

Community Service Volunteers

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates		5–8 March 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- The proportion of learners on Foundation Learning who finish the course and progress to further education, employment and training opportunities is satisfactory but needs to improve. Too few learners progress to an apprenticeship programme.
- Pass rates on most courses are satisfactory but need to improve. Learners are making reasonable progress given their starting points, but they could progress more quickly.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in taught sessions varies too much and not enough is consistently good or better. Not all sessions develop learners' skills well enough in the application of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The observation of key aspects of training is not sufficiently established and used to check and improve the learners' experience.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Learners improve their personal and social skills very effectively and make good gains in developing their self-esteem and confidence. Learners and tutors treat each other with mutual respect.
- The range of available vocational training is good, particularly at the Hereford centre.
- Community Service Volunteers (CSV) is very committed to helping learners with low literacy and numeracy levels or with personal issues of concern.
- Performance management of teaching staff is good and is well used by managers to improve standards.
- Learners' benefit from working on projects developed as a result of good partnership working with the local community.
- The safeguarding of learners is good.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers need to continue to improve outcomes for learners by ensuring tutors set and record detailed, challenging, ambitious and measurable targets for achievement during reviews. Ensure all learners have access to timely and appropriate work experience throughout their programme and more effectively use information, advice and guidance to raise their understanding of progression opportunities, particularly apprenticeship training.
- More effectively meet learners' individual learning needs by more improved individualised programme planning that fully exploits the outcome from initial assessment. Introduce arrangements that effectively support learners with dyslexia.
- Improve the planning and embedding of functional skills into teaching and learning so that all taught sessions fully use the available opportunities to develop learners' understanding and application of English, mathematics and ICT. Ensure all feedback leads to the correction of spelling and grammatical errors and handouts are of the highest quality.
- Fully implement and use the results from the quality assessment of taught sessions through direct observation to further drive up the standard of all training received by learners. Ensure all key training stages are subject to robust quality assurance and improvement measures and link the outcomes of these processes to the setting of demanding tutor appraisal targets.
- Improve the promotion of equality and diversity by better planning and use of discussion opportunities in taught sessions and progress reviews. Ensure reference to legislation used at learners' induction is current.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners' outcomes are satisfactory but require improvement. Pass rates for woodcraft programmes are good and very high for most ICT qualifications; however, rates for other qualifications are not consistently high enough. Learners' achievement of English, mathematics and ICT functional skills qualifications have been too low, though in year data indicates a much improved trend. Since the previous inspection, actions to address the progress and achievement of different groups have been effective and they now achieve at a similar rate. ▪ Learners are making reasonable progress relative to their starting point but further improvement is needed. Most commence their programme with very few educational qualifications and CSV appropriately addresses the challenging personal barriers learners' possess, which helps them achieve better. However, progress in developing functional skills has been slow for many learners, with tutors not making good use of challenging targets to aid progress monitoring and improvement. Not all learners demonstrate an adequate appreciation of the importance of good attendance and timekeeping to support their progress in learning sessions and future employment. ▪ Learners develop an appropriate range and standard of vocational skills through participation in work experience and workshop activity within the provider. For example, in bricklaying sessions, learners demonstrate relevant competence in the use of hand tools to build a wall. Tutors effectively extend learners' understanding of the application of these new skills using questioning linked to different workplace settings. Learners report this makes them more aware of employers' requirements and better prepared for work. ▪ Learners make good gains in enhancing their personal and social skills and often make very significant improvements in self-esteem and confidence which help them deal better with challenges encountered during training and within their personal lives. Improvements gained in independent and teamwork skills are satisfactory or better and contribute to a learning 	

environment that values and promotes mutual respect. Learners develop an adequate understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and feel safe and protected from discrimination, bullying and harassment. They make suitable gains in improving their jobsearch techniques through, for example, the preparation and use of curriculum vitae and job interview preparation and practice.

- The rate learners' progress into further learning or employment, after completing the programme, is adequate and shows a rising trend but needs improving. Rates show significant differences between the performance of learning centres and, with the exception of the Ipswich site, are not consistently high enough. As identified by CSV, the number of learners progressing to apprenticeship programmes is too low.
- The range of available vocational training is good, particularly at the Hereford learning centre, but CSV does not offer some qualifications, such as a food hygiene qualification, that would help learners progress into specific employment sectors. Too few learners have an adequate understanding of possible progression opportunities, which tutors do not discuss or record in sufficient depth at the beginning and during their programme. Despite well-developed plans to improve the situation, current learners do not benefit from the routine use of work experience with a wide range and variety of local employers.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement and reflects the need to improve outcomes for all learners.
- In the better taught sessions, tutors plan a good variety of appropriate teaching and learning activities which both enthuses and stimulates learners to extend their understanding. For example in a beauty therapy session, learners made face masks from a wide range of fresh ingredients that significantly raised their appreciation of minimising wastage within a commercial setting while ensuring personal health and safety. In another session, learners expressed their creativity well by writing poetry and stories drawn from personal experience which they were able to use in discussion and activities that illustrated safe internet use.
- In the less successful sessions, tutors do not always take sufficient account of learners' individual learning needs. Tutors session planning often fails to reflect the different range of learners' abilities and includes insufficiently challenging activities for the more-able learner. Sessions do not always make good use of the available accommodation or information and learning technology to ensure learners have the opportunity to participate in effective pair and group working.
- Tutors have a good range of vocational experience and are appropriately qualified for their roles. They use their skills and understanding of the personal and learning barriers faced by learners, to offer good individual support during sessions. As a result, learners confidently contribute to discussions and offer their own views and opinions, for example, by effectively engaging in a debate on equality between genders in sport.
- The teaching, learning and assessment of functional skills require improvement. In some sessions, tutors skilfully develop learners' understanding and application of English, mathematics and ICT. However, tutors too often do not exploit the opportunities available in sessions to promote learners' functional skills development and ensure feedback leads to the correction of spelling and grammatical errors. Not all handouts used in taught sessions are of a good enough standard to support learners' improvement in personal literacy skills.
- Learners receive adequate feedback on their progress and have a satisfactory understanding of how well they are achieving since commencing their programme. However, tutors' feedback comments mostly relate to learners' general progress on the programme rather than a detailed consideration of the learning experience that supports further success. Tutors do not support learners to use their learning diaries effectively to both record and reflect on what they have enjoyed in sessions and learnt.

- The overall process of systematically reviewing and recording learners' progress is weak and requires improvement. Progress review records are often incomplete and tutors do not ensure they are consistently detailed so learners always know what they need to do to improve. Targets set by tutors do not challenge all learners and often lack precision and meaning to inform both short and long-term actions. In many cases, targets are far too generic and not easily measurable by users.
- The overall initial assessment process requires improvement. CSV gathers a significant amount of information about learners' starting points and barriers to learning that usually includes a thorough initial assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills. However, outcomes from this process are not fully reflected in plans to meet individual learning needs. Although tutors plan and record learners' key qualifications objectives, they do not routinely carry out a similar process to capture how learners' individual learning or support needs are to be met.
- Advice, guidance and support require improvement. CSV has satisfactory links with a good range of employment and careers guidance agencies which it refers learners to for help. However, the planning of information and guidance to meet individual needs is not systematic and the impact of guidance on learners' progression is not yet evident. Tutors do not always effectively support learners with dyslexia.
- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. Learners have an adequate understanding of their rights and responsibilities and feel respected and valued by staff. However, the induction training in equality received by learners is not fully effective as some aspects are based on out-of-date legislation. Tutors promote learners' understanding of equality and diversity during progress reviews but this is sometimes superficial and is not consistently effective in exploring topics relevant to individual learners. Not all tutors have sufficiently embedded equality and diversity in taught sessions, or always fully exploit available opportunities to promote learners' understanding.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- CSV demonstrates an ambitious and clear vision which prioritises its contribution to a society where everyone can participate within strong and inclusive communities. Through its work with disadvantaged groups, leaders and managers effectively set and communicate to all staff the organisation's strategy that supports the recruitment and achievement of learners. However, the pace of improvement in learners' outcomes since the previous inspection has not been sufficiently good, although this is starting to improve.
- Leaders and managers at CSV show a strong commitment to helping learners who often have low literacy and numeracy levels, exhibit challenging behaviour and/or come from disadvantaged social backgrounds. Despite reductions in funding, managers have ensured learners' benefit from the payment of a bursary allowance that successfully encourages better attendance, punctuality and active participation in training.
- Managers use robust performance management procedures to improve teaching and learning. Assessment of the quality of learning sessions through direct observation includes the awarding of a grade and production of a personalised tutor development plan with agreed improvement actions. Where necessary, tutors receive appropriate training and further lesson observations to assess the impact of improvement interventions. Subsequently, managers rigorously monitor shortfalls in tutor performance and have dismissed staff rather than allow learners to continue to experience unsatisfactory teaching and learning.
- The observation process for assessing the quality of teaching and learning has been further developed and improved since the previous inspection. However, managers have been slow to implement fully effective lesson evaluation arrangements and quality assessment by observation of all key training stages such as progress reviews, assessments and inductions. During staff appraisals, managers do not adequately use the outcomes from the observation process to set targets that contribute effectively to improvements in teaching and learning.

- Managers receive and make good use of accurate data to manage the curriculum, performance and improve the provision. Management actions have led to improvements since the previous inspection, for example in raising the recruitment, retention and achievement rates of learners. However, further effective actions are required to improve learners' future employability prospects following training completion.
- CSV has effective self-assessment arrangements that take good account of the views of staff and learners in an evaluation of the provision's quality. The provider uses individual learning centre self-assessment reports well to inform judgements made within the national report. Managers have a good understanding of their organisation which has contributed to a self-critical analysis of its quality that has informed effective planning and review. CSV has recently introduced more effective internal auditing; however, managers have yet to implement fully this improvement initiative across all learning centres.
- CSV has successfully established a good range of vocational programmes, particularly in the Hereford learning centre which has a café used by the public offering good work experience opportunities for learners. Vocational programmes effectively meet the needs and interests of most learners and employers. However, some learners would benefit from accessing more timely work experience to enhance their employability.
- Managers have forged good links with the local community and use them well to benefit learners. For example, learners on construction courses have built bird feeding tables and flower planters for elderly residents at the request of the local police. The police and community involvement has helped improve learner's perceptions of, and attitudes towards, the police. However, CSV recognises that wider links with employers need further strengthening.
- CSV's promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory but in need of improvement. Managers effectively analyse equality and diversity data for monitoring purposes and actions to improve the recruitment of under-represented sectors, including females, and narrow the achievement gaps between different groups of learners, have been successful. However, opportunities by tutors to explore and promote learners' appreciation of equality and diversity during lessons and progress reviews are not sufficiently planned or effective.
- CSV's arrangements for safeguarding are good and the provider meets its statutory requirements for protecting learners. CSV supports vulnerable learners particularly well and ensures risks are minimised and managed appropriately. All learners' feel safe and enjoy their training.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Community Service Volunteers		
Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	Foundation Learning
Overall effectiveness	3	3
Outcomes for learners	3	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3
Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Grade
Foundation learning		3

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	86	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Part-time	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

Additional socio-economic information

CSV offers Foundation Learning from learning centres in Hereford, Worcester, Redditch and Ipswich. CSV recruits learners from a wide geographical area within commuting distance of its four learning centres. Hereford is the largest and provides vocational training in beauty, sport, woodcraft, plastering, brickwork, catering, ICT, hospitality and customer service. The centre in Worcester offers ICT, employability and art and design training. In addition, both centres at Ipswich and Redditch provide ICT training, with Redditch also offering an employability programme. Learners typically have lower prior academic achievement and relatively weak literacy and numeracy skills compared to young people of the same age nationally.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Nigel Bragg HMI
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Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the manager as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject area listed in the report.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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