 85% being over 19 years of age. Fifty-six per cent of learners are female, 12% are from minority ethnic backgrounds and 20% have a declared disability. Courses from pre-entry level to level 2 are held in various locations throughout the borough including community venues, schools, workplaces and Tees Achieve centres. All the provision inspected is externally accredited.

Key findings

- On Train to Gain Skills for Life programmes in 2008/09 and 2010/11 overall success rates were high at 94% and 97% respectively. The proportion of learners achieving within their expected timescale was also high at 93% and 95%. However, in 2009/10, overall and timely success rates were significantly lower. Success rates on learner-responsive courses have improved from 45% in 2008/09 to 73% in 2009/10 and to 79% in 2010/11 and are now satisfactory.
- Learners enjoy their learning. A group of low level literacy learners, for example, who are completing the Six Book Challenge, derive great enjoyment from visiting the library, selecting books and reading them. Many had previously never visited a library. Learners' self-confidence increases, their self-esteem improves and they develop good personal and social skills. Their work meets the requirements of awarding organisations.
- Learners have good opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy, language and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in Skills for Life classes. Learners on foundation and employability programmes also have good opportunities to prepare for, and obtain, employment related qualifications. Through their learning and development, learners significantly improve their employability prospects and their chances of enrolling on an apprenticeship or on a more advanced training programme.
- Learners say they feel safe in the training venues. They have good knowledge of the procedures to follow should they wish to make a complaint. However, some classrooms are congested with insufficient space for learners and staff to move around easily. ICT learners receive insufficient reminders about healthy and safe working practices, such as adopting the correct posture.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better sessions, tutors plan learning carefully, matching it to learners' needs and abilities. Learners are skilfully managed, fully engaged and continually challenged. Tutors' explanations are clear and correctly sequenced and subject content is presented both visually and orally. Good emphasis is placed on individual and collaborative learning and the pace of learning is appropriate. Learners make good progress.

- In the weaker sessions, planning is poor and individual target setting is inadequate. Learning activities are not individualised and learners are insufficiently challenged. Tutors' oral questioning is poor and more reluctant learners are not encouraged to answer. These lessons do not have a clear theme, there is not enough variety, learners become bored and progress is impeded. Summarising is neglected and learning is not checked.
- Learners' work is satisfactorily assessed and encouraging comments are often added. However, spelling and grammatical errors are not routinely corrected and learners' attention is not drawn to them. Literacy and numeracy are insufficiently integrated into employability and other sessions to give learners additional practice in developing their competencies. Resources are satisfactory overall. However, where information and learning technology (ILT) is available it is not used to enhance teaching and learning. ICT resources are under-used.
- The range of provision is good and it successfully meets learners' needs and interests. Skills for Life, ESOL and employability programmes are offered from pre-entry to level 2 giving learners good progression opportunities. Many learners progress to the next higher level. One learner, for example, who started an ESOL pre-entry course four years ago has been accepted on an access to higher education course to study law. Classes are held at convenient times.
- Partnership working is good. A wide range of partnerships has been developed with organisations including those dealing with drugs and alcohol misuse, debt and money management, and homelessness. Learners appreciate the visiting speakers from external partners and value the support they receive when referred for advice. However, there are too few partnerships with employers, including departments within the local authority that will provide learners with work shadowing, sampling and experience.
- Learners receive good care, guidance and support which make a significant contribution to their continued attendance and achievements. The identification of learners' support needs at an early stage in the course is good. Many learners have been subjected to domestic violence, rejection and homelessness, and they highly value the pastoral, practical and emotional support they receive from their tutors.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers meet regularly to review the provision and to identify areas for improvement. The inclusion of part-time and hourly paid staff in all communications is good and managers and tutors discuss and monitor targets satisfactorily. Curriculum management is satisfactory and has led to improvements in outcomes. The majority of staff are suitably qualified and experienced in dealing with the multiple and complex needs of learners.
- The promotion of safeguarding, and equality and diversity at induction or early in the course is satisfactory. Learners are appropriately aware of what action they should take if the need arises. Collection of learners' and employers' feedback is regular but there is insufficient evidence of it being used effectively to improve the quality of provision. The provision is over-graded in the self-assessment report and in the teaching and learning observations.

What does Tees Achieve need to do to improve further?

- Improve the sharing of good practice in teaching, learning and assessment and action planning following observations so that all learners experience provision of the highest quality and obtain the qualifications for which they are working within the predicted time.
- Increase the number and range of employer partnerships so that all learners, especially those on employability and foundation programmes, have the opportunity to have work tasters, work shadowing and work experience, according to their needs.
- Ensure that literacy and numeracy are integrated into employability and other sessions to give learners additional practice in developing their literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills.
- Train all staff in the use of ILT so they can confidently exploit its potential to enhance teaching and learning. Allow learners maximum access to ICT so they become knowledgeable and skilled users.

Information about the inspection

37. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's learning and skills 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 funding body, Framework for Excellence indicators, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's monitoring visit and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
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)
Tees Achieve

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

| Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate | Overall | 16-18 Learner responsive | 19+ Learner responsive | Employer responsive | Social and personal development |
|---|----------|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Approximate number of enrolled learners | | | | | |
| Full-time learners | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Part-time learners | 4151 | 166 | 963 | 333 | 2689 |
| Overall effectiveness | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Capacity to improve | 3 | | | | |

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

*where applicable to the type of provision

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Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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