

# Hartlepool Borough Council

## Local authority

|  |                         |                     |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Inspection dates</b>                      |                         | 03–06 December 2013 |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>This inspection:</b> | <b>Good-2</b>       |
|  | Previous inspection:    | Good-2              |
| 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:

- Outcomes for learners at Hartlepool Adult Education Service (HAES) are good. Learners achieve good levels of success in accredited programmes and excellent success in non-accredited community learning courses.
- The development of personal, social and employability skills for learners is very good. The service successfully recruits learners who often start programmes with low prior attainment and barriers to learning; they subsequently improve their levels of personal confidence and self-esteem, and many are better prepared to gain employment.
- Successful strategic planning enables adults from the most disadvantaged communities in the borough to develop their skills and confidence, successfully enhance their employment opportunities, and improve the quality of their lives.
- The service develops very successful partnerships with community and voluntary organisations that enable the service to target its provision successfully and encourage adults to participate and succeed in learning.

### This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Outcomes for learners on accredited programmes are not yet outstanding.
- The systems used to track and monitor all learners' progress towards achieving their targets in developing English and mathematics are not sufficiently rigorous.
- Actions identified after observation of teaching do not sufficiently drive further improvements in performance. Managers do not monitor these well enough during performance reviews.
- Although reasonably accurate, the self-assessment does not sufficiently link outcomes for learners and the results of observations of teaching so that managers can identify specific areas for improvement.
- Tutors do not sufficiently promote aspects of diversity in their teaching.

## Full report

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the success rates for learners on accredited programmes further so that even more learners benefit from successful achievement from their learning.
- Ensure that rigorous systems track and monitor all learners' progress towards achieving their targets in developing their English and mathematics skills.
- Ensure that actions from observations are more specific in identifying how teachers can improve their practice further, and monitor closely progress in implementing these actions through performance reviews.
- Improve the self-assessment process by analysing data on learners' performance and outcomes from observations more rigorously, and identifying specific areas for improvement.
- Improve the training and support for tutors to enable them to promote diversity in their teaching successfully.

### Inspection judgements

|                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| <b>Outcomes for learners</b> | Good |
|------------------------------|------|

- Outcomes for learners relative to their starting point and prior attainment are good. Success rates on nearly all classroom-based learning programmes are good and are in line with, or exceed, national averages. Learners from low starting points achieve well and make significant progress in their development from their learning. Success rates on short courses are particularly high and are excellent.
- The outcomes on community learning programmes, approximately one third of the total provision, are excellent. The process for recognising and recording progress and achievement on the non-accredited programmes is rigorous.
- Gaps between some groups of learners are reducing. Male learners achieve slightly less well than females, although the gap between them has narrowed each year for the last three years. In 2011/12, the gap was only 2%. Minority ethnic learners succeed equally as well as the predominant White-British learners. The learners aged 19 years or more with a declared learning difficulty or disability succeed slightly less well than those without but this is not significant.
- The focus of provision to develop personal, social and employability skills is strong. The service offers a wide range of courses and programmes targeting disadvantaged learners. Good use is made of craft-based skill activities to develop the confidence and self-esteem for learners with mental health difficulties. Classes aimed at learners with a range of barriers succeed in improving individual and group communication skills. Learners in British sign language classes demonstrate excellent fluency levels.
- In many classes, learners demonstrate very good support for other learners. In one class, learners collect and bring to the class another learner who might not otherwise attend. The service focuses much of the provision at improving the life chances for its participants and the localities in which they live.
- The service is currently developing systems to monitor and track progression by learners. To date, the service has successfully tracked and followed up 20% of learners to identify that a vast majority achieve a positive progression outcome from their learning. These outcomes include progression into work, further training and volunteering. Programmes devised to support unemployed learners successfully enable a significant number to gain employment.

**The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Good

- The teaching, learning and assessment at HAES are good, as demonstrated by the good overall success rates. The service is highly effective at motivating learners who participate very well in sessions. Many develop good skills to support their independent learning. Learners referred for employability courses make very good progress, a good proportion continue their studies in mainstream learning.
- Tutors are well qualified and many have good current vocational experience. In a music technology course, the industry-standard resources and appropriately experienced staff enable learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to benefit from very good models of working practice. This prepares them well for work and/or further study. The standard of most learners' work is good. On foundation courses, many learners access additional opportunities for accreditation and qualifications. The service monitors gaps in achievement and ensures that success and attendance rates for learners needing additional support or childcare in order to participate are improving.
- Tutors establish good rapport with learners, and provide them with good support, challenge and encouragement, resulting in very active learning. This is particularly good in work with hard-to-engage and vulnerable learners, who gain good personal and social skills with very good improvements in their confidence and capacity to participate actively in learning. In a dressmaking class, beginners successfully finish fitted garments of marketable standards. The service responds well to learners' needs, providing specific resources such as handouts in different formats or to suit dyslexic learners, responsive arrangements for childcare and one-to-one support in sessions when required.
- Well-planned sessions include good varieties of approaches to sustain learners' attention and most courses make good use of learners' profiles so that tutors have a good understanding of learners' backgrounds, concerns and preferences. Tutors make good use of learners' own experiences, activities and interests in their teaching. The caring nature of much of the provision is characterised by supportive teaching for anxious learners and good encouragement for reluctant learners.
- Much teaching is stimulating and in some instances inspirational, including very clear presentations and explanations, targeted well to suit learners' levels, reinforcing learning and giving confidence. Tutors use innovative approaches well, such as simulations to explore learning themes or games to help learners visualise complex interactions, such as the 'Pants' game that illustrated the speed and extent of the transmission of sexually transmitted infections in a way that parents can explain to their children.
- There is especially good support for group learning, motivating learners and giving them the confidence to speak out and participate fully in sessions. Tutors encourage peer and group support activities well resulting in very active sessions, with some informal mentoring between learners.
- Although a good virtual learning environment is available, tutors do not use it sufficiently to support, remind and reinforce learning between sessions, especially those anxious about their retention of information.
- Initial assessment is available for learners on all courses and for learners on waiting lists for courses, and it identifies individual needs well. However, not all undertake initial and diagnostic assessment. The service identifies the need for a more robust practice to identify gaps, barriers and learning needs of the learners. It is actively involved in a local peer review group and shares good practice and resources with neighbouring providers.
- On the better courses, the recording and written feedback on learners' progress is good. Assessment and feedback is timely and measurable targets set in both portfolios and learners' records. Tutors give good feedback to learners about their next steps. Learners understand how to improve because of frequent, detailed and accurate feedback from staff following assessment of their learning.

- The service promotes English, mathematics and functional skills well, with good provision of functional skills courses and additional in-session support for learners needing further help. Many learners, many of whom were initially reluctant to participate, are very proud of their progress in functional skills in English, mathematics and information technology. However, the system used to track and monitor learners’ progress towards achieving their targets is not sufficiently rigorous. All staff do not consistently correct spellings and grammar and, although quality checks by the service recognise this, the actions taken to date have not yet resolved the problem.
- Learners benefit from good access to information, advice and guidance to plan next steps and explore targets for qualifications. Tutors have built very good information, advice and guidance into foundation courses, with good opportunities for learners to make informed choices about courses and extend learning opportunities. Improvements to the initial advice and guidance to learners have resulted in a more robust induction process and accurate information about course content and requirements.
- The service very successfully promotes inclusion and equality in teaching and learning. It is particularly effective at including learners with disabilities. The monitoring of success, recruitment and retention of learners with additional support needs and the checking of the effectiveness of support for learners with additional needs is good. However, the focus on promoting diversity in lessons is less well developed.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <p><b>Health and social care and early years and playwork</b></p> <p><b>19+ Learning programmes</b></p> <p><b>Apprenticeships</b></p> | <p>Good</p> |
|---|-------------|

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in the high proportion of learners who achieve all of their planned learning outcomes. Learners demonstrate good levels of skills and knowledge of care and early years work. For example, they develop an improved awareness of safeguarding, increased understanding of the importance of promoting independence for older people and the key stages of child development.
- Tutors and assessors motivate learners very effectively. They ensure learners remain fully engaged in sessions by using a good range of stimulating and interesting activities that make learning fun and worthwhile. Tutors have good vocational experience; they use this effectively to help learners apply classroom learning to workplace settings. High quality learning takes place in different locations across the borough in areas where few other opportunities exist.
- Arrangements for initial assessment are effective. Nearly all learners undergo detailed assessments and staff use this information to guide learners carefully to an appropriate course to enable them to gain skills and succeed. However, where initial assessment is less detailed the arrangements to support learners’ development of literacy and numeracy are less successful.
- Tutors help learners to set appropriate and challenging individual learning goals that are relevant to the course content and that match their individual needs, interests and aspirations. For example, several learners on the introduction to health and social care course aim to work in residential care settings or become nurses. Tutors record these ambitions on the individual learning plans and very effectively monitor the progress towards achieving them.
- Tutors and assessors ensure learners benefit from detailed verbal and written feedback on their work. Learners understand the progress they have made and gain a good understanding of what they need to do to improve. Because of this supportive feedback, learners gain confidence while acquiring new skills and knowledge.
- Arrangements for learners to practice and improve their literacy and numeracy skills are less well developed. In the majority of lessons, tutors support learners well. For example, childcare

learners use a glossary of terms to help with spelling and understanding of key terms. However, in the less successful lessons learners' work is not marked carefully enough to help improve their grammar and punctuation.

- Resources to support learning are particularly good. Tutors work very effectively with employers and key partners to deliver courses in community settings, such as children's centres, which learners find stimulating. Teaching rooms are comfortable and well equipped with interactive learning technology. Tutors use this effectively. Tutors develop good paper-based materials to aid learning in lessons and to extend learning beyond the classroom.
- They provide good information, advice and guidance. Tutors give clear advice to prospective learners on course content and purpose. Honest advice and guidance is available throughout the course and learners receive detailed and useful information about opportunities for progression.
- Tutors promote equality well in lessons. For example, in a lesson about planning activities for young children, tutors introduce learners to strategies aimed at supporting children with disabilities. Learners demonstrate good awareness of the importance of promoting the rights of individuals to exercise choice and to determine the nature of the care they receive. Good attention is given to ensuring learners remain safe and adopt safe working practices in all care and early years settings.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <p><b>Teaching and lecturing and training to provide learning support</b></p> <p><b>19+ Learning programmes</b></p> | <p>Good</p> |
|---|-------------|

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in the outcomes for the great majority of learners. Learners develop a good understanding of the theoretical basis of effective teaching and learning, as well as the skills to reflect on their own support practices and make continuous improvements. The standard of written work from most learners is good.
- Support for learners is very good. They are highly motivated to succeed, and many progress from basic, introductory courses to intermediate or advanced programmes and into employment. Tutors carefully structure the youth work programmes to cover the background knowledge early in the course. This ensures that they prepare learners well for work and enables them to complete early if they have appropriate opportunities to demonstrate practical competence at work, which motivates learners.
- Tutors are confident and knowledgeable, and are able to use their experience to illustrate theory lessons very effectively. Taught sessions are brisk, highly interactive and stimulating. They make excellent use of learners' and tutors' experience of working in schools, colleges or the youth service. Learners discuss their experiences openly and readily in a mutually supportive and trusting atmosphere which significantly contributes to their development.
- Initial assessment is effective at identifying those learners with additional needs, and follow-up support to develop literacy and numeracy skills is very good. Learners who need help to achieve the required standard for their qualification attend focused weekly teaching sessions that rapidly improve their skills. Learners are encouraged to consider extending their literacy and numeracy skills beyond the course requirements.
- Learners' understanding of internet safety is good and developed very effectively through assignments and discussions. They are able to describe a good range of measures to help children to stay safe on the internet. Although there are good information technology resources, not all tutors make the most effective use of the equipment. The virtual learning environment supports independent learning well but a few learners on short courses are unsure whether they have access to it.

- Assessment and feedback to learners is good and sufficiently detailed to ensure they are able to make improvements where necessary. In a few cases, tutors do not always highlight repeated errors of spelling or punctuation. Tutors monitor learners' progress very well on most long courses although managers were insufficiently aware of the difficulties a small number of learners experienced on one course in 2012/13, which resulted in below-average success rates. The monitoring of learners' progress on short courses is less carefully analysed.
- Initial advice and guidance are good and improved following concerns about one particular course in 2012/13. Learners now have to provide evidence that they are able to meet the basic requirements of their course, in terms of both literacy and numeracy skills and the opportunity to gather enough teaching experience.
- Tutors challenge and extend learners' understanding of equality in naturally arising discussions in theory lessons and through assignments effectively. They make very good use of their experience at work to challenge one another in theory discussions about meeting the needs of the individual children they support.

|   |      |
|---|------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management</b> | Good |
|---|------|

- Leaders and managers have a clear vision and strategy for the service that successfully supports the council's priorities to enhance skills and regenerate the local economy. The service has successfully developed its provision in recent years so that the focus is now on enabling adults from the most disadvantaged communities in the borough to improve their skills and confidence to take an active role in their community and gain employment.
- Senior officers and elected members in the council support and challenge managers well. They agree challenging targets for managers, and closely monitor the service's performance in recruiting adults to learning and enabling them to succeed.
- Managers successfully improve the performance of staff to ensure that teaching and support for learners remain at a consistently good standard. Staff benefit from a wide range of training opportunities that successfully develop their skills and knowledge. Tutors whose teaching is below the expected standard have clear improvement targets, and managers carefully review the progress that these tutors make in improving their teaching. However, managers do not consistently support and challenge tutors to improve their performance beyond the expected standard. They do not use review meetings or the outcomes of observations effectively to identify actions for tutors to deliver outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.
- Resources to support learning are particularly good. At the service's main centre and in the majority of community venues, learners benefit from the high quality accommodation and a wide range of good learning resources. All tutors have received training to use learning technology, including interactive whiteboards, so that they can use these effectively to support learning.
- Leaders and managers accurately evaluate the quality of the provision. Throughout the year, they carefully analyse information about the success of learners, outcomes from observations, and the views of learners and partner organisations. They use this information to identify areas for improvement accurately. Managers act swiftly and effectively improve identified weaknesses. For example, they take decisive action to improve attendance on courses where this falls below the high targets that they set. However, the service does not use its annual self-assessment process effectively to evaluate the overall impact of the service's activity in improving outcomes for learners. The self-assessment report is too descriptive and does not provide a sufficiently evaluative overall account of the service's performance.
- Partnerships with community organisations are very successful in enabling adults to participate in learning and gain new skills and qualifications. The service works successfully with community organisations to provide a wide range of courses in the most deprived areas of the borough. This enables the service to recruit successfully adults who lack confidence in their ability to learn and who would not otherwise participate in learning. The service is particularly effective in

supporting adults to develop skills and gain qualifications to enable them to work successfully as volunteers and contribute to improving their communities. For example, young volunteers working for an organisation that supports families with disabled children successfully develop their vocational and English and mathematics skills through a traineeship programme that is highly valued by the manager of the organisation.

- Leaders and managers successfully promote a strong ethos of mutual respect and inclusion across the service. Learners are very positive about the support they receive from both tutors and other learners in encouraging them to succeed in their learning. The promotion of equality and diversity is a priority in the service's strategy and plans. Managers set challenging participation targets for groups that are under-represented, such as men on health and care courses, and take actions to improve participation. However, the service's arrangements for ensuring that tutors promote diversity in their teaching are not rigorous enough. They are not sufficiently equipped to promote diversity effectively in lessons, and observations of teaching and learning do not consistently evaluate how well they promote both equality and diversity.
- The service meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Comprehensive and effective arrangements are in place to ensure that all learners are safe. Safeguarding is a priority in the service's strategic plan and the management team consider safeguarding concerns in detail. The service trains all individuals who interact directly with learners in recognising and knowing when and how to refer safeguarding incidents.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Hartlepool Borough Council

|  |         |                        |                    |
|--|---------|------------------------|--------------------|
| <p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding<br/>                 2: Good<br/>                 3: Requires improvement<br/>                 4: Inadequate</p> | Overall | 16-19 study programmes | Community learning |
| Overall effectiveness  | 2       | 2                      | 2                  |
| Outcomes for learners  | 2       | 2                      | 1                  |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment   | 2       | 2                      | 2                  |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management   | 2       | 2                      | 2                  |

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade    |
|---|----------|
| <b>Teaching and lecturing</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Training to provide learning support</b>                               | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Health and social care</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Early years and playwork</b>   | <b>2</b> |



## Provider details

|   |   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|---|---|-------|-----------------|-----|----------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| <b>Type of provider</b>   | Local authority   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Age range of learners</b>  | 19+   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>                  | Full-time: 14   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | Part-time: 1,928  |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Principal/CEO</b>  | Mrs Maggie Heaps  |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>  | December 2007   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Website address</b>  | www.haded.org.uk  |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>                                       |   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Main course or learning programme level</b>  | <b>Level 1 or below</b>   |       | <b>Level 2</b>  |     | <b>Level 3</b> |     | <b>Level 4 and above</b> |     |
| <b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>                                     | 16-18   | 19+   | 16-18           | 19+ | 16-18          | 19+ | 16-18                    | 19+ |
| <b>Full-time</b>  | 11  | 3     | 0               | 0   | 0              | 0   | 0                        | 0   |
| <b>Part-time</b>  | 30  | 1,431 | 2               | 173 | 0              | 142 | 0                        | 46  |
| <b>Number of traineeships</b>   | 16-19   |       | 19+             |     | Total          |     |                          |     |
|   | N/A   |       | N/A             |     | N/A            |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>                                    | <b>Intermediate</b>   |       | <b>Advanced</b> |     | <b>Higher</b>  |     |                          |     |
|   | 16-18   | 19+   | 16-18           | 19+ | 16-18          | 19+ | 16-18                    | 19+ |
|   | 3   | 18    | 0               | 3   | 0              | 0   | 0                        | 0   |
| <b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>  | N/A   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Full-time</b>  | N/A   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Part-time</b>  | N/A   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of community learners</b>   | 985   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of employability learners</b>   | 987   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Funding received from</b>  | Skills Funding Agency (SFA)   |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Hartlepool College of Further Education</li> </ul> |       |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |

## Contextual information

According to the 2011 census, Hartlepool has a total population of 92,028 with slightly more females than males. In 2011, 2.4% of the population of Hartlepool was from a minority ethnic background and in June 2013 Hartlepool had an unemployment rate of 13% compared to a national rate of 7.8%.

The town also has a high proportion of benefit claimants, 26.7% of working-age residents receives key benefits. The majority of these are on employment and support allowance and incapacity benefits. In addition, 23.2% of the population identified themselves as having a limiting long-term illness, compared to 18.1% nationally. The town also has a large number of residents with no qualifications, currently standing at 17% compared to 9.7% nationally.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Tim Gardner HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the learning and skills 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, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions and assessments. 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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