

Leeds City Council

Local authority

Inspection dates		15–19 April 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- Learners are very successful in achieving their learning aims, especially in information and communication technology (ICT) and visual arts. This is particularly impressive given the low starting points of many learners.
- Learners reach high standards in their work, improve their English and mathematics, and increase their chances of moving on to higher level courses or of finding paid work.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Well-qualified tutors plan varied and interesting teaching that keep learners motivated and help them make good progress.
- Tutors encourage learners to achieve to the best of their ability. They give learners regular feedback on their work to help them understand how they can improve.
- Leeds City Council (LCC) has a strong focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment for the people of Leeds. It manages the high proportion of courses delivered by subcontractors well.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Not enough teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding.
- The procedures for judging and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are not yet fully reliable.
- The arrangements for assessing and recording the progress learners make are not consistently and reliably applied across the whole of the provision.
- There are a few inconsistencies in the way the performance of subcontractors is managed.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the achievement of all learners across the provision is consistently high by giving all subcontractors clear and challenging targets for learners' attendance, retention and achievement, and including these in their contracts.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and learning by developing the arrangements for tutors across the provision to share best practice, including in the use of information learning technology (ILT).
- Strengthen and make more consistent the use of the procedures for monitoring and recording progress to ensure they give a fully accurate view of non-accredited achievements for all learners across the provision.
- Strengthen the procedures for observing teaching, learning and assessment so that they are based on accurate and consistent judgements about quality, particularly for sessions judged to be outstanding.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Learners achieve very well, including those on the small proportion of externally accredited courses. This good achievement is particularly impressive for the significant proportion of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds with little previous experience of success in education. Success rates are particularly high for ICT and for visual arts, two of the largest programme areas offered by LCC.
- The proportion of learners who attend classes regularly and complete their courses has increased significantly since 2010/11 and is now very high for the majority of learners. There is little difference between the achievements of different groups, including for those learners from the most deprived areas.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills. They improve their ability to learn independently as well as in collaboration with others, and to reflect on their own progress. They gain practical skills and techniques that lead to high standards in the quality of their work. In visual arts, for example, learners develop the skills needed to create individually designed clothing, and to achieve a very professional finish to jewellery.
- Learners demonstrate improved English and mathematics skills that they are able to use in everyday life when shopping or budgeting, for example, and that increase their prospects of future employability. The development of these skills, together with new insights into the way children learn at school, helps many parents and carers attending family learning courses to support their children's educational progress far more effectively.
- Learners benefit from the opportunity for regular social contact through attending community based classes. Some older learners who have little contact with others particularly value this. For learners dealing with complex problems such as alcohol misuse, the support from people on the same programme who share this experience is invaluable.
- Learners develop very well their motivation to continue learning. Many progress to other programmes including further education courses. A small minority move on to employment or voluntary work, some setting up their own businesses. Examples of learners with learning difficulties on community-based media courses progressing to voluntary work and paid employment in this sector are especially impressive.
- LCC has increased significantly the amount of information it collects on the destination of learners when they have completed their courses. The service now collects reliable data on the

destinations of over three-quarters of learners, and uses this information effectively to plan future provision.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good with some outstanding aspects, reflected in the good outcomes that learners achieve. In the best sessions, tutors plan meticulously, drawing creatively on a range of teaching and learning strategies to inspire and motivate learners. These include the successful use of paired and group activities, independent learning, practical demonstrations and tutor explanation.
- Tutors set high expectations and routinely challenge learners to achieve to the best of their ability. For example, instead of responding to learners' questions with a direct answer, tutors often encourage learners to think analytically and find their own solutions. Learners are highly motivated to learn, participate well during class and produce good work.
- Learners feel well supported in class. In the best sessions, tutors take particularly good account of the full range of learners' individual needs, a key factor in building the confidence of those who have had negative experiences of formal education. In the less successful sessions, planning is weak and sessions fail to engage and motivate all learners.
- Tutors identify learners' starting points and support needs carefully. However, in some instances, the records of initial assessment results are too brief to inform planning fully.
- Tutors use a wide range of assessment methods to check learning and help learners improve. In addition to formal written testing, individual exercises and feedback on observed practical activities, tutors encourage learners to use peer and self-assessments, and to identify in reflective learning diaries how they can improve their work.
- Procedures for recognising and recording progress in non-accredited learning are generally satisfactory. Tutors know their learners well and monitor their progress effectively against very specific learning objectives. However, in a minority of subjects, the targets recorded in individual learning plans are too broad to help learners understand exactly what they need to do.
- Tutors are appropriately qualified and in subjects such as visual arts use their vocational experience to very good effect. Resources and accommodation are generally good. In some community venues, tutors have access to good quality ILT resources and use these in a creative way. However, the availability and use of ILT to enhance learning varies across the service.
- Tutors integrate the development of English and mathematics very effectively into classroom activities. In craft, for example, learners apply measuring skills when purchasing and cutting fabric. In family learning, parents and carers enhance their own skills through planning reading and number activities for children.
- Tutors provide learners with appropriate information and guidance about opportunities for further learning across the city, sometimes inviting external speakers to talk to learners about future progression routes.
- Learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity. Most tutors promote inclusion well, stimulating discussions about equality, for example, and fostering mutual respect between class members. One group of learners spoke in a very positive way about how much they enjoyed finding out about different cultures when participating in a creative crafts course. However, in a minority of sessions, tutors fail to make enough use of opportunities to promote equality.

Visual arts
Community learning

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Learners of all abilities gain new skills and techniques quickly and the standard of learners' work is high. This reflects the good outcomes for learners in visual arts.
- Tutors are enthusiastic, well qualified and have high expectations of learners. In most sessions tutors provide helpful encouragement to ensure that learners with a wide range of abilities complete their studies and achieve successfully; this in turn raises learners' aspirations. However, in a small minority of classes tutors do not challenge the learners enough and they make slower progress.
- Tutors create a welcoming atmosphere in the classroom which helps learners to enjoy their learning, develop confidence and complete a wide range of complex tasks to a good standard.
- Many tutors use practical demonstrations very effectively to help learners' understand different approaches and techniques. This motivates learners to continue work at home to develop their skills further. Most learners work hard to achieve high standards and acquire the ability to work independently. Tutors support this, encouraging learners in a practical sewing class, for example, to keep folders of complex techniques such as zip insertion for future reference.
- Tutors make too little use of ILT to enhance learning in the classroom. In a minority of sessions tutors use technology to reinforce learning by projecting images relevant to key teaching points, but tutors do not make innovative or imaginative use of technology. For example, although learners appreciate specialist advice and guidance from tutors on where to purchase materials, they do not benefit from opportunities to research the best suppliers through the internet.
- Tutors successfully develop learners' skills in mathematics and English in practical sewing, pattern cutting and jewellery-making sessions.
- Good quality written information helps learner's identify visual arts courses appropriate to their interests and abilities as well as other subjects which may be appeal to them. Tutors offer good individual support and guidance and use their professional experiences well to help learners decide on a course. Tutors support learners with learning difficulties and disabilities well to ensure that they can benefit from the courses.
- At the start of the course, tutors discuss and agree challenging personal targets with learners so that all learners are fully aware of what to do to achieve improved results.
- Tutors use a range of assessment methods to support learners' progress. This includes informal assessment throughout each session to assist individual learners' skill development as they work, and detailed, constructive written feedback following formal assessment. Tutors use peer assessment very effectively, encouraging learners to evaluate, discuss and give constructive feedback to others on their application of techniques. Learners use their individual learning plans and reflective diaries well to identify their progress and any problems they have encountered.
- Learners work in an atmosphere of mutual respect for both their peers and tutors and feel safe. However, tutors miss opportunities to develop learners' awareness of other cultures through their approach to visual arts. Male participation on courses is low.
- Specialist resources are good throughout the area. Visual arts and craft studios have up-to-date machinery. Learners adopt safe working practices in the studios and are very aware of the health and safety rules in practical sessions.

Family learning Community learning

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. This results in learners achieving well, developing increased confidence in supporting their children's learning and improving their own skills in English and mathematics.
- Tutors motivate and challenge learners, making good use of a range of learning strategies to build self-confidence and develop strong personal, social and employability skills. The progress parents make has a measurable impact on their children's development in the classroom.
- Very experienced and enthusiastic tutors provide well-planned and creative lessons to meet the individual needs of all learners. They involve learners well in developing stimulating and exciting learning materials and activities to use with their children. For example, parents and children who are not confident in their reading are encouraged to develop games with pictorial clues to match with the written word. Through this activity both the parents and children develop their reading skills and confidence.
- Tutors make good use of questioning to check understanding, challenge, and prompt learners to reflect on their learning. Learners make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and language skills and working towards a range of qualifications to support their future training and employment goals. Tutors use a good range of approaches to meet the individual language needs of the learners. They encourage peer support to help learners develop confidence, share experience and increase their capacity for independent learning.
- In centres where it is readily available, tutors use information learning technology well to develop learners' skills. However, in a number of venues access to technology is limited to laptops that tutors can request through an internal booking system. Tutors provide well-produced and well-designed resources for all learners. Classrooms have stimulating displays and celebrations of learners' work to inspire learners.
- Tutors use initial assessment effectively to identify learners' English, mathematics and language skills. They involve learners well in setting personal targets, negotiating challenging activities and planning learning that extends their skills. For example, by working with number bonds and number lines using the methodology used in schools with their children, learners develop their own understanding of mathematical concepts. A card-sorting activity that focuses on mathematics also develops learners' English skills by stimulating discussion and debate. Tutors monitor learners' progress well and record this accurately in individual learning plans and portfolios.
- Tutors encourage learners to reflect on their learning and skills development through constructive feedback during classroom sessions. Detailed written feedback enables learners to identify how they can improve. However, written feedback to more-able learners is insufficiently challenging.
- Tutors provide good information, advice and guidance to support learners throughout the courses, often supplemented by specialist input. This includes information about routes into further learning, employment, and voluntary work within community organisations.
- Family learning courses meet the diverse needs of the targeted groups and their communities well. However, few men attend family learning courses. Learners feel safe and tutors actively promote a culture of respect and inclusion. Tutors use opportunities within the curriculum, for example when discussing the design of learning materials and resources for children, to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The quality of leadership and management is good. Managers and officers focus strongly on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and this has led to good outcomes for learners. The service has improved a significant number of issues identified at the last inspection such as the use and analysis of data on learners' performance and the self-assessment process.

- The head of service with the support of the council's senior managers determine business and council priorities as they relate to LCC's adult community and skills provision, setting appropriate targets to develop and improve the provision. Managers scrutinise carefully progress towards achieving the objectives set out in the service plan. However, in some reports the performance of the service against its targets is not clearly evaluated and recorded.
- The service subcontracts the vast majority of its provision. The commissioning and contracting arrangements are well considered and systematic. The good commissioning process has been very effective in ensuring that LCC prioritises successful providers when awarding contracts.
- The service ensures through the routine monitoring of subcontractors that managers identify performance issues and resolve them as quickly as possible. Monitoring procedures incorporate the effective use of unannounced observations of the subcontractors' teaching and learning. However, the subcontractors' contracts do not include clear and ambitious targets for the key performance criteria of attendance, retention and achievement.
- LCC uses data well to analyse learners' performance at overall provider, subcontractor and course levels. The self-assessment process is well established and the resulting development plan is effective in improving the quality of provision further. The service draws effectively on an appropriate range of information, including the views of staff and learners, to inform judgements in the self-assessment report, which are mostly accurate. Managers, subcontractors and most tutors have a good understanding of the provision's quality and contribute towards further improvements well.
- The arrangements to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are effective. Most written records of the observed teaching sessions accurately reflect the grade awarded. However, the records of sessions judged as outstanding do not fully support the grade awarded.
- Arrangements are in place for sharing best practice across the service, but these are not yet implemented fully.
- Procedures for recognising and recording progress and achievement are broadly satisfactory. The service has identified where improvements are required. However, too many subcontractors have been slow to implement these improvements.
- LCC makes good use of learners' views collected through a range of methods, including surveys and learner forums, to develop and improve the quality of provision. Learner forums, which are active in most subcontractors, are particularly effective in ensuring that learners' views are gathered and that managers use them effectively.
- The provision meets the needs of learners, stakeholders and regional priorities particularly successfully. The service uses local knowledge very effectively to target its resources towards hard-to-reach learners and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Very effective work with subcontractors has improved significantly the recruitment of learners from under-represented communities in Leeds. The service has a number of initiatives to increase the proportion of male learners, but these have so far had too little impact.
- LCC actively promotes equality and diversity through the subcontractors. The equality and diversity action plan takes good account of the Equality Act 2010 and other legislative requirements. The commissioning process focuses particularly well on the impact of provision offered by each subcontractor on different groups of learners. All tutors are appropriately trained to recognise and address any abuse or inappropriate behaviour.
- The service makes very effective use of data to evaluate the impact of the provision, and to ensure all groups of learners achieve broadly as well as each other.
- The service meets statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. It has effective arrangements in place to ensure that learners in all subcontractors learn and work in safe environments.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Leeds City Council		
Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Outcomes for learners	2	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Visual Arts	2
Family Learning	2

Provider details

Leeds City Council	
Type of provider	Local authority
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	6,364
Head of Service	Jane Hopkins
Date of previous inspection	June 2009
Website address	www.leeds.gov.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Part-time	3	4,222	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Age UK ■ Cardigan Centre ■ East Street Arts ■ Groundwork Leeds ■ Leeds City College ■ Leeds Libraries Service ■ Learning Partnerships ■ Mad Science ■ Multiple Choice ■ MD Teaching & Training ■ Northern College ■ People Matters ■ St Anne’s Community Service ■ Swarthmore Centre 							

- TCV
- Vera Media
- YMCA

Additional socio-economic information

Leeds City Council provides adult and community learning across Leeds in a wide range of community venues. The service subcontracts the delivery of all programmes except some Family Learning to 17 providers. Leeds City College delivers most of this subcontracted provision. Leeds has a population of 751,500. It has over 140 ethnic groups representing about 17% of the total population. The proportion of people with a qualification at NVQ level 4 or above is similar to the country as a whole, but higher than for the region. The proportion of people with five GCSEs A* to C including English and mathematics or the equivalent is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Jan Smith HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the head of employment and skills 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. 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 areas listed in the report above.

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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[Piccadilly Gate](#)
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