

# Adult Education in Gloucestershire

## Local authority

<b>Inspection dates</b>		27–31 January 2014
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	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:

- The proportion of learners who achieve their goals on courses that do not lead to qualifications is high. Success rates on apprenticeship programmes and functional skills qualifications are also high.
- Learners make good progress and develop their personal and social skills and their confidence.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, and in visual arts they are outstanding.
- Staff are very successful at understanding and meeting the needs of learners from different cultural and social backgrounds, and those with considerable barriers to learning.
- Staff have a strong focus on supporting learners to gain jobs and good examples exist of learners progressing into employment or starting their own businesses.
- Managers have a very clear vision for the service which has been carefully researched and links well to local and regional priorities.
- Highly effective partnerships benefit learners, and procedures to improve subcontracted work are excellent.
- Managers have accurately identified the service's strengths and areas for improvement through self-assessment and have successfully implemented strategies that have improved teaching, learning and assessment.

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

- Outcomes for learners on programmes leading to qualifications require improvement.
- Not enough teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding and a small minority requires improvement.
- Teachers do not always identify and record learners' personal learning goals adequately.

## Full report

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

- Raise success rates on programmes leading to qualifications. Monitor the progress of learners on under-performing courses closely. Ensure that the small minority of subcontractors delivering courses with a history of poor performance comply with the service's procedures and standards.
- Ensure that all teaching, learning and assessment is good or better and increase the proportion that is outstanding. Plan lessons with closer reference to learners' personal goals in order to ensure that all learners make excellent progress. Increase access to, and the use of information and learning technology (ILT). Develop the use of internet enabled devices for use in locations where access to ILT is limited.
- Implement the use of individual learning plans to a consistently high standard across all courses. Ensure teachers identify and record learning goals that are closely matched to each learner's personal ambitions. Provide written feedback to all learners so that they are clearer about what they need to do to achieve their learning goals.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- The proportion of learners who stay to the end of their courses is high on programmes that do not lead to qualifications, which make up most of the provision. The proportion that successfully achieves their learning goals is also high. Apprentices make excellent progress and the large majority successfully achieve their qualifications within the planned time. Success rates are low on the small number of courses that have externally assessed qualifications. However, managers have implemented actions to improve this and in-year data show a marked increase.
- Teachers record learners' confidence and skills carefully at the start of courses, and use this effectively to monitor the good progress that learners make. Learners enjoy their courses, develop good personal and social skills, and participate enthusiastically in lessons. Learners' attendance and punctuality are good.
- Managers have been successful in reducing gaps in the performance of different groups of learners, which are now negligible. They carefully monitor the performance of all learners across their own and their subcontractors' courses. They are effective in implementing staff development, working with community partners and adapting courses to bring about improvements to all learners' achievements.
- The standard of learners' work is good. Learners take part in class discussions with confidence and are able to demonstrate the good progress they make in gaining new skills. For example, health and social care learners gain excellent skills in working as health care assistants and in supporting children with special educational needs.
- Staff provide excellent support to help adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities gain employment. For example, learners are completing supported internships and gaining customer service qualifications through a highly effective partnership with the National Star College and a large national energy supplier.
- The development of learners' skills in English and mathematics is good and the large majority of learners on functional skills courses successfully complete their qualifications. On courses that do not lead to qualifications, learners develop their confidence well, for example in being able to support their children with homework. Good examples exist of learners progressing from courses in English and mathematics to other courses, such as information and communication technology and business administration, and then into employment.
- Managers' highly effective partnerships with local agencies and training providers ensure that courses are available across the county to meet local skills needs and the needs of learners with

different abilities and employment goals. Managers and teachers have a strong focus on supporting learners to gain jobs. Staff have begun to improve the collection of information about learners' destinations and individual case studies show that many learners make progress to other courses and into employment. Learners gain confidence to pursue their goals and those on enterprise programmes develop good entrepreneurial skills.

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

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall and outstanding in visual arts. This results in good outcomes for learners. Managers' improved approach to the observation of lessons, and follow-up support for teachers, has helped raise the standard of teaching and learning since the last inspection. Teachers successfully motivate learners who have varied needs and interests. Most learners make good progress in their lessons and acquire new knowledge and skills.
- The vast majority of teachers have high expectations of their learners. Teachers plan lessons well to ensure that these expectations are met. In visual arts sessions teachers plan highly effective sensory awareness activities that meet the needs of learners with difficulties and/or disabilities. In these lessons, learners enjoy producing craft work of a high standard. Learners develop mathematics skills well in lessons that feature fun activities emphasising the everyday use of mathematics.
- Teachers expertly use a good range of strategies that enthuse and motivate learners. In community learning lessons, teachers plan stimulating activities that help learners to apply problem-solving skills to their home lives. In French lessons, the teacher skilfully encourages conversation to help increase learners' vocabulary while they discuss news stories that improve their understanding of life in France.
- Learners on apprenticeship programmes are very enthusiastic about their training and are supported well to achieve good outcomes. Effective coaching helps learners on business administration courses to develop skills and confidence in undertaking administrative tasks such as arranging team meetings, taking minutes and organising events. Apprentices make very good progress and most of them gain jobs on completion of their course.
- Teachers work closely with prospective learners to assess their individual needs and requirements and to match them to appropriate courses. Teachers have a good understanding of learners' starting points and use this well to plan learning. However, in a small minority of community learning lessons learners undertake activities that are too easy for them.
- Assessment of learners' work and progress is very good. Teachers monitor and check learners' progress carefully in lessons. They provide verbal feedback in lessons that gives learners confidence and enables them to see the progress they are making. Teachers' written feedback to learners does not always provide enough detail on how to improve.
- Teachers ensure that learners develop good skills in English and mathematics. They routinely correct learners' spelling and grammatical errors in their written work. Staff have developed good electronic resources that learners enjoy using for homework activities and which develop their skills in using technology. Teachers are piloting innovative ways of using mobile phones to enable learners in more remote centres to use ILT.
- The majority of learners receive good information, advice and guidance to help them progress to further learning or employment. However, advice and guidance to help learners make the right choices for their next stage in learning are not clear on a few community learning courses.
- Staff provide good support for learners, who are positive about the help they get to complete their programmes. Visual arts staff are particularly effective at helping adults to overcome any barriers to learning. Teachers and learners across the service treat each other with fairness and respect. Teachers on most courses provide good activities that increase learners' understanding of social diversity and cultural differences.

**Visual arts****19+ Learning programmes  
Community learning**

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding and this is reflected in the consistently high success rates over the past three years. Learners make excellent progress in developing their skills across a range of disciplines and produce work that is of a high standard. Teachers are highly skilled and learners take evident delight in making new discoveries.
- Teachers establish an excellent rapport with their learners and are continually mindful of their comfort and security. Learners respond very positively to this and participate exceptionally well in lessons which they thoroughly enjoy.
- Teachers are highly adept at developing the skills and knowledge of learners with widely differing abilities. They plan lessons meticulously to ensure that the different needs of each learner are met. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are able to deal well with events that arise spontaneously in lessons.
- In many lessons, teaching and learning are based on sensory awareness. Teachers make outstanding use of strategies that enable learners with visual impairments to create work of a high standard. For example, one learner was able to understand better the texture and formation of felt material by tearing it apart and rubbing it against her skin, and another learner expertly used a coiling technique with clay to make a vase.
- Teachers enrich the lives of learners through their lessons and inspire them to visit galleries and museums, sometimes for the first time, in order to broaden their knowledge and appreciation of art. Teachers set imaginative homework assignments that successfully help learners to develop skills gained in lessons, and improve further their understanding of key artistic concepts. For example, as a result of an assignment in which they took photographs of the street where they live, learners gained a better understanding of how artists use visual perspective.
- Teachers accurately and quickly assess the needs of all learners before they start their course. They use this information very well to set individual goals for all learners, and provide effective support to help learners achieve their ambitions. Teachers accurately inform learners about the progress they are making. Teachers provide continual verbal feedback and encouragement to learners during lessons that help them to make excellent progress. Learners are aware of the skills they have acquired. However, in a very small minority of cases teachers do not review learners' targets.
- Teachers provide very clear information to learners about courses so that they know what to expect prior to starting their lessons. They provide good information about progression opportunities and many learners continue to more advanced lessons which build on the skills they have acquired.
- Teachers very successfully develop learners' confidence in participating in discussions during lessons and in talking about their work. Teachers use ILT in imaginative ways and learners use mobile phones extensively to photograph their work and present images in their learning logs. Teachers make highly effective use of audio recording devices to help learners whose recollections of past events have faded to record their thoughts and reminiscences about growing up in the Forest of Dean, and use these as a starting point for their subsequent painting projects.
- All teachers are assiduous in ensuring that all learners are safe and learn within friendly environments. The extent to which teachers ensure that all learners, irrespective of their abilities and impairments, have the opportunity to participate fully in lessons is outstanding.

**Community learning**

Good

**Community learning**

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good on community learning programmes and result in good outcomes. Most learners achieve their learning goals and make good progress. Learners' attendance and punctuality are good.
- Teachers use strategies that are adapted well to ensure that the different needs of individual learners are met. During lessons learners make good progress, improve the quality of their work and quickly develop a wide range of practical and theoretical skills. For example, as a result of attending well-being classes, learners are able to identify changes they can make to improve their eating habits and save money.
- Learners become more confident as a result of attending courses. They learn to participate fully in class discussions, listen to the views of others and share their ideas. Adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make exceptional progress and successfully gain good personal and social skills. Teachers provide excellent support and plan lessons with activities that are suitably challenging for most learners.
- Care and support for learners are good. Learners value the support they receive from their teachers, both during and after lessons. Teachers and additional learning support staff work well together to ensure that learners who need extra help successfully achieve their goals. Teachers accurately assess learners' abilities at the start of the course, and quickly identify and provide any support they will need. However, in a small minority of lessons, teachers focus too much on the requirements of the course and not enough on individual learners' goals.
- Teachers make good use of a range of teaching and learning methods, activities and resources to motivate learners and maintain their interest in lessons. They make effective links between the topics of lessons and everyday life and work. For example, learners are able to identify their personal strengths, explain how they use them at home and how they would apply them to a job role. In the best lessons, learners work at different paces and levels that suit their individual needs and they take pride in their work. The large majority of learners achieve or exceed their expectations.
- Teachers skilfully help learners develop their use of English and mathematics. For example, learners make very good use of computers, glossaries, word search activities and quizzes to learn and use words related to using the internet. During these activities, learners develop skills in research, decision making and note taking. Teachers make good use of resources and plan group and pair activities well to develop learners' team working skills.
- Teachers check the progress of all learners effectively in lessons through carefully planned activities and good use of questions that check their knowledge and understanding. Teachers give verbal feedback effectively that motivates learners, improves their confidence and assesses their progress. However, teachers' written feedback to learners does not provide sufficient detail on how to improve their work.
- Teachers provide learners with good advice and guidance that directs them to further training and employment opportunities. However, in a small minority of cases, teachers do not inform learners sufficiently of the options available to them.
- Teachers integrate themes related to equality and diversity well in lessons. For example, in cookery lessons teachers use topical events such as the Chinese New Year to introduce learners to different national cultures. However, a small minority of teachers do not include equality and diversity themes sufficiently in their teaching. Teachers provide safe and friendly learning environments where learners are able to work at their own pace and show respect for all.

**Foundation English****19+ Learning programmes  
Community learning**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and this is reflected in the high proportion of learners who successfully complete qualifications in English at foundation and intermediate levels. Learners make good progress in developing their skills and confidence in English and the standard of their work is good. In the majority of lessons teachers focus well on the needs of individual learners and learners understand what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers maintain a strong focus on giving learners a range of good opportunities to practise everyday spoken English, as well as developing their speaking and listening skills to achieve qualifications. For example, learners practise conversations for ordering food in a restaurant, and successfully review appropriate words and phrases to be used in the presentations that form part of their assessment.
- Knowledgeable and expert teachers use a good range of individual, pair and group work to give interest and variety to difficult tasks, such as debating the differences between fact and opinion. Teachers know their learners well and plan lessons that are carefully tailored to meet the particular learning needs of individual students.
- Learners contribute well to lively discussions and teachers manage these skilfully to ensure all learners participate equally and make progress. Teachers use questions well in lessons, for example to check learners' understanding of the key points in persuasive texts.
- Teachers make good use of aspects of ILT, for example in making resources available to learners via a social media site. However, the use of computers in lessons is rare and this limits the ability of learners to make progress in aspects of everyday English, such as writing emails. Learning resources are of a good standard and teachers use them effectively so that learners can practise and improve the skills learned in lessons.
- Managers' excellent partnership work within communities and children's centres has resulted in learners in hard-to-reach communities returning to study English for the first time since reaching adulthood. Many learners move on to further or higher levels of study and good examples exist of learners finding paid or voluntary work.
- Teachers assess learners' needs carefully before they come on a course and ensure learners attend a programme in a location best suited to their needs. Teachers accurately assess learners' skills in English to place them on a course at the correct level of learning. They provide good advice to learners to encourage them to continue their learning or further raise their aspirations.
- Learners and teachers negotiate precise and measurable targets which teachers use effectively in their planning of lessons, resulting in learners making good progress and achieving their qualifications. Learners and teachers regularly review progress in achieving targets. Teachers give good written and verbal feedback to learners who understand how to make further improvements to their work.
- Teachers incorporate themes related to social diversity well into lessons, and they provide a safe and comfortable learning environment in which all learners participate with confidence. Teachers pay good attention to the well-being of learners, for example by raising their awareness of the dangers of 'cyberbullying' when using the internet.



**Foundation mathematics****19+ Learning programmes  
Community learning**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and result in the large majority of learners achieving their qualifications. Learners develop considerable confidence in their ability to use mathematics, become more motivated and feel enthusiastic about their learning. They make good progress and are proud of what they have achieved. For example, learners gain confidence in helping their children with mathematics homework. Learners work cooperatively with each other and become more aware of their future employment options.
- Teachers have high expectations of their learners and quickly inspire them to contribute to lively discussions and practise their newly-developed mathematical skills. Teachers very successfully encourage learners of different ages, abilities and from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds to work together, which helps them to make swift progress.
- Teachers carefully craft activities which stimulate learning. Learners complete interesting tasks as homework between lessons. For example, a group of learners were set tasks to develop a counting game, which they played with their children at home, and to evaluate the success of the game. Teachers' well-planned, interesting and varied activities provide learners with good levels of challenge and further develop their knowledge.
- Teachers are well qualified and use their expertise skilfully to plan activities that are relevant to learners' daily lives. For example, learners are able to see how rounding up numbers is an easy and quick way of calculating the cost of weekly shopping. Teachers make difficult tasks, such as long multiplication, fun and this aids learners' progress in gaining new skills. However, in a small minority of lessons, teachers do not use strategies well enough to check the progress that all learners have made.
- Staff assess learners' abilities thoroughly before the start of courses in order to guide them to an appropriate programme of study. However, these assessments do not always result in the setting of specific targets for a minority of learners and teachers do not use this information sufficiently to plan lessons that meet all of the learners' individual needs.
- Learners frequently reflect on what they have achieved and benefit from regular reviews with teachers to assess their progress. In family learning settings, learners are good at considering how their learning and experiences will help them support their children. Teachers give written feedback that provides good encouragement and motivation to learners, but this feedback does not explain clearly enough what learners need to do next to achieve their goals.
- Learners receive well-timed and good advice and guidance. Pre-course literature and information are clear and the induction process ensures learners are aware of the commitment they need to make in order to complete their studies successfully. Learners also benefit from the good guidance they receive to help them take their next steps on completing a course.
- Learners have a good awareness of topics related to social diversity. Teachers and learners respect each other in safe learning environments and learners quickly form good friendships. Staff schedule lessons thoughtfully so that they are easy for learners to attend, for example at children's centres with crèche facilities to enable parents with young children and babies to participate.

**The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Good

- Leaders and managers are extremely effective at developing and implementing the service's strategic vision, and their priorities match the local authority's objectives well. Managers research local priorities thoroughly and plan the provision carefully to meet the diverse range of the community's needs. Leaders and managers are ambitious on behalf of their learners and

share this ambition across the organisation with all staff. They identify best practice in the sector and disseminate it across the provision and with partners.

- Managers work closely with specialist local providers and agencies to develop a good variety of courses. These include educational and skill-building courses, as well as programmes that help adults to integrate into their communities. These courses have benefited a wide range of learners, for example young parents who have been in, or are just leaving, care, ex-offenders, wives of service members and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Governance arrangements are very good. Managers give senior officers detailed feedback on the outcomes of partnership working, recruitment of learners and learners' achievements. Senior officers scrutinise the performance of the service routinely during the commissioning process, and through regular meetings that focus on the progress made against recruitment and outcome targets. As a result, they have a good understanding of the overall strengths and the areas for improvement of the service.
- Managers are effective at using their well-established procedures to raise standards of teaching, learning and assessment, and this has resulted in considerable improvements in the quality of its own provision and that of its subcontractors. Managers and staff have been successful in remedying the key weaknesses identified at the last inspection.
- Managers' clear and detailed procedures for the observation of teaching and learning have resulted in improvements in classroom practice and have helped them to gain an accurate view of the quality of lessons. Managers make sure that the precise action points in individual staff training plans result in teachers improving their teaching.
- The performance management of subcontractors is exceptional. Managers conduct regular and challenging contract and performance management meetings with subcontractors and, through appropriate advice and support, bring about marked improvements in those who are under performing. They conduct very effective quality assurance checks on all courses to manage subcontractors' compliance with the service's procedures and standards. However, in a small minority of cases, managers provide feedback with insufficient detail to enable prompt remedial action to be taken. Managers very effectively identify the best subcontractors to work with to provide courses that are highly relevant to residents' needs, in particular for those who are anxious about returning to learning after a long period of absence from education or training. The service delivers its courses in a wide range of venues, which helps to make the provision very accessible to learners.
- Staff at all levels use data well to support the systematic monitoring of provision. Managers monitor key performance indicators rigorously to analyse the performance of all courses and to identify and successfully minimise gaps in the performance of different groups of learners.
- Managers make good use of feedback from learners, staff and subcontractors in evaluating and improving the quality of the service. They accurately identify most of the key strengths and areas for improvement within the self-assessment report and are effective in implementing actions to bring about improvements. However, the extent to which managers identify all of the improvements carried out by the service in order to have a sufficient overview of progress made is an area for improvement.
- Managers have successfully implemented training to raise teachers' confidence in promoting equality and diversity themes in teaching and learning. This has led to a greater focus on discussions about equality and diversity in most lessons. Managers' strategies for recruiting learners from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds have been very effective, as has the initiative to increase the number of male learners.
- Learners feel safe and the service meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners and, where necessary, safeguarding children on premises where adult learning courses take place. All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. Risk assessments of venues and providers ensure that subcontractors have appropriate health, safety and safeguarding practices and policies.




## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Adult Education in Gloucestershire

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Visual arts</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Community learning</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Foundation English</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Foundation mathematics</b>	<b>2</b>

Type of provider	Local authority								
Age range of learners	19+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 66								
	Part-time: 6,616								
Principal/CEO	Mr Jim Austin								
Date of previous inspection	February 2012								
Website address	<a href="http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ad-ed">www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ad-ed</a>								
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		
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	
Full-time	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Part-time	-	86	-	124	-	45	-	1	
Number of traineeships	16-19			19+			Total		
	-			-			-		
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
	11	24	3	43	-	-			
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A								
Full-time	N/A								
Part-time	N/A								
Number of community learners	465								
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"><li>■ Art Shape</li><li>■ Bridge Training Ltd</li><li>■ Business 2 Business Ltd</li><li>■ Cinderford Artspace</li><li>■ GDR Solutions</li><li>■ Gloucester City Council</li><li>■ Gloucestershire College</li><li>■ Gloucestershire Enterprise Ltd</li><li>■ Hudson &amp; Hughes</li><li>■ National Star College</li><li>■ Nationwide Community Learning Partnership</li></ul>								

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- PATA
  - Stroud Valleys Project
  - Skills to Go
  - South Gloucestershire & Stroud College
  - The Churn (Cirencester)
  - TCV – The Conservation Volunteers
  - Trio Childcare Connections
  - Wyedean School

## Contextual information

The service has centres across Gloucestershire, including in a range of community venues. The majority of provision is subcontracted to 19 providers. The service has developed learning in areas of the county where new communities have been established and the programmes meet the needs of these local communities. Employability programmes are mainly delivered in areas with the highest levels of unemployment. Health and well-being provision is delivered in areas with an older age profile and reduced access to alternative services and facilities.

Unemployment levels in Gloucestershire are the same as for the South West, and just below the national rate for England. The proportion of the population who are unqualified is lower than the average for England.

## Information about this inspection

### Lead inspector

Rieks Drijver HMI

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Head of Curriculum and Business Development 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, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant 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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